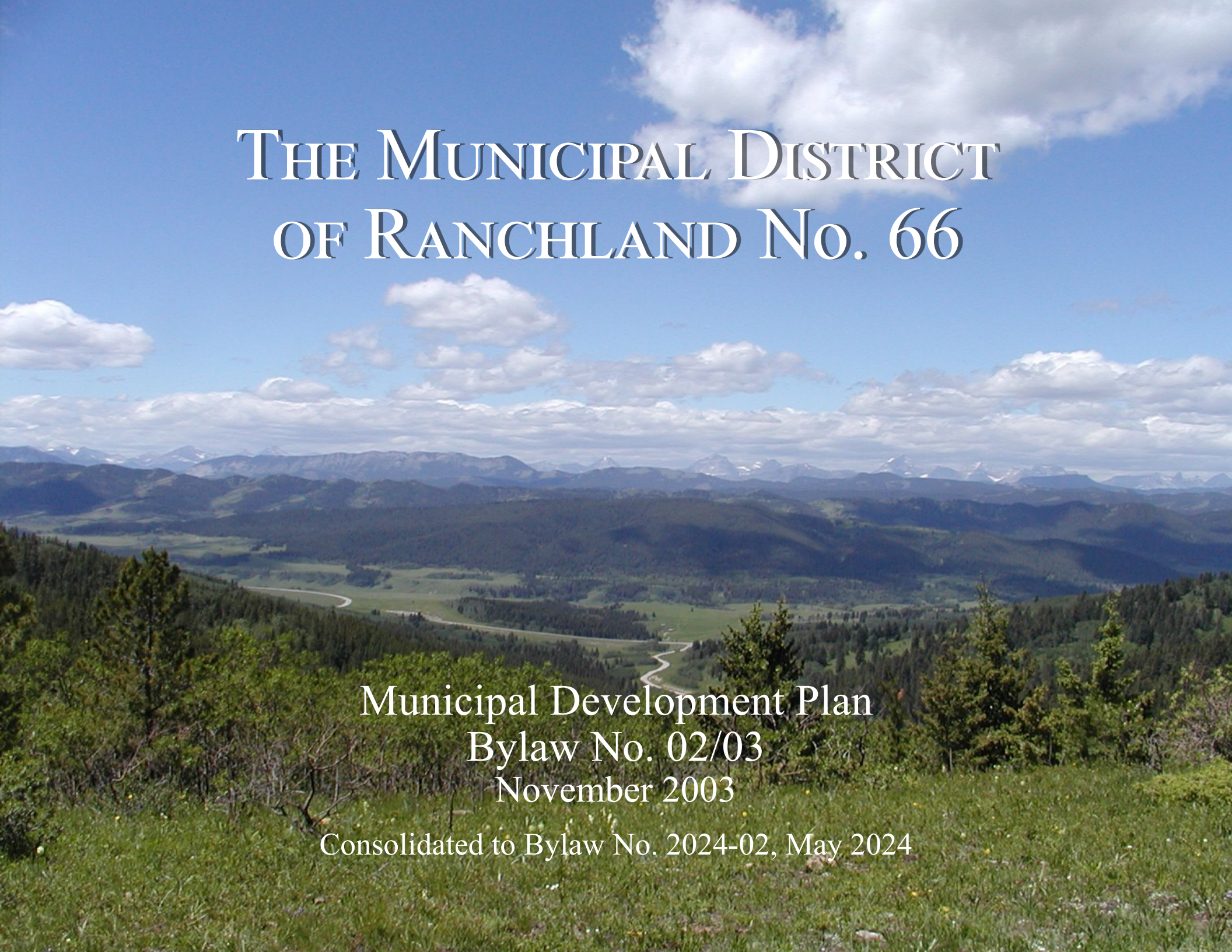


The Municipal District of Ranchland No. 66

Municipal Development Plan
Bylaw No. 02/03
November 2003

Consolidated to Bylaw No. 2024-02, May 2024

M.D. of Ranchland No. 66
Municipal Development Plan Bylaw No. 02/03 – Amendments

Bylaw No.	Amendment Description	Legal Description	Passed
2012-02	Delete Policy 8.4, "Single Lot Country Residential" and add that it is prohibited; Amend Diagram 3 in Appendix C to reflect this change		5-Jun-2012
2024-02	Addition and amendment of policies to promote orderly, economical, and beneficial development, ensure provincial land use initiatives are met, address environment consideration, ensure compatibility with subdivision and development regulations, and enhance efficiency and delivery of municipal services, and protection of municipal infrastructure.		7-May-2024

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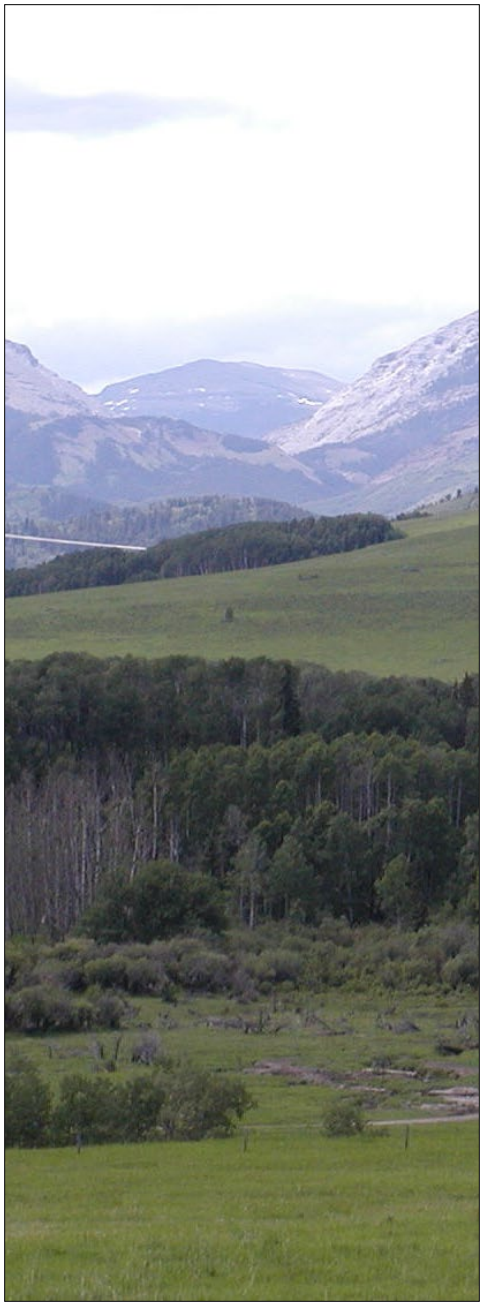
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Introduction

Nestled in the Rocky Mountains and rolling foothills of southern Alberta, the Municipal District of Ranchland No. 66 includes some of the finest ranching country in Canada. Located in the southwestern portion of the province, municipal boundaries stretch north to Kananaskis Country, south to the border of the Crowsnest Pass, west to the British Columbian border and east to the ranch lands west of Willow Creek. The area possesses outstanding forestry, wildlife, and grazing resources, in addition to some of the most important watersheds in Alberta.

Administered by the Department of Municipal Affairs since the early 1900s as an Improvement District, the MD of Ranchland seized the opportunity provided by the Government to incorporate and become a self-governing municipality in 1995. As part of the transformation from an Improvement District to a Municipal District, the MD was required to develop a series of new policies, procedures, and bylaws.

In a proactive effort to pursue its vision of preserving and promoting their unique ranching heritage, the MD Council initiated the preparation of this Municipal Development Plan to further reinforce the Municipality's land use goals and objectives as defined in the Land Use Bylaw.

Function of a Municipal Development Plan

In 1995, the Alberta Planning Act was rescinded and matters relating to planning were incorporated into Part 17 of the Municipal Government Act. Under the new legislation, a hierarchy of statutory planning documents exists. Created and adopted by bylaw for the purpose of planning and managing land use, these statutory plans include Municipal Development Plans, Land Use Bylaws, Intermunicipal Development Plans, Area Structure Plans and Area Redevelopment Plans. All plans must comply with the Provincial Land Use Policies.

Under this system, the role of a Municipal Development Plan is to guide the general direction of future development and provide land use policies regarding development, while the Land Use Bylaw regulates land use and development on a site-specific basis. Section 639 of the Municipal Government Act requires every municipality to adopt a Land Use Bylaw and section 632(1) requires those municipalities with populations of 3500 or more to adopt a Municipal Development Plan, whereas municipalities with smaller populations have the choice of creating and adopting a plan.



As required, the Municipal District of Ranchland completed and adopted their Land Use Bylaw in March of 1996 but at that time did not pursue the development of a long-range plan. The preparation of a Municipal Development Plan at this time satisfies the current need to define a long-term land management strategy for the Municipality. The MD represents one of the most biologically diverse areas in the province. The ranching community has been the main contributor to the present landscape and the long-term viability of the area is dependent on the effective management of local natural resources and preservation of the Municipality's ranching heritage.

Legislative requirements

The Municipal District of Ranchland's Municipal Development Plan has been developed in accordance with section 632(3) of the Municipal Government Act, Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000, Chapter M-26, as amended (MGA) for the purpose of identifying future land use goals, defining the long-term expectations and aspirations and clearly defining the municipality's development philosophy. The goals, objectives and policies of this Plan are reflective of the values and philosophy of the landowners and residents of the Municipal District of Ranchland. The Municipal Government Act requires that the plan provide policies on a broad range of issues. Specifically, section 632(3) of the Act states that:

A municipal development plan

(a) must address

- *(i) the future land use within the municipality,*
- *(ii) the manner of and the proposals for future development within the municipality,*
- *(iii) the co-ordination of land use, future growth patterns and other infrastructure with adjacent municipalities if there is no intermunicipal development plan with respect to those matters in those municipalities,*
- *(iv) the provision of the required transportation systems either generally or specifically within the municipality and in relation to adjacent municipalities,*
- *(v) the provision of municipal services and facilities either generally or specifically,*

(b) may address

- *(i) proposals for the financing and programming of municipal infrastructure,*
- *(ii) the co-ordination of municipal programs relating to the physical, social, and economic development of the municipality,*
- *(iii) environmental matters within the municipality,*



(iv) the financial resources of the municipality,
(v) the economic development of the municipality,
(vi) any other matter relating to the physical, social or economic development of the municipality,

(c) may contain statements regarding the municipality's development constraints, including the results of any development studies and impact analysis, and goals, objectives, targets, planning policies and corporate strategies,

(d) must contain policies compatible with the Subdivision and Development Regulation to provide guidance on the type and location of land uses adjacent to sour gas facilities, and

(e) must contain policies respecting the provision of municipal, school or municipal and school reserves, including but not limited to the need for, amount of and allocation of those reserves and the identification of school requirements in consultation with affected school authorities.

Public Participation

In order to allow for public participation and to meet the requirements of the Municipal Government Act, the MD of Ranchland undertook the following steps:

- conducted a survey of rate-payers of the municipality and published a summary of questionnaire results,
- published a background summary and preliminary recommendations,
- held meetings with Council and administration to discuss preliminary recommendations,
- published a draft plan,
- circulated draft plan to adjacent municipalities and affected government departments for comment,
- conducted a formal public hearing.



Vision

The MD of Ranchland's vision is:

> *"To serve the ranching community and support the sustainable use of healthy ecosystems and watersheds by creating a sustainable and safe community that harmonizes progressive change with traditional rural values, whilst protecting our natural environment."*

Mission Statement

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> *"To protect and enhance the unique ranching heritage and to promote activities that are sustainable and compatible with it and the environment, and to support ranching and grazing as the mainstay of the municipality in conjunction with healthy ecosystems that support it, such as watersheds."*

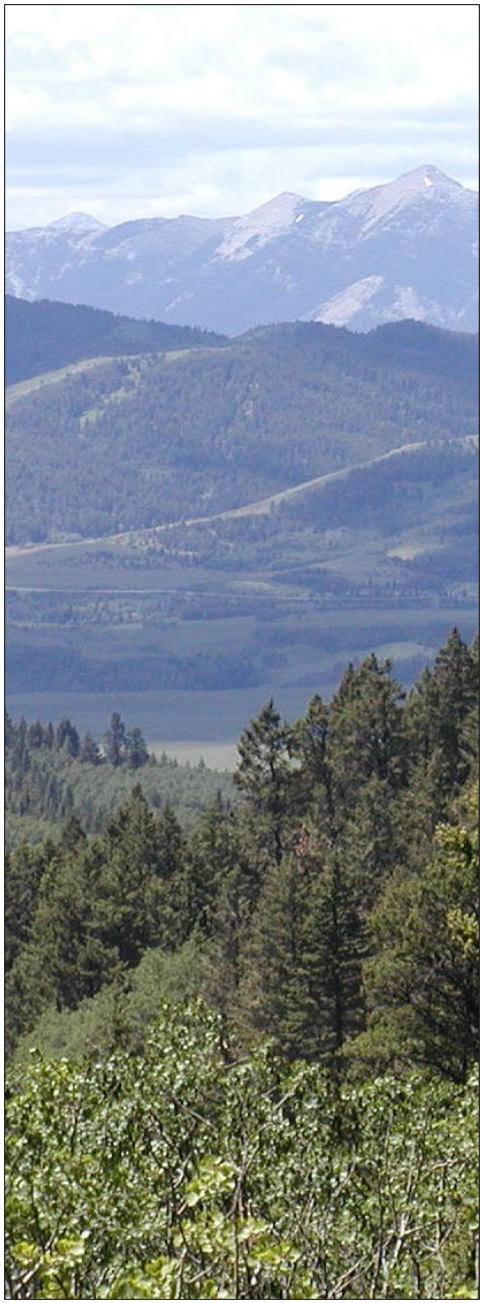
Emerging out of a series of amalgamations and annexations in 1995, the newly formed Municipal District embraced a vision for their community's future. This vision promotes the protection of the area's ranching heritage while conserving the environment. The Council and the residents share the vision and they are unfaltering in their belief in it. The municipal development plan and its policies are to be supportive and in alignment of the overall Vision and Mission Statement of the Municipal District of Ranchland.

Local ranchers are cognisant of the fact that their livelihood depends on the preservation and continued existence of the current rangelands. The Municipal District of Ranchland supports this concept.

Municipal Development Plan Goals

In pursuit of the implementation of the various policies of this plan, Council intends to accomplish the following:

- To protect the existing unique ranching heritage from the encroachment of land uses that conflict with the Municipal District's mission statement.
- To ensure, where applicable, historically and environmentally sensitive lands are considered when making land use planning decisions.
- To promote intermunicipal cooperation and partnerships that support the Municipal District of Ranchland's Mission Statement.
- To protect the present environment, watershed, local ecosystems, and natural amenities for future generations.
- To ensure land use planning decisions consider the compatibility with ranching and grazing operations and any non-agricultural development is suitably managed to not negatively impact residents, ranching, grazing lands, watersheds, or municipal infrastructure such as roads.
- To ensure the municipality has a policy framework to guide and direct appropriate subdivision and development standards incorporated into the municipal land use bylaw to manage land use within the MD.
- To protect the Municipal District of Ranchland's interests as they relate to Section 619 of the Municipal Government Act (MGA) and ensure the Province (i.e., Government of Alberta) is aware of local interests and issues as they relate to matters pertaining to Section 619 of the MGA.



Background

Regional Location

Located in the foothills and Rocky Mountains of Alberta's eastern slopes, the Municipal District of Ranchland is one of the most picturesque areas in southern Alberta. Encompassing nearly 2500 km^2, the Municipality consists of forest reserves, protected areas, creeks and streams and open rangeland. Approximately 75 percent of the land base is Crown owned; privately owned land is held in large holdings. Highway 22 and Forestry Truck Road 940 traverse the MD, providing a route between the Municipal Districts of Crowsnest Pass and Pincher Creek to the south and Kananaskis Country and the Municipal District of Foothills to the north. Secondary Highways 520, 532 and 533 provide additional access.

Approximately 100 people populate the Municipal District and traditionally reside on secluded ranching operations rather than in urban areas. Currently no urban centres exist within Municipal boundaries and residents travel outside the Municipality for goods and services.

Physical Characteristics

Three main events have shaped the southwestern portion of Alberta. First, the advance and retreat of the Bearpaw Sea approximately 100 to 70 million years ago; second, the formation of the mountains between 70 and 55 million years ago; and finally, a major period of glaciation.

Located in the Rocky Mountain Natural region, western portions of the Municipal District lie on a major uplift that forms the Continental Divide. Characterized by a rugged mountain environment, underlain primarily by up thrust and folded carbonate and quartzitic bedrock, surface materials vary from residual bedrock to colluvial material on the upper and mid-slopes. The lower slopes and valley bottoms consist of gravely alluvial material associated with watercourses. Major valleys trend southeast northwest through the mountains and are occupied by headwaters of many of the Province's major rivers, which drain into the Saskatchewan River System.

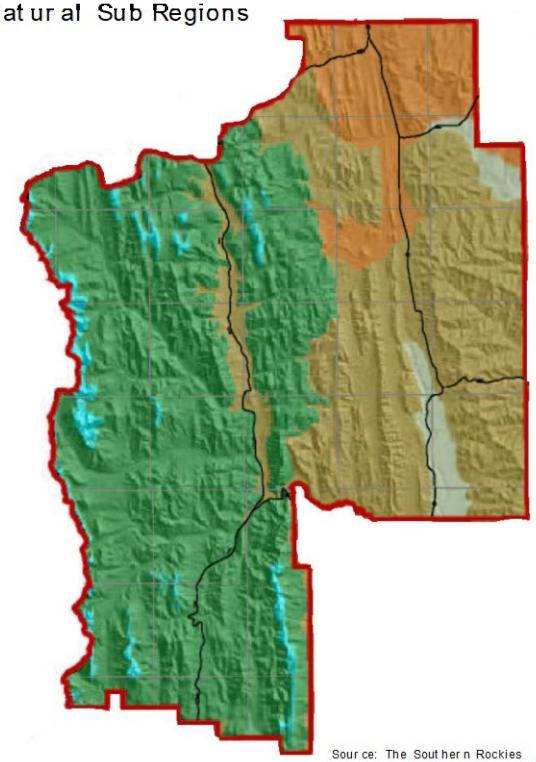


Natural Subregions

Situated at the crossroads of several natural subregions, the landscape within the Municipal District is characterized by four distinct categories that include the:

- foothills fescue grassland subregion,
- montane subregion,
- subalpine subregion, and
- alpine subregion.

Figure 1
MD of Ranchland
Natural Sub Regions



Source: The Southern Rockies Landscape Planning Pilot Study Alberta Environment 2000



The rough fescue grassland lies to the east at the edge of the foothills and mountains. The region is flat to gently rolling with a few major hill systems. Most of the bedrock is covered with extensive, thick glacial tills supporting mixed vegetation in addition to rough fescue and Parry oat grass.

The Montane subregion ranges from an elevation of 3,300 ft. to 6,300 ft., depending on the location and aspect. Chinooks are characteristic of this subregion and soils vary with the climatic conditions and complex topography. A pattern of open forests and grasslands characterize the landscape. Douglas fir and limber pine can be found on the exposed ridges of the north and east aspects, while lodge pole pine and aspen can be found in areas recently disturbed by forest fires.

The Subalpine region is found between the elevations of 4,300 ft. to 7,600 ft. and occupies the area between the montane and alpine subregions. Below freezing temperatures occur year round and the frost-free period is likely less than 30 days. Englemann spruce, subalpine fir and larch dominate the mature forests and typically occur on higher, moister sites, which have not been as subject to fire as the lodge pole pine forests.

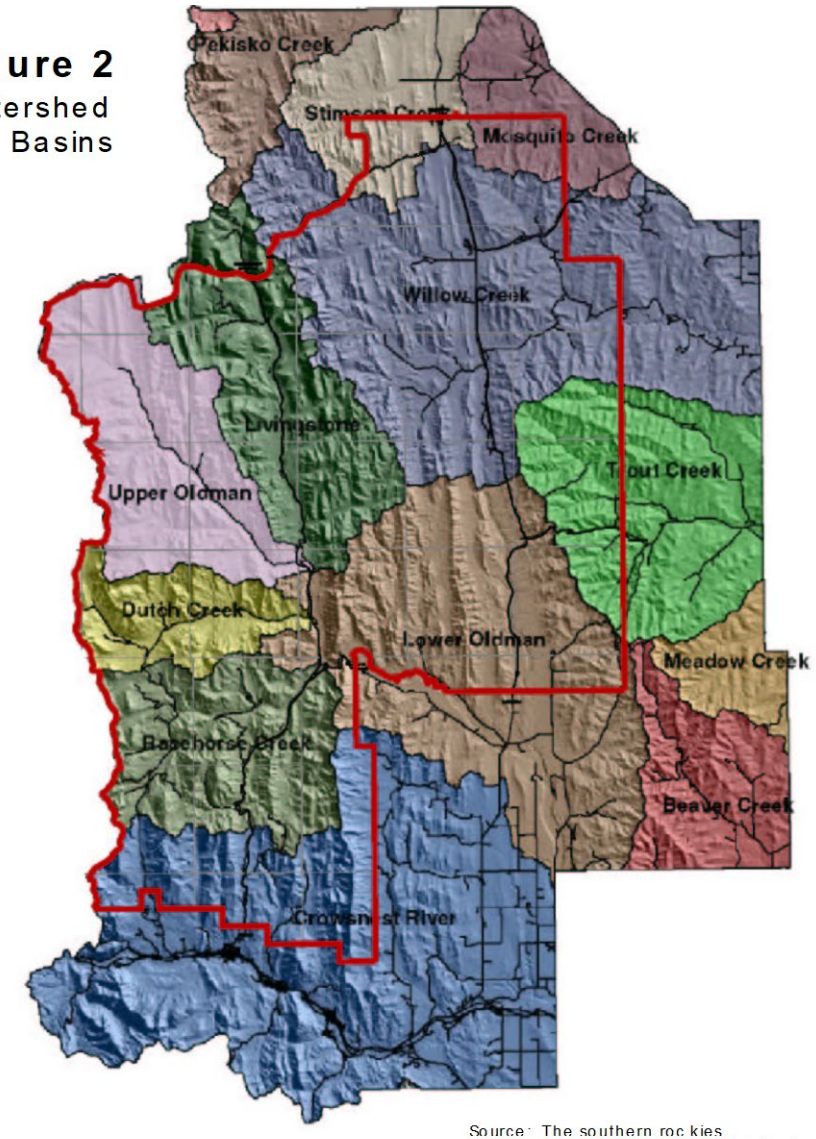
Finally, the Alpine subregion includes all areas above tree line including vegetated area, rock land, snowfields and glaciers. Much of the alpine subregion has no soil and the amount of weathered material present is too thin to qualify as soil. Climatic data for this region is limited and few records exist for winter periods. However, this is clearly the coldest subregion in Alberta and wind speeds and temperatures are more extreme than those found at lower elevations.

Water and Watershed

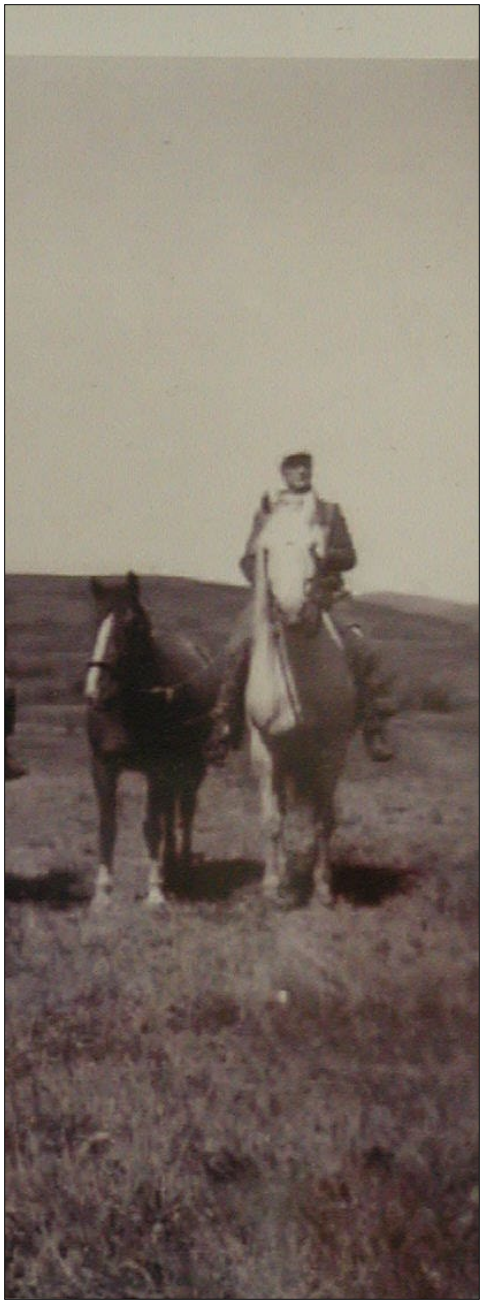
A significant portion of the headwaters of the Oldman River, which eventually flows into South Saskatchewan River, originates in the Livingston Range and Porcupine Hills. In southern Alberta both the Oldman and South Saskatchewan Rivers are heavily used downstream for domestic, recreational and irrigation purposes. The drainages of the Oldman, Crowsnest, and Livingston Rivers are provincially significant and an important natural resource.

Precipitation throughout the Municipal District is high, generally increasing towards the west at the higher elevations. Approximately 60 percent of the annual precipitation is in the form of snow and stream levels peak in the spring with the melting snow pack.

Figure 2
Watershed
Sub Basins



Source: The southern rockies
Landscape planning Pot Study
Alberta Environment 2000



History of Ranching in Alberta

An essential component of the Conservative government's national policy in the 1870s was to encourage a stable and productive settlement of the West, particularly Alberta. In an effort to promote settlement, surveyors were sent west to survey the land into townships in 1871. In 1872, the Dominion Lands Act was enacted to attract millions of hard-working farmers to the area. Continuing debate over the suitability of southern Alberta for extensive agriculture hampered the government's settlement aspirations, and prompted the government to reconsider its settlement plan.

Activities of early settlers, the North West Mounted Police and American merchandising companies convinced the government to support, at least in the short term, ranching. Southern Alberta in fact had several factors that made the area ideal for ranching. First, the warm Chinook winds regularly alleviated excessive snow accumulation; coulees provided ample shelter from the cold, and the abundance of native grasses and mountain streams provided food and water for range cattle. Second, the success of the American merchandising companies of I. G. Baker and T.C. Power in the area offered further proof of the region's suitability for ranching. These companies brought stock, capital and expertise to an area lacking all three and demonstrated the economic viability of the industry. Third, the presence of the North West Mounted Police provided both the security and the market required to launch a growing industry. Local ranchers supplied the force with beef and in turn, it represented a small but stable market. Finally, the signing of Treaty 7, including the commitment by the Federal Government to supply beef to the First Nation's people of southern Alberta, created an additional local market.

To stem the flow of money and profits across the border, the Federal Government initiated favourable land policies that encouraged the growth of a domestic cattle industry. In an effort to promote investment, Prime Minister Macdonald eagerly established a long-term lease system that would be the foundation of open range ranching. This lease system allowed the leasing of 100,000 acres for up to 21 years at an annual rental of one cent per acre. With capital expenditures kept at a minimum, investors were encouraged to commit large amounts of money.

By 1885, four major cattle companies — the Walrond Ranch, the Cochrane Ranch, the North-West Cattle Company and the Oxley Ranch — alone controlled 42 percent of the total leased land in southern Alberta. By 1895 approximately 200 ranchers controlled the entire region and provided the majority of Canadian exports of live cattle. Ranching and ranchers wielded a considerable amount of power and from 1885 to 1905 the cattle business dominated the southern Alberta economy. However, the vigorous immigration campaigns of Clifford Sifton and Frank Oliver succeeded and attracted thousands of farmers to southern Alberta and brought an end to the glory days of ranching. Within months of Oliver taking office, government leased lands, which were the foundation of ranching, were sold and opened to general settlement.



Although the closing of the lease system was the most detrimental to the cattle business, poor markets, high tariffs and freight weights and a series of hard winters all affected the industry. Many ranchers sold out but the cattlemen who remained endeavoured to place ranching on a more solid footing by scaling down operations. After the Great Depression of the 1930s, the provincial government reassessed land use policies and enacted legislation designed to re-establish viable ranching and community livestock grazing in the southern region of the province. Many of the ranchers in the area today are continuing to build on the legacy left by their fathers, grandfathers, and great-grandfathers.

Population Analysis

Past Trends

Table 1 displays a history of the Municipal District of Ranchland population growth from 1976 to 2001. Due to boundary changes experienced by the current incorporated MD of Ranchland, historical populations are those of Improvement District 5 and 6.

Table 1
Municipal District of Ranchland
Historic Population 1976-2001

Year	Population	5 Year % Change	Average Annual % Change
1976	116	—	—
1981	119	2.5	0.5
1986	128	7.5	1.5
1991	130	1.5	0.3
1996	108	-16.9	-3.4
2001	96	-11.1	-2.2

Source: Statistics Canada



The Municipality's population displays a significant drop between 1991 and 1996. This decrease can be explained by the incorporation of southern portions of the former Improvement District No. 6 into both the Municipality of Crowsnest Pass and the Municipal District of Pincher Creek, taking a percentage of the population with it.

Table 2
Population Breakdown for the MD of Ranchland 1996

Age Group	Males	Females	Total Population by Age Group	Percentage of Total Population
0-4	5	5	10	8.3
5-9	0	0	0	0.0
10-14	5	5	10	8.3
15-19	10	5	15	12.8
20-24	5	0	5	4.1
25-29	0	0	0	0.0
30-34	5	0	5	4.1
35-39	5	5	10	8.3
40-44	5	5	10	8.3
45-49	0	5	5	4.1
50-54	5	5	10	8.3
55-59	5	5	10	8.3
60-64	5	0	5	4.1
65-69	5	0	5	4.1
Over 70	10	10	20	16.9
Total	70	50	120	100.0

Note: Census information is rounded to the nearest unit of 5 to protect the privacy of the individuals completing the census. Therefore some differences between the total population and the breakdown of the age structure will occur.

Table 2 and Charts 1 and 2 depict a fairly even split between the males and females for each of the census periods and they indicate an aging population. Approximately 42.0 percent of the population is over the age of 50, but a healthy 29.4 percent of the residents are under the age of 19. These statistics indicate that while the municipal population will not grow at a dramatic rate in the years to come, families continue to have children at a moderate rate.

CHART 1
Municipal District of Ranchland
1996 Population Structure

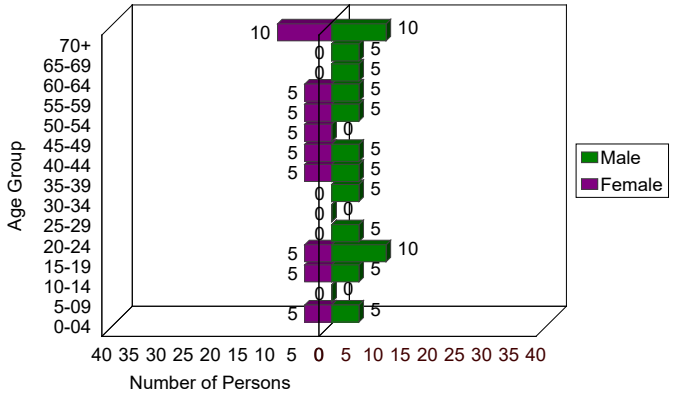
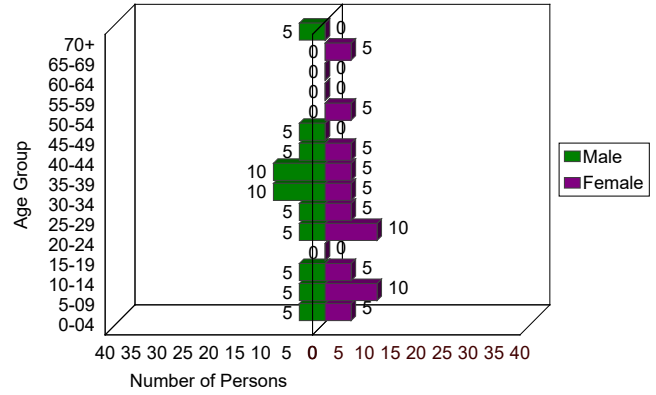
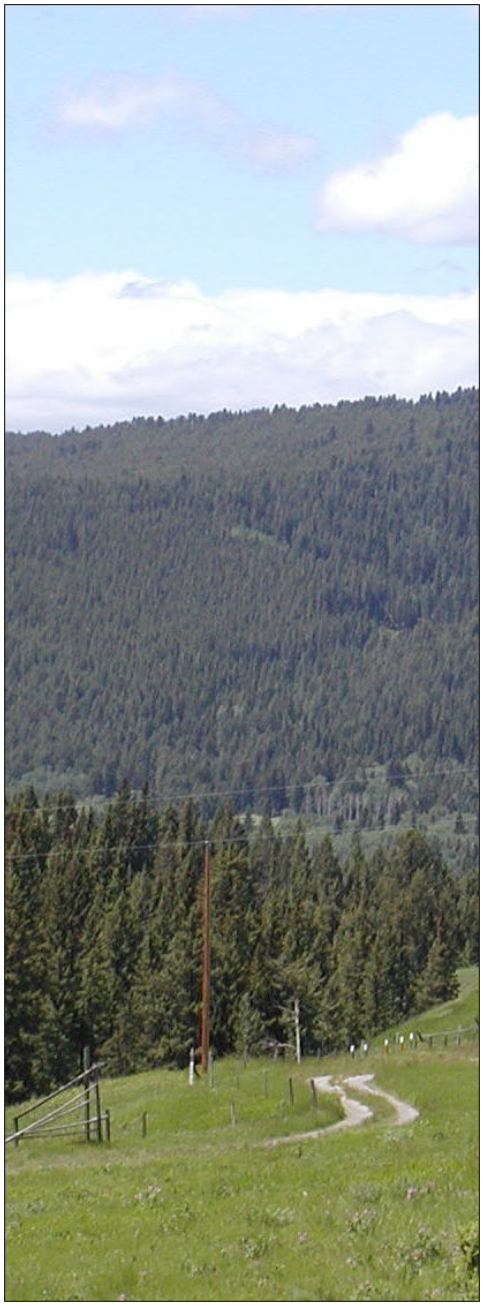


CHART 2
Municipal District of Ranchland
1991 Population Structure



Population Statistics from ID No. 6



Population Projections

The knowledge of possible directions of population change can aid in assessing future requirements of a population. Through the use of population projections, planners can formulate the necessary strategies to cope with population change and its effects on a municipality.

Population projections have been defined as the numerical outcome of a set of assumptions made about future trends usually with reference to trends from the past. Any projection must be carefully reviewed and, in the case of the MD of Ranchland, some factors to be considered are:

- Population projection methods are only as accurate as the initial data.
- In general, the smaller the initial population, the greater the error to be expected.
- There are various forces affecting population change. The most common are migration in and out; birth, death, and fertility rates; and social, economic and political pressures.

Table 3
MD of Ranchland
Population Projections until the year 2021

Year	Arithmetic	Logarithmic	Cohort 5 Year	Cohort 10 Year	Cohort 20 Year
2006	118	117	95	96	111
2011	118	117	76	83	106
2016	117	116	50	69	102
2021	117	115	17	52	98

Note: Census information is rounded to the nearest unit of 5 to protect the privacy of the individuals completing the census. Therefore some differences will occur.

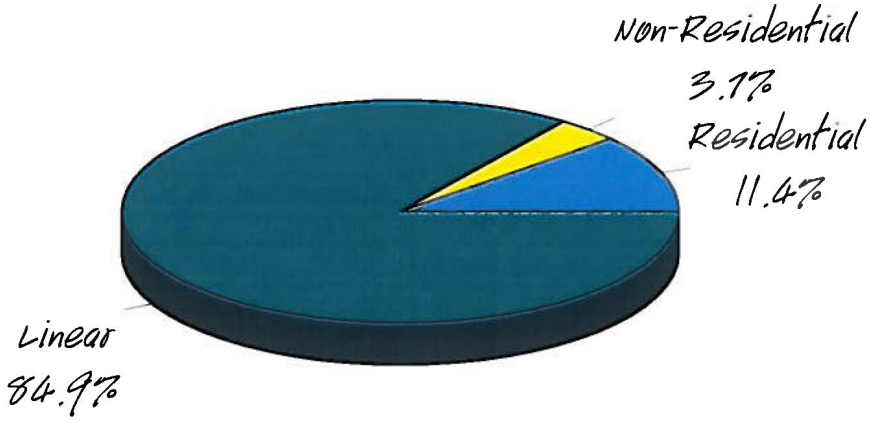
Due to the small population of the Municipal District, it is unlikely it would grow significantly or decrease significantly in population to the extent of the Cohort Survival Projections (Table 3). It would be prudent to project either a stable or slight growth rate for the future, but it would be unlikely to reflect the extremes of the projections.



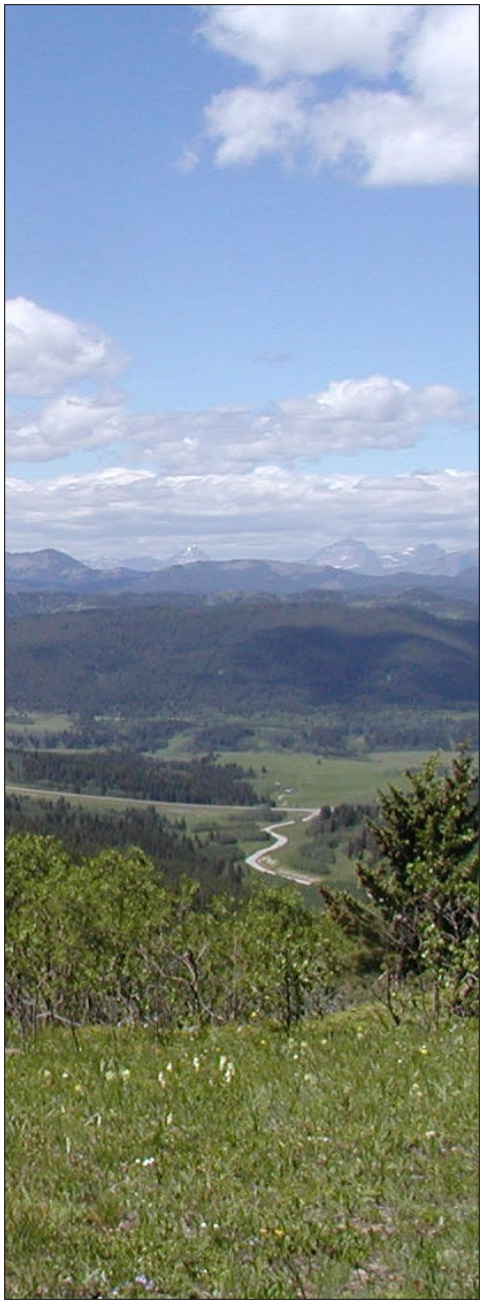
Municipal Assessment

Chart 3 illustrates the equalized tax assessment for the Municipal District for 2001 as reported by Alberta Municipal Affairs. Approximately 84.9 percent of the total assessment levied in the Municipal District is derived from linear assessment while residential and non-residential assessment contributes 11.4 percent and 3.7 percent, respectively.

CHART 3
Municipal District of Ranchland
2001 Equalized Assessment



Source: Alberta Municipal Affairs

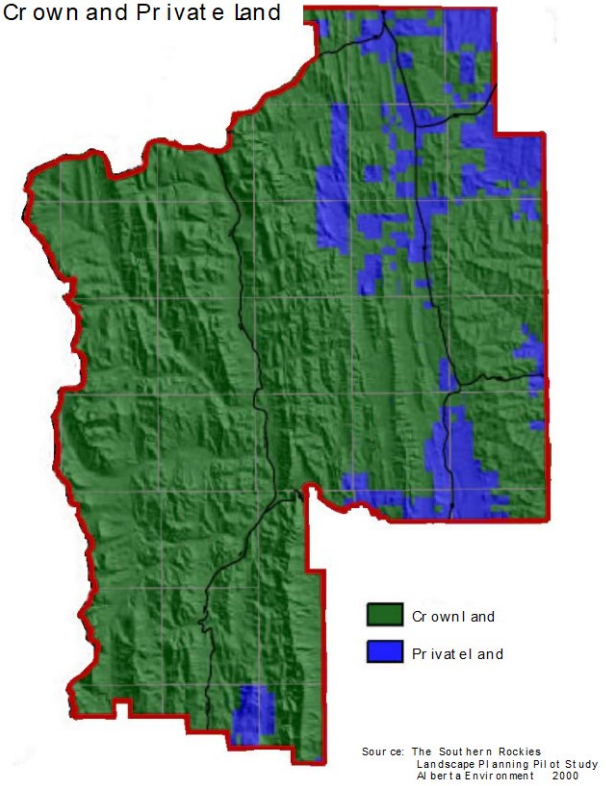


General Land Use

The Municipal District of Ranchland encompasses approximately 631 999 acres (255 770 ha) of land adjacent the Alberta-British Columbia border. It is unique in that there are no urban municipalities, hamlets or urban service areas within the boundaries of the Municipal District and almost all land within the municipality is used for agricultural purposes. The Council has endorsed the concept that the complex watershed, ecoregion and habitat are protected to interact with grazing, ranching and other land uses. Land uses that conflict, fracture or destroy the long-term vision of the MD are discouraged.

The Municipal District is one of many municipalities along the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains in which much of the land is Provincial owned. Public land in Alberta is managed by the provincial government.

Figure 3
MD of Ranchland
Crown and Private land





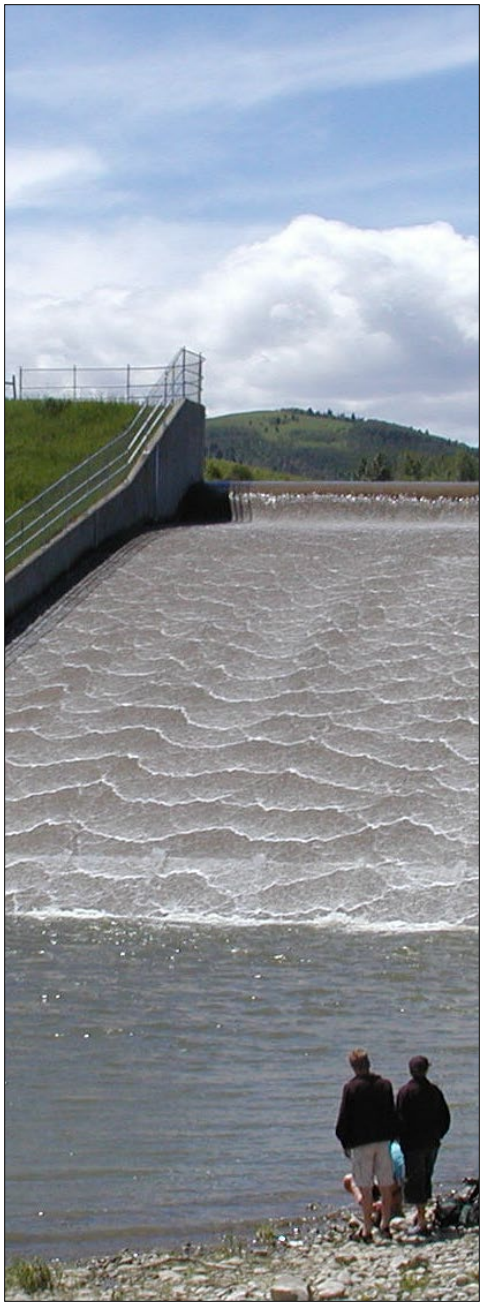
The Council for the Municipal District endorses the concept that land is an extremely valuable resource. All lands should be used wisely to encourage both a prosperous regional economy and a stable rural environment where residents, especially farmers and ranchers, can plan their livelihoods, confident that potential conflicting non-agricultural uses will be minimized.

Over 72 percent of the Municipal District is in the Green Area and committed to the Bow Crow Forest Reserve. Of the remaining 28 percent, approximately one-third is in the possession of individual private landowners. Of the privately held land, approximately 172 891 acres (69 939 ha) is zoned as agricultural land in the Municipal District's Land Use Bylaw. The purpose of the district is to conserve agricultural land, including grassland while permitting activities associated with agricultural production on privately held land or leased land within the White Area. All development proposed for leased lands requires prior approval from the Crown. The Crown (provincial government) should require, as a condition of its disposition, that the lessee also receive development approval from the Municipality for any activity that is subject to part 17 of the Municipal Government Act.

Within the boundaries of the Municipal District of Ranchland, there exists one provincial park, a wildland park, an ecological reserve and three natural areas. The protection of these landscapes reflects the unique roles that the Municipality and its residents must play in preserving Alberta native grassland ecosystems. Ranchers rely on the continued diversity and production of native grasses, and the fact much of the land is unbroken and without road access is a direct consequence of their stewardship.

Table 4
Parks and Protected Areas within The Municipal District of Ranchland

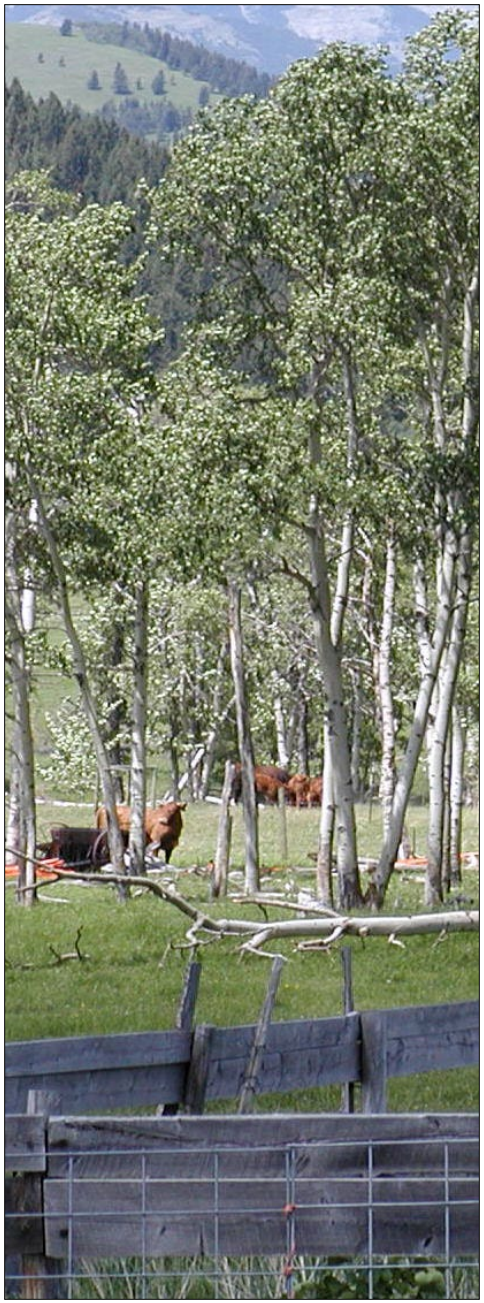
Parks and Protected Areas	Acres	Hectares
Chain Lakes Provincial Park	1,010.56	408.95
Bob Creek Wildland Park	52,608.65	21,290.72
Don Getty Wildland Park	2,953.99	1,195.48
Upper Bob Creek Ecological Reserve	6,426.86	2,600.95
Beehive Natural Area	13,990.61	5,662.00
Mount Livingston Natural Area	1,358.07	549.60
Black Creek Heritage Rangeland Natural Area	18,160.54	7,349.57
Total Area	**93,555.29**	**37,861.79**



Provincial Parks are areas that have been set aside to provide opportunities and facilities for a wide range of outdoor recreational and educational activities. Parks designated under the Provincial Parks Act offer protection to significant natural, historical and cultural landscapes and features. Chain Lakes Provincial Park was opened in 1972 as a result of access conflicts between private landowners and the general public to the Chain Lakes Reservoir. The park has grown to encompass 1010 acres of willow and aspen groves and grassland. The park hosts a large abundance of flora and fauna to be viewed and enjoyed by the public.

In 1999, the Bob Creek Wildland Park was designated under the Provincial Parks Act. These types of parks are usually large, natural land bases where human development and interference are kept to a minimum. Intensive recreational development is not permitted, but backcountry campsites and a few motorized trails may be allowed. Approximately 70 percent of the Bob Creek Wildland Park is montane landscape and largely undisturbed.

Ecological Reserves are designated under the Wilderness Area, Ecological Reserve and Natural Areas Act (WERNA). Some of Alberta's most rare and fragile landscapes, plants, animals and geological features have been given protection under the Ecological Reserves Program and designated land is primarily used for scientific research and educational opportunities and is protected from recreational and industrial development. While staging, parking and/or interpretive facilities may exist on the perimeter of some ecological reserves, surface disturbances within the reserve are prohibited. The Upper Bob Creek Ecological Reserve was designated in 1999 to protect significant resources in the Whaleback Area of the Porcupine Hills.



Land Use Issues

This section of the Municipal Development Plan attempts to identify land use planning issues that are prevalent in the Municipal District of Ranchland. The identification of such issues will lead to the formulation and application of the policies presented in this plan. As the Municipal Government Act establishes a detailed number of issues that must be addressed, including the provision of transportation systems, municipal services, guidance on land use adjacent to sour gas facilities and other land uses, municipal and school reserve issues, and coordination of land use issues with adjacent municipalities, this section will also identify the legislative requirements pursuant to this enactment.

Future Land Uses

Ranching is the predominant land use in the Municipal District of Ranchland and pressures from country residential and non-agricultural developments can have a dramatic impact on agricultural land and the environment. The Municipal Development Plan will contain policies which relate to the regulation of land use and will identify uses that are suitable in certain locations within the Municipal District.

The paving of Highway 22 from Longview to Lundbreck has resulted in the MD becoming a very significant transportation corridor. In addition to a major increase in commercial vehicles, the corridor has also become a tourist/public attraction in its own right as exemplified by the establishment of the Bar U National Historic Site and the designation of the Cowboy Trail. Preserving the natural beauty along this corridor from a tourism perspective should be a major consideration in any land use/planning decision by the MD or the Province. It may be that tourism and conservation groups are the best allies for the MD residents in preserving the area and restricting resource development and urban encroachment.

The Council for the Municipal District of Ranchland endorses the following land use concepts and objectives with regard to future development within its boundaries:

- Land with a Canadian Land Inventory soil classification of 1 to 6 will be considered prime agricultural land since classes 5 and 6 (the lower soil classes) are equally important to agricultural production in the Municipal District as those soils of higher capability. In many circumstances, marginal lands form a valuable and integral part of a viable agricultural operation.
- The development of non-agricultural land uses within the Municipal District should be considered only in the case where agricultural opportunities are not compromised by conflicting developments.



- Owners of agricultural land will try to maintain viable agricultural operations.
- Fragmentation of rural land should be discouraged.
- Development, which may detract from the aesthetic appearance of an area, should be discouraged.
- Oil and gas (exploration, production, gathering and processing); pipelines or electricity transmission activities and developments in the MD will be considered subject to certain qualifications outlined in the Policy section of this plan.
- Mineral extraction, aggregate excavation, mining activities and coal exploration should only be carried out in alignment with the vision and objectives established by the MD and this plan.
- The municipality should encourage utility companies to locate on lands that will not unduly interfere with the scenic attributes of the area.
- Future recreational development should be limited so that agricultural endeavours are not compromised.
- The municipality shall encourage landowners to protect the present environment, watershed and natural amenities for future generations.
- Ranching and grazing activities are considered the principal land use of the MD of Ranchland and other land uses and development should only be considered in regard to compatibility with agricultural operations.

Coordination of Land Use

The Municipal Government Act and the Provincial Land Use Policies encourage intermunicipal planning cooperation. This can be addressed formally in two ways through the adoption of a Municipal Development Plan or an Intermunicipal Development Plan. As there are no urban jurisdictions existing with the MD of Ranchland, the intent would be to establish policies that are compatible and acceptable to adjacent rural municipalities and provincial Crown interests in terms of desirability and location of development, which may affect them.

Adjacent Municipalities

One of the other requirements of the Municipal Government Act is that a Municipal Development Plan must address land use matters with adjacent municipalities. Section 632(3)(a)(iii) of the Municipal Government Act states:



"A municipal development plan must address the co-ordination of land use, future growth patterns and other infrastructure with adjacent municipalities if there is no intermunicipal development plan with respect to those matters in those municipalities."

The Municipal District of Ranchland shares boundaries with the Municipal District of Willow Creek, the Municipal District of Pincher Creek, the Municipality of Crowsnest Pass, the Municipal District of Foothills and Improvement District No. 5 (Kananaskis Country). Therefore, it is of benefit for the MD to maintain contact with the other municipalities and to discuss issues of shared concern. Administration and Council should endeavour to consult with all neighbouring municipalities regarding plans to undertake any major projects which may affect the other municipality, or other projects that may be of mutual interest.

Provincial Departments

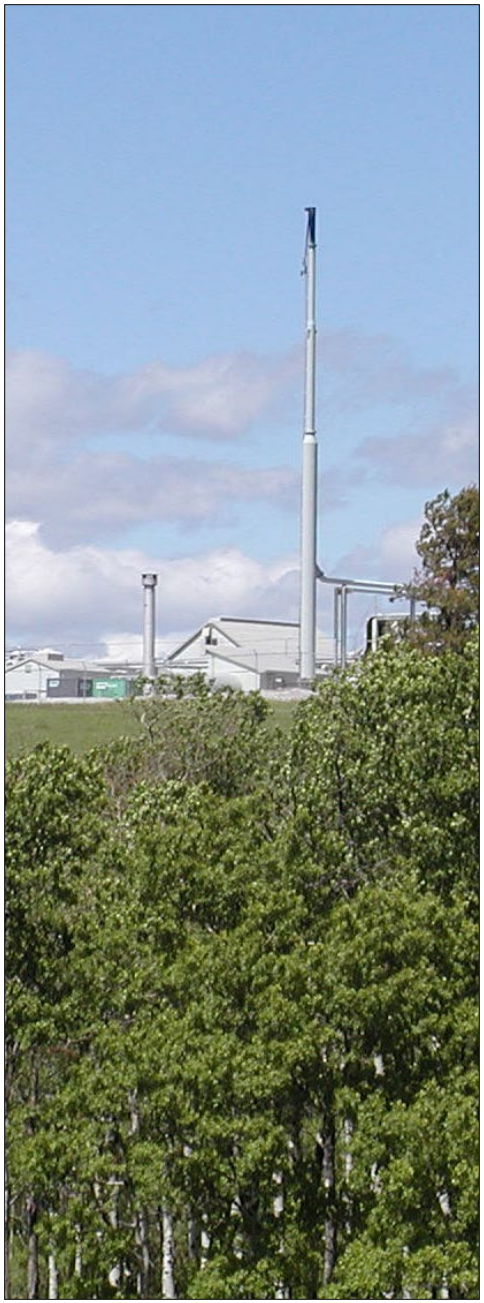
In addition to the surrounding municipalities, it is essential that the Municipal District coordinate land management with the provincial government. The Government of Alberta is responsible for managing public land and focuses on establishing and sustaining an optimum balance of use, conservation and development of resources in harmony with the values and needs of the citizens of Alberta.

Through Integrated Resource Management, government policies, programs and activities are integrated to gain the best long-term benefits while minimizing conflicts. Currently, the Livingston-Porcupine Hills Sub-Regional Integrated Resource Plan is responsible for identification and assessment of all resource value in the Municipal District of Ranchland. In order to promote consistent and compatible development on both public and private lands, consideration should be given to public policies outlined in the Integrated Resource Plan.

Transportation Systems

The normal hierarchy of road systems characterizes the Municipal District of Ranchland and includes one primary highway, numerous secondary highways and a local road system. Highway 22 is the main north-south route through the Municipality from the Municipal District of Pincher Creek and the Municipality of Crowsnest Pass in the south to Improvement District No. 5 and the Municipal District of Foothills in the north. Secondary highways 533, 532 and 520 all provide access from various points east into the Municipality.

Tables 1, 2 and 3 (see Appendix A) track traffic volumes, type of vehicle and primary function of primary and secondary highways and the local road system within the Municipal District of Ranchland. The network of roads and highways is essential to the movement of people and goods. They are especially important to the ranching



community as a primary means of moving agricultural products to market. The provision, maintenance and improvement of the system are a constant challenge to the Municipal District of Ranchland.

Water Act

The Water Act was enacted January of 1999 and is the primary provincial legislation governing a municipal council's ability to pass resolutions, or enact bylaws for the direction, control and management of water within its jurisdiction. It is the intent of the provincial government to eventually adopt Water Management Plans (WMPs) for all basins in Alberta.

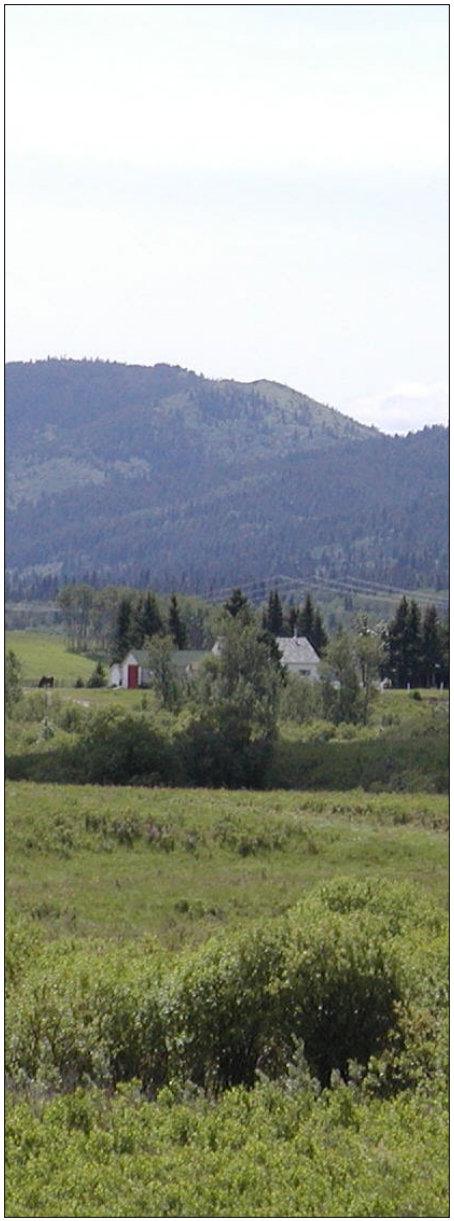
Watershed management within the Municipal District of Ranchland is a priority and, as these WMPs will take several years to prepare in accordance with the provincial guidelines, the Municipal District is encouraged to adopt interim policies in the respective Municipal Development Plan with respect to the Water Act.

Sour Gas Facilities

The Municipal Government Act recognizes that sour gas facilities can create special planning concerns and may have a detrimental effect on subdivision and development; thus, the Municipal Government Act requires that they be addressed in the Municipal Development Plan. The Municipal Government Act stipulates that the Municipal Development Plan contain policies consistent with the Subdivision and Development Regulation regarding the type and location of land uses adjacent to sour gas facilities.

However, municipalities have no jurisdiction in the location of most oil field development. The Alberta Energy and Utilities Board (AEUB) and/or the Energy Resources Conservation Board (ERCB) regulate the oil industry and they are exempt from the planning legislation pursuant to the following section of the Municipal Government Act:

> *"618(1) This Part and the regulations and bylaws under this Part do not apply when a development or a subdivision is effected only for the purpose of*
>
> (a) *a highway or road,*
>
> (b) *a well or battery within the meaning of the Oil and Gas Conservation Act, or*
>
> (c) *a pipeline or an installation or structure incidental to the operation of a pipeline."*



Since municipal approval must comply with the distances established by the AEUB, land use policies must be adopted which identify facilities within the Municipality and which sets off the mandatory referrals. According to section 9(1) of the MGA Subdivision and Development Regulation it is required that:

> *"A subdivision authority must send a copy of a subdivision application and a development authority must send a copy of a development application to the AEUB if any of the land that is subject to the application is within 1.5 kilometres of a sour gas facility or a lesser distance agreed to, in writing, by the AEUB and the subdivision authority."*

According to information from the AEUB, there are currently sour gas wells located in various areas of the Municipal District of Ranchland (see Map 2). As municipal approval must comply with the distances established by the AEUB, land use policies must be adopted which identify these facilities within the municipality and which trigger the mandatory referrals.

Municipal and School Reserves

The Municipal Government Act allows for the taking of municipal and/or school reserve at the time of subdivision under certain circumstances, subject to section 666(1). The Subdivision Authority may require the owner of a parcel of land that is the subject of a proposed subdivision to provide a part of the parcel of land, to provide money in lieu of land, or to provide any combination of land or money.

The Municipal Government Act requires all Municipal Development Plans contain policies respecting the provision and allocation of municipal and school reserves. As no formal agreements exist with the associated school authorities, the Municipal Government Act requires that the amount and allocation of those reserves be discussed with those affected authorities.

Other Land Uses

All other land uses proposed in the municipality shall be regulated through the standards established in the Land Use Bylaw.



Subdivision and Development

Due to the traditionally large tracts of land utilized for ranching within the Municipal District of Ranchland, very little subdivision or development occurs within the Municipality. In the last ten-year period, one subdivision was applied for and approved in 1994 for the purpose of consolidating land with an adjacent ranching operation. Prior to 1994, subdivision records reveal that only five additional subdivisions have been approved in the former Improvement District since 1966.

Subdivision Criteria

At this time, no Municipal Development Plan or General Municipal Plan (plans adopted prior to 1995) exists for the Municipal District of Ranchland. The Advisory Council for former Improvement District No. 6 endorsed a ***Land Use Policy Statement***, which provided a philosophical overall view regarding land use and established a number of guiding principles that still govern many land use decisions today. The preparation of the Municipal Development Plan will provide an opportunity to review and incorporate these land use principles as they pertain to the various land uses encountered in the municipality.

Development Criteria

Land Use Bylaw No. 2023-01 establishes the criteria for development within the Municipal District. These criteria deal with:

- permitted and discretionary uses,
- minimum and maximum parcel sizes,
- development setbacks.

Environmental considerations

The unique natural environment, including both the diverse landscape and vital watersheds, requires the community to be active stewards of the land and to take positive measures to ensure the continued health of the ecosystem. Environmental protection is accomplished through steps by each level of government as well as the public at large. In this regard, the MD of Ranchland, along with appropriate government agencies and landowners, have been very active in promoting and participating in projects which concern riparian habitat protection and reclamation in partnership with the Alberta Cows and Fish Program.

In terms of land use, the powers available to the Municipal District are somewhat limited due to other provincial legislation, but do involve the monitoring of the following:

- land uses adjacent to environmentally sensitive areas,
- land uses in close proximately to sour gas facilities.

Policies

Previous sections of this document highlighted several issues and concerns. The identification of these planning issues provides the opportunity to establish land use policies that are intent on addressing and mitigating those concerns. The policies presented in this plan will provide guidance and direction for municipal decision-makers regarding future growth and other planning-related issues. The Council, council committees and the public will review the policies, prior to adoption, to ensure that conformity exists with the Municipal Government Act, Provincial Land Use Policies and reflects the vision and mission statement of the community.

Future Land Use and Growth

Agriculture has been identified as the predominant land use in the MD of Ranchland and it is imperative to protect and preserve agriculture and the environment while balancing the interests of non-agricultural uses. The current statutory plans adopted by municipal councils have approved very restrictive land use policies with the intent of preserving lands within the MD for farming and ranching. As such, guidance for development and subdivision matters is provided in the Land Use Bylaw and this statutory plan.

Objectives:

- To protect the present ecosystem.
- To protect agricultural land for agricultural activities and, in particular, ranching and grazing activities.
- To ensure that consistency exists between this Municipal Development Plan and the present Land Use Bylaw.
- To ensure that the municipal decision makers have sufficient information to make an informed decision and a process in which to obtain and review that information.
- To ensure that non-agricultural development does not negatively impact ranching and agricultural land and that any such development aligns with the overall goals and objectives of this Plan.
- To support consultation and collaboration between the MD and the Province in decision making, especially in regard to development activities on Crown land that may impact the MD of Ranchland, landowners or disposition holders.
- To promote consistency of decision making by ensuring decisions are made within a framework of policies.

Policies:

1.1 The Municipal Development Plan shall contain policies as to the criteria used for making subdivision and development decisions.

1.2 The subdivision and development criteria shall be drafted to protect agricultural land and the environment.

1.3 Input shall be sought from adjacent municipalities prior to decisions being rendered on matters of mutual concern or interest.

1.4 The municipal Council or its committees may require additional information from an applicant or ratepayer any time during the land use process, including the provision for scheduling public meetings or hearings to obtain additional input.

1.5 The Municipal District shall continue to prohibit certain land uses that are deemed to be detrimental to a specific land use district in the Land Use Bylaw.

Coordination with Adjacent Municipalities

Recognizing it is important for adjacent municipalities to work together to promote efficiency and effectiveness, dialogue must occur for this process to be successful. It is not intended to increase the complexity of decision-making, but rather to open channels of communication to take advantage of any opportunities that may be available.

Objectives:

- To ensure cooperation in planning issues between neighbouring municipalities.
- To allow municipalities to take advantage of mutual opportunities to maximize efficient use of transportation systems, infrastructure and other mutual interests.
- To ensure cooperation and dialogue between municipalities on matters of mutual interest or concern.

Policies:

2.1 Administration and Council shall consult with adjacent municipalities regarding plans to undertake any major projects that may affect or impact other municipalities.

2.2 Administration and Council should endeavour to consult with adjacent municipalities where mutual interest exists.

2.3 All proposed statutory plans, land use bylaws and/or amendments that may have an impact shall be forwarded to adjacent municipalities for their comments.

Crown Land

The Municipal Government Act requires a municipality to adopt a land use bylaw that prohibits, regulates and controls land use within the Municipal District. The Municipal District has limited jurisdiction over public lands or provincial Crown lands in terms of issuing dispositions, licences of occupation or permits for land use activities. Given this situation, it is desirable that dialogue, coordination and referrals occur between appropriate government departments.

Objectives:

- To coordinate the land use decisions made between the two levels of government recognizing the planning processes established for integrated resource plans and municipal development plans.
- To ensure land uses are compatible on private land adjacent to provincial Crown lands.
- To recognize that activities under section 619 of the Municipal Government Act may impact matters or infrastructure of local importance and these need to be addressed as part of land use decisions.
- To identify a process for maintaining involvement and input into subdivision and development activities within public owned land or the green zone of the municipality with respect to section 619 of the of the Municipal Government Act.

Policies:

3.1 The appropriate government departments having jurisdiction on Crown lands are requested to have regard for the policies established in this plan and follow Part 17 of the Municipal Government Act for any approval that involves subdivision or development.

3.2 To ensure proper notification of adjacent landowners and provincial departments, and to address issues of local importance, applicants are required to obtain municipal approval for any subdivision

or development on Crown land and make an appropriate Development Permit application if required by the municipality.

3.3 Prior to the disposition on Crown lands, the appropriate government department is encouraged to inform the Municipal District of the said disposition.

3.4 Mining activities and coal exploration are discretionary uses within the MD of Ranchland in accordance with the land use bylaw. These activities may be deemed contrary to the vision and objectives established for the municipality. Should an application for commercial mining activities and coal exploration proceed under section 619 of the Municipal Government Act, the municipality requires a Development Permit application to be made to ensure issues of local importance are addressed.

Municipal Services and Transportation

A strong, healthy assessment base provides the necessary revenues for the Municipality to provide the services and facilities to which ratepayers have become accustomed. Given the dramatic decline in provincial grants to municipalities and the pressure to keep municipal taxes low, the challenge persists for the Municipal District to maintain its current levels of service.

Objectives:

- To provide a basis for evaluating the services provided to the ratepayers of the Municipal District.
- To establish guidelines for the provision or acquisition of services at the time of subdivision and/or development.
- To provide a safe, economic and efficient road system.
- To ensure any subdivision and/or development that may use or impact a municipal road shall be responsible for the upgrades or maintenance of the road infrastructure at the expense of the developer.

Policies:

4.1 At the time of subdivision and/or development, the provision of municipal services shall be at the expense of the developer.

4.2 The Municipality should endeavour to ensure that the developer provides satisfactory levels of services for any subdivision or development application.

4.3 The Municipality and or the appropriate government department shall ensure that the developer provide service roads and access points for road or highway related land uses as required following consultation with the appropriate government department.

4.4 The MD shall request that developers include timeframes for active use and the dates for decommission and reclamation for any permits, approvals or agreements being entered into with the municipality for construction of roads, private driveways or access roads, or other linear disturbances.

4.5 The MD shall discourage land use and development activities that insert new cut lines, access trails and roadways into what was previously dense forest, as additional access to public land brings added pressure to the environment and disposition holders, as the potential for increased conflict with disposition holders is a concern.

4.6 The protection of the MD roads during certain seasonally vulnerable weather periods throughout the year is deemed to be beneficial and the MD may control and manage road use, and may apply conditions through a permitting process, road bans, or through the application of Road Use Agreements.

4.7 To address municipal servicing matters, and in particular municipal roads and any potential impacts to them, the municipality will require when deemed necessary that a developer to enter into and abide by a development agreement pursuant to the *Municipal Government Act* as a condition of a development permit or a subdivision approval.

4.8 The MD of Ranchland shall ensure that developers are responsible for any costs related to servicing or impacts to municipal infrastructure so as to not place an unnecessary burden on the MD ratepayers. The MD may require the posting of financial security or bonds be provided by developers to ensure that development permit or subdivision approval conditions are met when required by the development officer or the Municipal Planning Commission as a condition of development approval.

4.9 The MD of Ranchland shall manage the impacts from development and use of municipal roadways by requiring an applicant or developer to enter into either a Road Use Agreement or Road Use Maintenance Agreement with the municipality to address any road use and upgrades required, new construction, load and weight limitations, or maintenance or repair that may result from development and/or heavy truck traffic.

4.10 It is the objective of the MD to better manage timber harvesting (logging) operations that may impact municipal roads and the MD will, through the land use bylaw, identify a size threshold for such operations as a discretionary use that would require a development permit issued by the MD Municipal Planning Commission.

4.11 The MD shall strive to limit development impacts to the Highway 22 transportation corridor which is a major transportation route for commercial vehicles. The MD will encourage the Province to consider in its decision making the potential effects and increase in heavy traffic within the municipality which may negatively affect cattle and ranching operations.

4.12 The municipality recognizes that the Highway 22 corridor has become a tourist/public attraction as exemplified by the establishment of the Bar U National Historic Site and the designation of the Cowboy Trail. The MD shall strive to preserve the natural beauty along this corridor from a tourism perspective as a major consideration in any land use/planning decision and the Province is encouraged to do so also.

Water Act

The Water Act was enacted January of 1999 and is the primary provincial legislation governing a municipal council's ability to pass resolutions, or enact bylaws for the direction, control and management of water within its jurisdiction. It is the intent of the provincial government to eventually adopt Water Management Plans (WMPs) for all basins in Alberta. As these plans will take several years to prepare in accordance with the provincial guidelines, municipalities are encouraged to adopt interim policies in their respective municipal development plans and land use bylaws. To this end, the Municipal District of Ranchland has identified the following objectives and adopted the subsequent policies with respect to the Water Act.

Objectives:

- To protect the existing watersheds within the Municipality by implementing the provisions of the Water Act.
- To ensure that subdivision and/or development in the Municipal District of Ranchland complies with the provisions of the Water Act.
- To adopt interim land use polices prior to the preparation of the Water Management Plans.

Policies:

5.1 Prior to the preparation of a Water Management Plan for the region, the municipality shall require that a certified hydrogeological report be prepared for any application for subdivision approval or a proposed land use redesignation that proposes to create six or more parcels of land in a quarter section.

5.2 All certified reports shall be prepared in accordance with the "Report Requirements under Section 23 of the Water Act for Subdivision Development" as produced by Alberta Environment, September 1999.

5.3 All costs associated with the preparation, evaluation, interpretation and /or distribution of the said report shall be borne by the registered owner or the agent authorized to act on the behalf of the registered owner.

5.4 Any subdivision and or development application within the Municipal District is not precluded from any appropriate federal legislation.

Petroleum and Gas Facilities

The Municipal Government Act requires the Municipal Development Plan to contain policies compatible with the Subdivision and Development Regulation regarding the type and location of land uses adjacent to oil and gas facilities. For the most part, the oil industry is regulated by the Alberta Energy Regulator and is exempted for the provincial legislation pursuant to section 618 of the Act.

Objectives:

- To meet the legislative requirements of the Municipal Government Act, the Provincial Land Use Policies and the Subdivision and Development Regulation.
- To identity any sour gas, sweet gas and other petroleum facilities within the boundary of the Municipal District of Ranchland.
- To minimize any adverse land use conflicts in proximity to a sour gas facility.
- To minimize any adverse land use conflicts in proximity to all facilities.
- To ensure that suitable access is provided to all oil and gas developments.
- To encourage an open and continued dialogue between developers in the petroleum industry and the local municipal council.

- To encourage developers in the petroleum industry to reclaim lands and cover-type to their predevelopment state.

POLICIES:

6.1 The Municipality shall ensure all subdivision and development applications that are located within 1.5 kilometres of petroleum and gas facilities are referred to the Alberta Energy Regulator (AER).

6.2 Pursuant to section 619 of the Municipal Government Act, a license, permit, approval or other authorization granted by the Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) shall prevail over any bylaw or land use decision rendered by the Municipality.

6.3 Setback guidelines for petroleum and gas facilities shall be in accordance with the standards established in Figure 1 – Minimum Setback Distances in Appendix B provided by the Energy Resources Conservation Board or any subsequent standards should these existing guidelines be revised.

6.4 The Municipality should refer all subdivision and development applications to the Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) for comment.

6.5 All subdivision and development shall adhere to setback requirements requested by the AER.

6.6 The Municipality should be proactive on matters of mutual interest prior to the issuance of any approvals by the AER.

6.7 New pipelines and electricity transmission lines should be sited along existing rights-of-way.

6.8 The municipality shall encourage the petroleum industry to refer their exploration and development program to the local council for perusal and comment.

6.9 Oil and gas exploration and development activities should be undertaken such that:

(a) surface disturbance, environmental damage and land usage is minimized (e.g. use of hand held seismic; multi-well drilling pads; and processing through existing/underutilized facilities);

(b) undisturbed lands (e.g. native grasslands) are avoided where at all possible;

(c) any disturbed lands are restored to as close to their natural state;

(d) the impacts (e.g. traffic, noise, dust, water usage) on adjacent/nearby residences and agricultural operations are minimized;

(e) the impacts on waterways and the regional watershed are minimized;

(f) public safety is not compromised; and

(g) the scenic attributes are not devalued.

6.10 Subdivision and development applicants are required to confirm if there are any abandoned gas wells on the parcel of land subject to the proposal and are responsible for providing an abandoned gas well map to the MD in accordance with the Regulations at the time of application.

Municipal and School Reserves

The Municipal Government Act requires that, under certain circumstances, the Subdivision and Development Authority address municipal and/or school reserve at the time of a subdivision decision rendered. The Act also requires that these reserves be allocated in conjunction with affected school authorities.

Objectives:

- To establish guidelines for the allocation of municipal and school reserves.
- To ensure that any applicable municipal and/or school reserves are addressed and acquired at the time of subdivision.

Policies:

7.1 Municipal and/or school reserve shall be provided in accordance with the provisions of section 666 of the Municipal Government Act.

7.2 Municipal and/or school reserve shall not be required to be provided under the circumstances authorized in section 663 of the Municipal Government Act.

7.3 Where the reserve requirement is to be satisfied as money in place of land, it shall be done so in accordance with the provisions of sections section 667 of the Municipal Development Act.

Subdivision Criteria

The following objectives and policies are intent on providing guidance to the Subdivision Authority and/or the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board when rendering decisions on these applications.

Objectives:

- To establish clear policies and guidelines that address subdivision issues in the Municipality.
- To ensure that subdivision approvals are limited in number as to not fragment lands for future ranching, agricultural endeavours and the protection of the environment.
- To provide landowners and residents with a reasonable certainty as to what limited subdivisions approvals are acceptable.
- To ensure that opportunity exists for the referral of any subdivision applications to the appropriate government departments, agencies and adjacent landowners for comment.

Policies:

Agricultural

8.1 For the purpose of this plan the minimum parcel size in the Municipality shall be 160 acres (64.75 ha) except where the quarter section may have been reduced in size by road widening, forced roads, cemeteries, school sites or any other public use.

8.2 A subdivision application which proposes to create one or more single lot undeveloped country residential parcel (bare land) is prohibited.

8.3 A subdivision application which proposes to create two 80 acre (32.4 ha) from a previously unsubdivided quarter section is prohibited.

Single Lot Country Residential

8.4 A subdivision which proposes to create a single lot country residential parcel containing a developed residence or farmstead is prohibited.

(Policy 8.4 amended by Bylaw No. 2012-02, April 18, 2012)

Grouped County Residential

8.5 A subdivision application which proposes to create a multi-lot residential use shall not be approved unless the said property is redesignated in accordance with the provisions outlined in the Municipal Government Act.

Intensive Agricultural Operations

8.6 A subdivision application which proposes to create a separate title for an existing intensive agricultural operation shall not be subdivided from the original parcel on which the original operation was allowed to locate.

Commercial and Industrial

8.7 No subdivision shall be allowed for a grouped commercial or industrial use unless the property is redesignated pursuant to the process outlined in the Municipal Government Act.

8.8 A subdivision for grouped or isolated rural industries shall, wherever possible, be located on poor agricultural lands, unless in the opinion of the subdivision authority such suitable parcels:

(a) are not reasonably available,

(b) would create land use conflicts,

(c) would conflict with other Municipal Development Plan policies and objectives.

Fragmented Parcels

8.9 Lands which are physically fragmented by way of forced roads, water courses, railways or any natural barriers are not eligible for subdivision approval.

Existing Parcels

8.10 A subdivision application which proposes the enlargement, reduction or realignment of an existing separate parcel may be approved provided that:

(a) the additional lands required are to accommodate existing or related improvements;

(b) the proposal is to rectify or rationalize existing habitational, occupancy, cultivation or settlement patterns;

(c) no additional parcels are created over and above those presently in existence;

(d) the proposed new lot and the proposed residual lot will continue to have direct legal and physical access to a public roadway, adequate development setbacks, and a suitable building site;

(e) the size, location and configuration of the proposed lot will not significantly affect any water project or transportation system in the area.

Municipal Referrals

8.11 The Municipal District shall forward all subdivision applications to adjacent municipalities for comment pursuant to the provisions outlined in this plan.

Subdivision Considerations

8.12 The Subdivision Authority shall refuse to approve any subdivision application where the subdivision of land is not expressly permitted by this bylaw or the MD of Ranchland No. 66 Municipal Development Plan.

8.13 The Subdivision Authority may request information from an applicant in order to accurately evaluate the application and determine compliance with the Land Use Bylaw or other government regulations. This may include but is not limited to the provision of geotechnical information, soil analysis reports, water reports, soil or slope stability analysis, drainage information, contours and elevations of the land, engineering studies or reports, wetland reports, environmental impact assessments, utility and servicing information, and/or the preparation of a conceptual design scheme or an area structure plan may be required from the applicant prior to a decision being rendered on a subdivision application to determine the suitability of the land for the proposed use.

Development Criteria

The intent of this section is to ensure that future development complies with the minimum standards established in the Land Use Bylaw or an approved area structure plan. To minimize land use conflicts with other uses in the immediate vicinity, development approval should ensure that a quality development could be provided.

Objectives:

- To ensure that all developments in the Municipal District of Ranchland are of an acceptable standard.
- To provide applicants with guidance as to the acceptable standards for development in the Municipal District.
- To ensure that all developments in the Municipal District of Ranchland are compatible with ranching operations and meet the overall land use objectives of the MD.
- To ensure land use activities consider the environment, the protection of grasslands, and do not threaten watersheds.
- To help protect the integrity of Highway 22 historic designation of the Cowboy Trail and the scenic attributes of the eastern slopes and its view scape.

Policies:

9.1 All development shall occur on parcel sizes outlined in this Municipal Development Plan or the municipal Land Use Bylaw for the use proposed.

9.2 Development approvals should ensure that non-compatible land uses are either sited properly or not approved at all.

9.3 The development authority may require a developer to provide additional information to determine the suitability of a site. Such information may include the provision of percolation and soil stability tests as well as other geotechnical data.

9.4 No development shall take place within the Municipality without being authorized by the issuance of a development permit unless the said development has been specifically identified with the Land Use Bylaw as not requiring a permit.

9.5 No person shall construct or erect more than one dwelling unit on a parcel of land unless authorized to do so in accordance with the Land Use Bylaw and by the issuance of a development permit by the Development Authority.

9.6 Developers shall be required when requested by the MD or its Development Authority to enter into a Road Use Agreement or Road Use Maintenance Agreement to control traffic, manage dust control or maintenance issues if access to the development is required from a road under its control or jurisdiction.

9.7 The preservation of good agricultural land for ranching and agricultural purposes, in particular Canada Land Inventory Capability for Agriculture classifications 1 to 4, and grazing lands with classifications 5 and 6, shall be highly encouraged. Land use and development decision making shall have regard to the impacts of non-agricultural development on such agricultural land.

9.8 Council requests that the authority having jurisdiction over development on subject lands, either municipal or Crown, shall have regard for how any proposed development may impact adjacent or area livestock, grazing and agricultural operations, water sheds, and how local municipal infrastructure and roads may be impacted prior to approving any use or development.

9.9 The MD will manage noxious industry as a discretionary use within its municipal land use bylaw to help mitigate potential issues of such uses that typically are associated with hazardous, noxious, unsightly or offensive by products by nature of the industrial activity, and they may often not be compatible in the environment and/or be contrary to Ranchland's vision and land use policies.

9.10 The following classes of industrial use may be considered in the municipality in accordance with the applicable land use district of the Land Use Bylaw:

(a) agriculture-related industries which support ranching and agricultural production;
(b) non-labour intensive industries which require relatively large areas of land, but minimal on-site improvements, services, and public amenities;
(c) quarries, sand and gravel operations, and natural resource extractive uses, which are governed by the location of a natural resource and provided any potential environmental impacts are adequately addressed.

9.11 Land use decisions shall consider the cumulative impacts of the approval in conjunction with current and future land uses, including recreational, economic or development uses or other approvals either applied for or granted.

9.12 The Development Authority of the MD shall consider the effects of visual intrusion, dust, noise, traffic, and air and water pollution when evaluating applications for resource extractive type activities.

9.13 The MD will adopt standards through the application of the Land Use Bylaw and manage logging on privately owned lands in specific geographic locations within the municipality to ensure municipal roads are protected. Municipal planning requirements may also apply to Crown lands where authorized by the province or through the agreement with lessees.

9.14 The developer of lands identified to contain a historic resource shall consult the *Historical Resources Act* and Alberta Culture and Tourism and may be required to conduct a historical resource impact assessment (HRIA).

9.15 When making land use decisions, the municipality will:

a) utilize and incorporate measures which minimize possible impacts to important water resources;

b) determine appropriate land use patterns in the vicinity of significant water resources and other water features;

c) establish appropriate setbacks to maintain water quality, flood water conveyance and storage, bank stability and habitat.

9.16 To plan and manage development in an orderly manner, an Area Structure Plan, Conceptual Design Scheme or Comprehensive Site Plan shall be required in conjunction with a redesignation application, industrial development, recreational development, resource extraction and mining activities, or when requested by Council or the Development Authority.

9.17 The provision of an Area Structure Plan, Conceptual Design Scheme or Comprehensive Site Plan may be required from the applicant/developer prior to a decision being rendered on a development application to determine the suitability of the land for the proposed use. Such a plan may be required to address geotechnical information, soil analysis, soil or slope stability analysis, storm water management, road and traffic impacts, an emergency or fire response plan, and development setbacks, amongst other matters, to the satisfaction of the municipality.

Environmental Considerations

The unique natural environment of the Municipal District of Ranchland includes both a diverse landscape and vitally important watersheds. Consideration must be given to the protection of the natural environment to ensure the continued health of the entire ecosystem.

Objectives:

- To identify environmentally sensitive areas within the Municipal District.
- To ensure public awareness of land use activities within environmentally sensitive areas.
- To manage subdivision or development activities to ensure they do not negatively impact or threaten the vitality and health of important watersheds in the MD of Ranchland.
- To make aware the public recreational users of land, both private and public, the importance of respecting and protecting grazing lands, the environment, and watersheds, and to regulate such uses where appropriate to do so and where matters are under the jurisdiction of the municipality.
- To help protect watersheds and the headwaters and source waters in the Oldman River watershed.
- To encourage public understanding of cumulative impacts on the Oldman River headwaters and the management actions that are needed to effectively address them.
- To ensure any/all development within the municipality is environmentally balanced.

Policies:

10.1 The Municipality, through its Land Use Bylaw, shall address hazard lands with a view of reducing risks to health, safety and property damage.

10.2 The Municipality shall discourage any subdivision or development on lands that are environmentally sensitive or identified as hazard lands.

10.3 The Municipality shall consider the acquisition or use of environmental reserve easements as a means of restricting future subdivision and/or development in the Municipality.

10.4 The Municipality may forward any application for subdivision and/or development to the appropriate government department or agency for pertinent comments.

10.5 The Municipality shall discourage any subdivision or development activity that will result in the loss of habitat through the removal of riparian vegetation, especially around stream margins or which may lead to exposure of underlying soils and increased erosion, thereby increasing sediment into waterways.

10.6 As all agricultural endeavors depend on water, the MD of Ranchlands is committed to working with the greater watershed community to ensure landowners and the greater public interests are supported in helping to maintain and protect the headwaters and source waters in the Oldman River watershed.

10.7 The MD supports the action plan of the *Oldman Integrated Watershed Management Plan* to manage and protect the integrity of headwaters and source waters to initiate collaborative stewardship work that will address key issues to headwater health over time, and within the capacity of participating stakeholders and the watershed community.

10.8 Through the implementation of criteria, standards and land use regulations in the municipal land use bylaw, the MD shall manage land use and development activities related to recreational development or use to ensure it is compatible with the environment, adjacent or existing area land uses, municipal infrastructure such as roads, and ranching and grazing operations.

10.9 Industrial, mining, aggregate and resource extraction related development activity should not be approved if it will negatively impact ranching and grazing operations, the watershed they are dependent on for self-sustainment and healthy grasslands, or the watersheds and associated ecosystems and riparian habitat.

10.10 In support of the strategic plan of Council, it is the goal of the municipality to ensure any/all development is environmentally balanced and Council and the Development Authority shall consider such in its decision making on land use matters.

10.11 All land use decision making on lands within the MD of Ranchland require consideration for cumulative effects and species at risk, and in particular, any critical habitat for threatened species that may exist and potentially impacted by development activities. Decision makers shall consider whether an activity will impact a species listed under the *Species at Risk Act* and any critical habitat related to that species.

10.12 The developer of lands identified to contain an environmentally significant site shall contact Alberta Environment and shall be required to conduct an environmental impact assessment (EIA) when requested.

10.13 The municipality through its policy decisions shall work at preserving Alberta native grassland ecosystems and protecting the rolling fescue grassland of the foothills that ranchers rely on for providing the continued diversity and production of native grasses that sustain ranching.

10.14 The MD of Ranchland should continue to play a critical role in the Green Zone (Forest Reserve) assisting the GOA in meeting it's own management goals for those same lands both in well-established roles like enforcing the Weed Control Act, Emergency Services, road network and bridges, and less tangible services supplied to help the Province in maintaining habitat integrity and limit cumulative effects from human footprint, as these have direct impacts to the landowners of the MD.

10.15 Ranchland is concerned with public access to Porcupine Hills and the forest reserve north of Highway 3 and land use planning is required to consider the impact of recent activity, especially coal, in the vicinity. The MD of Ranchland is supportive of policies requiring access management that need to be adopted and required following any land exploration or other types of coal development.

10.16 The MD of Ranchland is not supportive of coal related activities in the headwaters of the entire South Saskatchewan River Basin due to lack of water resources, conflict with current uses, and biodiversity and environmental concerns.

Implementation and Procedural Issues

The Municipal Development Plan is a statutory plan identified in the hierarchy of planning in the Municipal Government Act. It has been prepared for the Municipal District of Ranchland No. 66 in accordance with the

provisions of the Act, the Provincial Land Use Polices and the Subdivision and Development Regulation. The Act requires all local plans and bylaws to be consistent with the provincial legislation and adopted by bylaw.

The Act also establishes a public participation component, which requires providing opportunities for input, referrals to adjacent municipality and a mandatory public hearing prior to second reading of the bylaw. By the time this Municipal Development Plan has received its third and final reading it will have been refined and rewritten based on the comments of ratepayers, municipal administration and elected officials.

With the final revisions made, the Municipal Development Plan will ultimately become the long-range philosophical document for the Municipal District to which the Land Use Bylaw will provide guidance and implement the day-to-day decisions on subdivision and development matters and land use decisions.

Objectives:

- To adopt a plan which provides guidance for future land use decisions in the Municipal District of Ranchland.
- To meet the legislative requirements established in the Municipal Government Act.
- To establish a mechanism whereby the Municipal Development Plan may be revisited, refined and amended to accommodate changes in the Municipality.

Policies:

11.1 The Municipal Development Plan shall be adopted and subsequently amended if required pursuant to sections 230, 606 and 692 of the Municipal Government Act.

11.2 Prior to the adoption of this document, the plan should be sent to adjacent municipalities for their comments and concurrence.

11.3 In order to achieve consistency, the Land Use Bylaw shall be amended to comply with any policies to the contrary in this plan.

11.4 Strict adherence to minimum parcel size and measurable standards may be waived to a certain extent if:

(a) the applicant has proven the existence of some special or isolated circumstance;

(b) the effect of the variance would not, in the Council's or Subdivision and Development Authority's opinion, harm the agricultural potential, environment or adjacent land uses in the area;

(c) reasons for the variance are stated in the minutes of the meeting when the variance was contemplated and subsequently granted.

11.5 Any amendments or changes to this plan shall be forwarded to the Municipal District of Ranchland's planning advisor for review and comment.

11.6 This plan shall be reviewed, amended or replaced by a new bylaw from time to time in order to achieve consistency and reflect the wishes of the Municipal District and its ratepayers.

TABLE 1
Municipal District of Ranchland
Number of Private Households by Household Size (20% sample)

Household Size	Number
1 person	0
2 person	10
3 person	10
4 - 5 person	0
6 or more	10
TOTAL	35

Note: Census information is rounded to the nearest unit of 5 to protect the privacy of the individuals completing the census. Therefore some differences will occur.

TABLE 2
Municipal District of Ranchland
Occupied Dwellings by Ownership Status

Dwellings	1996
Owned	15
Rented	20

TABLE 3
MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF RANCHLAND
PRIVATE DWELLINGS – PERIOD OF CONSTRUCTION

Period of Construction	Number
Before 1946	0
1946 – 1960	10
1961 – 1970	10
1971 – 1980	10
1981 – 1990	10
1991 – 1996	0

Note: Census information is rounded to the nearest unit of 5 to protect the privacy of the individuals completing the census. Therefore, some differences will occur.

TABLE 4
MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF RANCHLAND
TOTAL EMPLOYMENT LABOUR FORCE BY PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT

Total employed labour force 15 years and over by place of work status (20% sample)	Males	Females
TOTAL 65	40	25
Usual place of work	35	0
In CSD of residence	0	0
In different CSD	35	0
In same CSD	0	0
At home	10	20
Outside Canada	0	0
No fixed workplace	0	10

CSD refers to Census Subdivision

Note: Census information is rounded to the nearest unit of 5 to protect the privacy of the individuals completing the census. Therefore, some differences will occur.

TABLE 5
MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF RANCHLAND SUBDIVISION ACTIVITY
10-YEAR OVERVIEW

Year	No. of Applications	Total Lots
1999	0	
1998	0	
1997	0	
1996*	0	
1995/96	0	
1994/95	1	2 - Agricultural
1993/94	0	
1992/93	0	
1991/92	0	
1990/91	0	
1989/90	0	
TOTAL	1	

**Nine month period April 1 to December 31, 1996.*

TABLE 6
EDUCATION STATISTICS COMPARISON BETWEEN THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF RANCHLAND AND ALBERTA 1996

	Municipal District of Ranchland			ALBERTA		
Characteristics	**Total**	**Male**	**Female**	**Total**	**Male**	**Female**
Highest level of schooling for the population age 15 years and over Total – All persons age 15 and over	85	40	45	2,055,020	1,021,435	1,033,585
Persons without a high school certificate	10	0	0	689,225	343,280	345,285
Persons with a high school certificate	45	10	30	243,075	106,785	136,285
Persons with some post secondary education (post secondary not completed)	10	0	10	255,620	119,690	135,925
Persons with trades or non-university certificate or diploma	25	25	0	555,915	293,235	262,680
Person who have completed university	0	0	0	311,180	158,435	152,750
Percent of the population 25 years of age and over with less than grade nine	0%	0%	0%	8.6%	8.6%	8.7%
Percent of the population 25 years of age and over with a high school certificate or higher	91.7%	83.3%	100.0%	69.8%	70.4%	69.2%
Percent of the population 25 years of age and over with trades or non-university certificate or diploma	41.7%	83.3%	0.0%	48.1%	51.4%	44.8%
Percent of the population 25 years of age and over who have completed university	0%	0%	0%	17.4%	18.2%	16.6%

Note: Census information is rounded to the nearest unit of 5 to protect the privacy of the individuals completing the census. Therefore, some differences will occur.

TABLE 7
TRAFFIC VOLUMES 1993 TO 2001

LOCATION	AADT 1993	AADT 1997	AADT 2001	ASDT 2001	% Change over the last 10 years
HIGHWAY 22					
S of 520 W of Claresholm	880	1330	1730	2250	42.8
N of 520 W of Claresholm	840	1450	1680	2190	43.5
S of 533 at Chain Lakes PP	760	1450	1730	2250	50.9
N of 533 at Chain Lakes PP	750	1430	1720	2240	54.7
S of 532 of Chain Lakes PP	750	1430	1780	2320	57.9
N of 532 of Chain Lakes PP	720	1460	1810	2360	60.2
S of Nanton Rd 9-16-2-515000000	720	1460	1790	2330	59.8
N of Nanton Rd 9-16-2-515000000	740	1440	1770	2310	59.3
HIGHWAY 520					
E of 22 W of Claresholm	70	160	70	90	-28.6
HIGHWAY 532					
E of FTR N of M of Crowsnest Pass	40	70	80	100	50.0
4km W 22 and 532 Chain Lakes	90	70	90	110	11.1
W of 22 at Chain Lakes PP	120	70	170	220	35.3
HIGHWAY 533					
E of 22 at Chain Lakes PP	140	270	250	330	48.0

AADT Annual Average Daily Traffic is an average daily two-way traffic expressed as vehicles per day.
Source: Alberta Infrastructure 2001

TABLE 8
TRAFFIC VOLUMES AND VEHICLE CLASSIFICATIONS (2001)

		Length in Km	WAADT	WASDT	% PV	% RV	% BU	% SU	% TT	% CM
HIGHWAY 22										
FROM	**TO**									
Oldman River	S of 520 W of Claresholm	19.62	1730	2250	76.1	8.9	0.6	1.8	12.6	15.0
N of 520W of Claresholm	S of 533 at Chain Lakes	27.19	1710	2220	80.6	7.9	0.7	1.6	9.2	11.5
Oldman River	S of 533 at Chain Lakes	47.15	1720	2230	78.7	8.3	0.7	1.7	10.6	13.0
N of 533 at Chain Lakes	S of 532 N of Chain Lakes	10.91	1710	2230	82.7	10.3	0.7	0.8	15.5	17.0
HIGHWAY 520										
FROM	**TO**									
E of 22 W of Claresholm	Claresholm Airport	38.73	350	380	88.6	3.2	0.0	2.4	5.8	8.2
HIGHWAY 532										
FROM	**TO**									
E of FTR N of CNP	W of 22 N of Chain Lakes	25.94	90	110	96.9	1.6	0.0	0.5	1.0	1.5
HIGHWAY 533										
FROM	**TO**									
E of 22 at Chain Lakes	W of 2 & 533 SJ	37.43	340	400	76.1	10.9	2.5	4.1	6.5	13.1

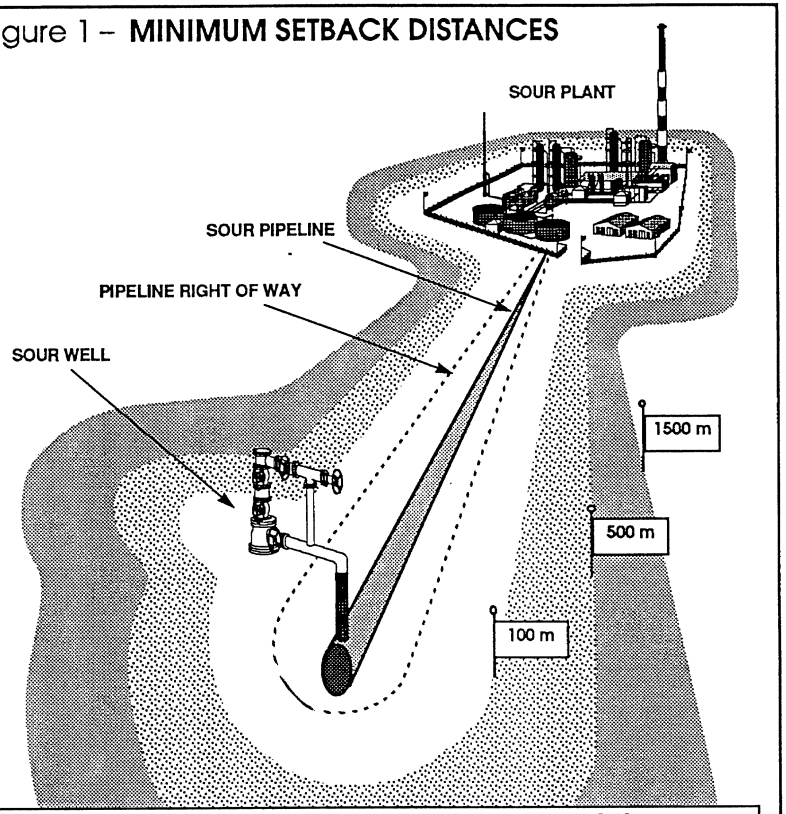
WAADT Weighted Average Annual Daily Traffic is the average daily two-way traffic, expressed as vehicles per day for the period of January 1 to December 31 (365 or 366 days).
WASDT Weighted Average Summer Daily Traffic is the average daily two-way traffic, expressed as vehicles per day for the period of May 1 to September 30 (153 days).
PV: Passenger Vehicles
RV: Recreation Vehicles
BU: Buses
SU: Single Unit Trucks
TT: Tractor Trailer Combinations
CM: Commercial Vehicles (BU + SU + TT)
Source: Alberta Infrastructure 2001

TABLE 9
MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF RANCHLAND TRAFFIC VOLUMES AND FUNCTION OF THE LOCAL ROAD SYSTEM (2001)

Road Name	Description		Length (km)	AADT 2000	Primary Function
	From	To			
Forestry Truck Road (F.T.R)	Coleman	Maycroft Rd	28.2	155	recreation/logging/regional continuity
Forestry Truck Road	Maycroft Rd	Dutch Creek Rd	6.4	171	recreation/logging/regional continuity
Forestry Truck Road	Dutch Creek Rd	Oldman River Rd	6.9	183	recreation/logging/gas/ regional continuity
Forestry Truck Road	Oldman River Rd	S.H. 532	29.0	124	recreation/logging/gas
Dutch Creek Road	F.T.R.	West	18.0	90	recreation/logging/gas
Oldman River Road	F.T.R.	West	18.0	126	recreation/local access
Bob's Creek Road	MD S Boundary	West	4.9	19	local access/regional continuity
Stavely Road	S.H. 533	MD E Boundary	13.0	18	local access
Riley Road	Hwy. 22	Stavely Rd	11.8	4	local access
Chimney Rock Road	Hwy. 22	West	8.8	14	local access
Saddle Mountain Road	Chimney Rock Rd	West	8.2	10 (est)	recreation
East Trout Road	S.H. 520	Trout Creek	12.9	6	recreation
Skyline Road	S.H. 520	Heath Creek Rd	11.3	6	recreation
West Sharples Creek Road	MD S Boundary	Skyline	9.6	4	recreation
Health Creek Road	MD S Boundary	Skyline	6.8	4 (est)	recreation
Maycroft Road	F.T.R	MD E Boundary	4.0	40 (est)	recreation/logging/regional continuity

Source: MD of Ranchland Rural Road Study 2001 prepared by AMEC Infrastructure Limited (formerly AGRA Torchinsky)

Figure 1 – MINIMUM SETBACK DISTANCES



LEVEL OF SOUR FACILITY *(Well, Pipeline or Plant)*	MINIMUM SETBACK DISTANCES *(ERCB Interim Directives ID 81-3, ID 87-2, IL 88-9 and Amendment)*
1	100 metres (except for pipelines which have a right of way setback)
2	100 metres - Individual dwellings - Unrestricted country development 500 metres - Urban centre or public facility
3	100 metres - Individual dwellings 500 metres - Unrestricted country development 1500 metres - Urban centre or public facility
4	As specified by the ERCB – but not less than level 3

DEFINITIONS:

Individual Dwelling – permanently occupied by a resident

Unrestricted Country Development – dwellings situated outside an urban centre and having more than eight permanent dwellings per quarter section

Urban Centre – a city, town, new town, village, summer village, or hamlet with not less than 50 separate buildings

Public Facility – a public building such as a hospital, rural school or a major recreational facility and includes any other development the **ERCB** may designate as a public facility based on the complexity of evacuation