Town Of
Milk River

Municipal Development Plan

Bylaw No. 903

April 2004

(Amended by Bylaw No. 1000, April 2017)

Prepared by the



OLDMAN RIVER REGIONAL SERVICES COMMISSION

BYLAW NO. 903

BEING A BYLAW OF THE TOWN OF MILK RIVER IN THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA TO ADOPT A NEW MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE MUNICIPALITY

WHEREAS the Council of the Town of Milk River wishes to replace existing Bylaw No. 729, being the General Municipal Plan adopted in November of 1990; and

WHEREAS the Municipal Government Act being Chapter M-26 RSA 2000, as amended, requires municipalities in the province with a direct control district to adopt a municipal development plan by By-Law; and

WHEREAS the purpose of the proposed Bylaw No. 903 is to provide a comprehensive, long-range land use plan pursuant to the provisions outlined in the Act; and

WHEREAS the municipal council has requested the preparation of a long-range plan to fulfill the requirements of the Act and provide for its consideration at a public hearing.

NOW THEREFORE, under the authority and subject to the provisions of the Municipal Government Act, Chapter M-26, R.S.A. 2000, as amended, the Council of the Town of Milk River in the Province of Alberta duly assembled does hereby enact the following:

1. By-Law No. 903 being the new Municipal Development Plan Bylaw is hereby adopted.

2. By-Law No. 729, being the former General Municipal Plan and any amendments thereto is hereby rescinded.

3. This By-Law comes into effect upon third and final reading hereof.

READ a first time this 10th day of November 2003.

MAYOR – TERRY E. MICHAELIS

C.A.O. – LAVINIA HENDERSON

READ a second time this 5 day of APRIL, 2004.

MAYOR – TERRY E. MICHAELIS

C.A.O. – TRAVIS L. PETER

READ a third time and final time this 5 day of APRIL, 2004.

MAYOR – TERRY E. MICHAELIS

C.A.O. – TRAVIS L. PETER

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION Page

1.1 Purpose of the Plan 1
1.2 Scope of the Plan 1
1.3 Planning Process 1
1.4 Community Goals and Objectives 2
1.5 Implementation and Procedural Issues 2

2. LOCATION AND HISTORY Page

2.1 Regional Location 3
2.2 Historical Background 3

3. ANALYSIS OF POPULATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT Page

3.1 Population Overview 5
3.2 Economic Overview 9

4. LAND USE ANALYSIS Page

4.1 General Land Use 13
4.2 Residential 14
4.3 Commercial 17
4.4 Industrial 18
4.5 Recreation and Open Space 19
4.6 Public and Institutional 20
4.7 Urban Reserve 20
4.8 Transportation 20
4.9 Municipal Services 23
4.10 Municipal, School and Environmental Reserve 24
4.11 Sour Gas Facilities 25
4.12 Regional Cooperation 25
4.13 Urban Design and Community Image 26
4.14 Municipal Finance 26

5. FUTURE LAND USE CONCEPT Page

5.1 Growth Strategy 29
5.2 Future Residential Development 30
5.3 Future Commercial Growth 31
5.4 Future Industrial Growth 31
5.5 Future Recreation/Open Space/Public and Institutional Growth 32
5.6 Summary 32

6. OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES Page

6.1 Plan Implementation and Public Engagement 33
6.2 General Plan Policies 34
6.3 Intermunicipal Cooperation 36
6.4 Sour Gas, Reserves, and Protection of Agricultural Land 36
6.5 Residential 37
6.6 Commercial 39
6.7 Industrial 41
6.8 Recreation/Parks and Community Facilities 43
6.9 Municipal and Community Service/Support 44
6.10 Transportation and Utilities/Municipal Services 45
6.11 Community Economy and Finance 47

Appendix A: SOUTH SASKATCHEWAN REGIONAL PLAN

Appendix B: CHARTS AND TABLES

Appendix C: MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN QUESTIONNAIRE SUMMARY

MAPS

Map 1 – Regional Location ..... following 4
Map 2 – Existing Land Use ..... following 14
Map 3 – Future Land Use and Growth Areas ..... following 30

Town Of
Milk River

Municipal Development Plan

INTRODUCTION

Town of Milk River

Town of Milk River
Municipal Development Plan Bylaw No. 903

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Plan

A community's Municipal Development Plan (MDP) must be both visionary and strategic. The Municipal Development Plan is a long-range statutory planning document, which outlines goals and objectives for the future and is the principal guide directing land use policy and decision-making. It provides a municipality's elected officials, administration, taxpayers and developers with a framework of policies for making decisions regarding future growth and development opportunities. It defines the policies, programs and specific actions necessary to attain these objectives.

The Municipal Development Plan manages and directs growth and development in a manner that minimizes the adverse impacts on adjacent activities and makes the best possible use of the land base and infrastructure of a municipality. The plan expresses how the community sees itself in the future and acts as a method to facilitate the determination and implementation of community-based policies on development.

1.2 Scope of the Plan

This Municipal Development Plan focuses on planning for the community for the next ten years to 2027. Changes will occur within the community and the Municipal Development Plan should be reviewed, updated and evaluated periodically to remain a valuable and functional document.

The Municipal Development Plan deals with development issues within the Town of Milk River (the town). There are approximately 571 acres (231 ha) within the town boundary and approximately 160 acres (65 ha) of this land is undeveloped. This leaves a considerable amount of land available for future urban development during the planning period. This Plan concentrates on the town's efforts in promoting effective and efficient growth, and in making such growth benefit existing and new residents alike.

1.3 Planning Process

A Municipal Development Plan is a statutory planning document, and therefore must follow the legislative process outlined in the *Municipal Government Act (MGA)*. This requires notice to the public, the adjacent municipality, and school authorities of plan intentions. In keeping with its legislative requirements established in the *MGA* to allow for notification of the plan's preparation and public participation, the Town of Milk River completed the following steps to meet its commitment:

- Notice of commencement of the plan preparation;
- Conducted a household survey of residents to gather opinions and feedback in June of 2001 (the survey highlights are available in Appendix C; for more detailed results refer to the Town of Milk River Municipal Development Plan Questionnaire Response Booklet);
- Compiled survey results to determine concerns and opinions of the residents and help formulate community goals, objectives and policies;
- Established a steering committee to discuss relevant planning issues and guide the plan process;
- Held meetings with the steering committee and Council to review and discuss the plan's content;
- Council approved the draft and gave the plan's adopting bylaw first reading;
- Copies of the draft were then circulated to adjacent municipalities, school authorities, and other affected agencies for consideration and comment;
- A mandatory public hearing was held to provide all residents an opportunity to comment and offer suggestions before the bylaw was adopted;
- After considering public and agency input, Council gave the adopting bylaw second and final reading and the plan acquired statutory standing.

1.4 Community Goals and Objectives

The policies of this plan are intended to achieve the community's desired future based on the following goals:

- To promote a moderate rate of growth.
- To maintain a high quality of municipal services and infrastructure.
- To retain the small town atmosphere.
- To encourage and promote economic development and diversification.
- To improve the appearance of the downtown.
- To plan for growth with a minimum of conflict.
- To provide directions for future growth.
- To continue to own and develop land for residential, commercial and industrial purposes.

1.5 Implementation and Procedural Issues

The Municipal Development Plan serves as the long-range statutory planning document, which guides the growth and development for the Town of Milk River. Change will occur within the municipality, therefore the Municipal Development Plan is intended to be a flexible document and requires review and/or amendment to remain current reflecting the needs of the community and Council.

Town Of
Milk River

Municipal Development Plan

LOCATION AND HISTORY

2. LOCATION AND HISTORY

2.1 Regional Location

Milk River is a small agricultural centre located within the County of Warner in southern Alberta. The community is situated on Highway 4, at the junction of Highway 4 and Highway 501. Highway 4 is the primary north-south route through the province, while Highway 501 provides an east-west route across the southern portion of the province. The town lies just north of the Canada-United States international border, approximately 84 kilometres southeast of Lethbridge and 304 kilometres southeast of Calgary (See Map 1). As the first town north of the international border, Milk River can be considered a gateway to Alberta. Located 945 metres above sea level in the Great Plains region, the town is sheltered by the Milk River Ridge to the west. Milk River enjoys a view of the Sweet Grass Hills rising to the southeast, as well as the Milk River that meanders through the south edge of town. The location of Milk River places it in close proximity to provincial parks and camping facilities. Writing-on-Stone Provincial Park is within a short drive of the Town of Milk River and the Milk River itself has become a popular location for canoe adventures.

2.2 Historical Background

The Cairn and Eight Flags represent Milk Rivers' rich history. The Eight Flags illustrated by the town's crest demonstrate the uniqueness of Milk River being the only place in Canada to have been ruled by seven governments and the Hudson's Bay Company. The flags of France, Spain, the French Republic, the United States, the Hudson's Bay Company, the British Empire, the Dominion of Canada, and Canada have flown over the area. A colorful history was created as First Nations, explorers, whiskey traders, North West Mounted Police, squatters and new settlers passed through this area.

Settled next to the Milk River, this town's future potential is as exciting as its colourful past. The nomadic First Nations people inhabited the Great Plains Region for centuries. In 1805, Lewis and Clark named the Milk River because the colour was like a cup of tea with a spoonful of milk in it. The waters that flow along this river wind their way to the mighty Missouri River and into the Gulf of Mexico. Settlement developed around the section house of a railroad built by the Alberta Railroad and Irrigation Company. The railroad ran from Ghent, just east of Lethbridge, to Coutts USA; its main purpose was to ship coal to Montana. The surrounding area soon began to fill up with prospective ranchers and farmers, which led to the building of a general store and livery stable.

Milk River was not officially recognized as a town until 1909 when the CPR laid out a town site. By 1916 the town had grown to a population of 150 and was declared a village. The 1920s saw a period of prosperity come to Milk River as better technology contributed to greater efficiency in the farming industry. At this time a gravelled highway to Lethbridge was built.

The Great Depression, drought and windstorms of the 1930s resulted in decreased farm incomes and consequently reduced spending. Strip farming and the Noble blade were introduced to conserve topsoil; trading developed as the new currency.

During the Second World War, 115 young people from Milk River and area joined the forces. It was a time of growth for the agriculture industry as farm size became larger and farm equipment became larger and more efficient. A paved highway was built from Coutts to Lethbridge, Calgary Power installed rural power lines and by 1946 the population had grown to 500 people.

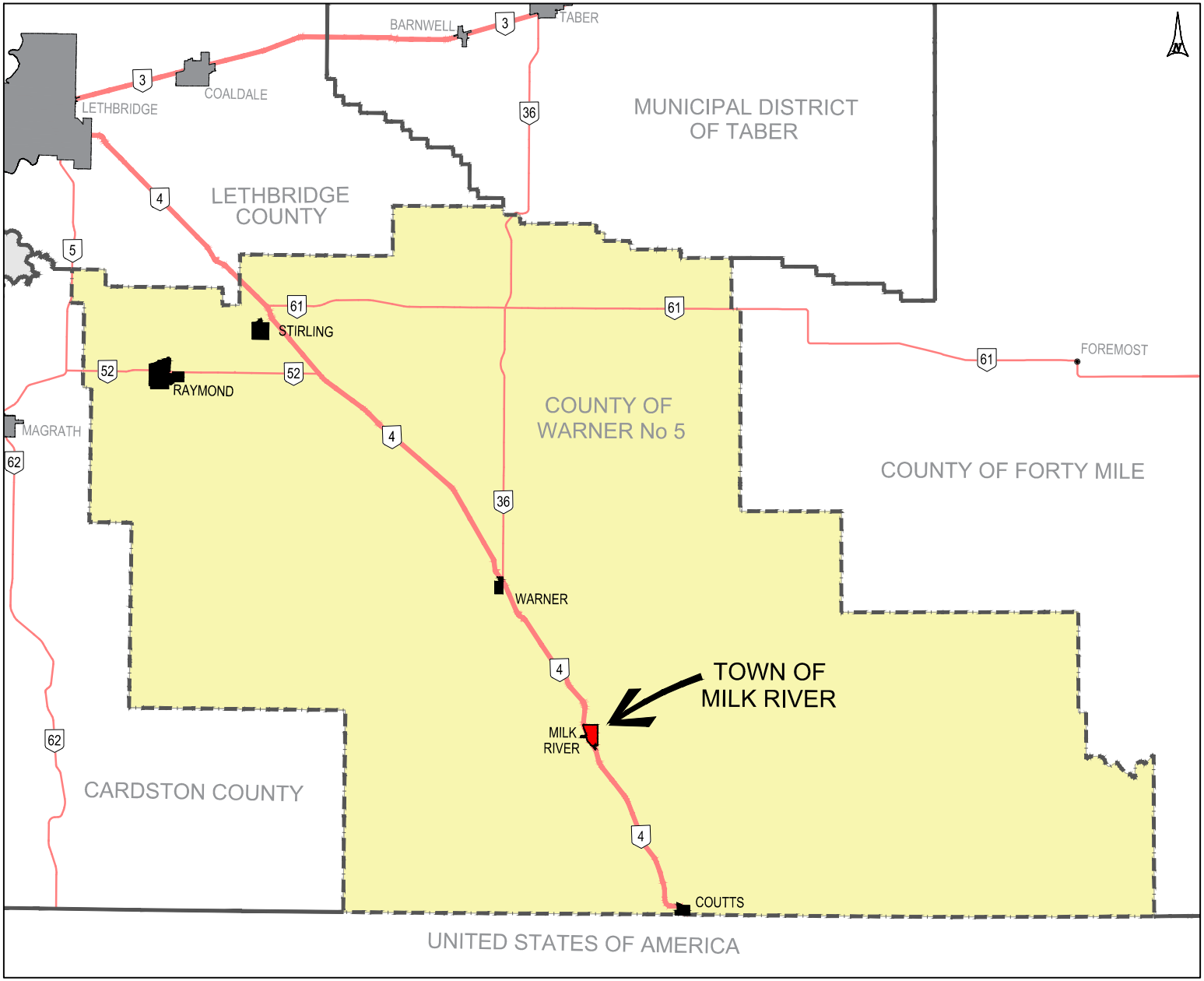
In February 1956, Milk River became a town and in 1959 celebrated its fiftieth anniversary. In the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s Milk River experienced slow but consistent growth with an increase in the number of businesses, educational and recreational facilities, an RCMP detachment, construction of a hospital and seniors lodge, municipal airport and a travel interpretive centre.

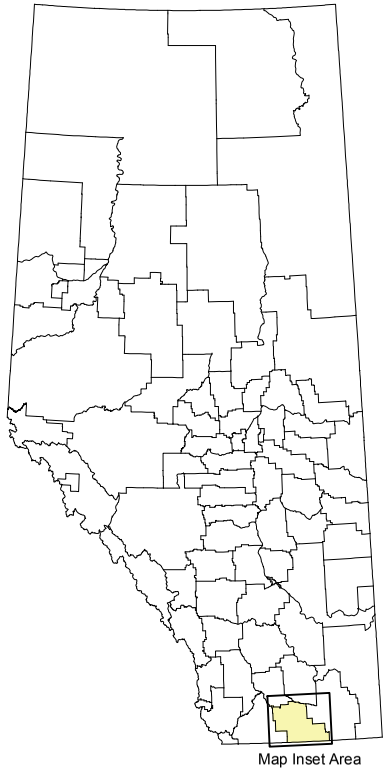
The Town of Milk River remains a service centre to the surrounding agricultural industry with diversification occurring gradually. Its location between the United States border and Lethbridge/Calgary places Milk River in a high traffic tourist and trucking corridor. During 2000 the construction began on the twinning of Highway 4, part of the CANAMEX corridor. With the twinning project since completed, the highway now serves as part of the corridor between Mexico City and Alaska. This corridor has improved highway travel and trade to, from and through the Town of Milk River.

Milk River is located near many world-class tourism facilities and has a tourist information center located on the south end of town to promote the area. These tourist facilities include attractions such as the International Waterton-Glacier Peace Park, Writing-On-Stone Provincial Park, Nikko Yuko Japanese Gardens, Head-Smashed-In-Buffalo Jump and Interpretive Center, Frank Slide Historic Areas and Crowsnest Pass, and the Remington Carriage Museum.

Town of Milk River
Municipal Development Plan
Bylaw No. 903 Amended to and Including Bylaw No. 1000

Map 1 - Regional Location





Town Of
Milk River

Municipal Development Plan

ANALYSIS OF POPULATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

3. ANALYSIS OF POPULATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The fundamental purpose of planning is to meet the needs of residents in communities more effectively. To achieve effective planning and policymaking, planners need to think prospectively about changing demographics. The following review of information is intended to give an indication of change in the community and from that to make estimates of future growth potential. Projections, either population or economic, based on past activity are dependant on the trends continuing into the future. There is a level of uncertainty to this method and therefore should be reviewed prior to making significant expenditures on the basis of this data.

3.1 Population Overview

PAST TRENDS

The Town of Milk River has historically experienced a fluctuating growth pattern from 181 persons in 1921 to 811 persons in 2011 (see Table 1 and Figure 1).

TABLE 1

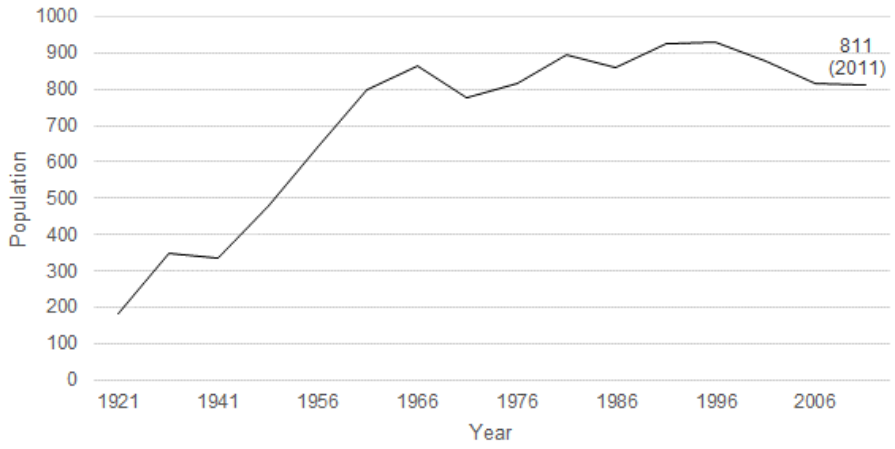
Town of Milk River
Historic Population – 1921 - 2011

Year	Population	Percentage Change Between Periods	Average Percentage Change Per Year
1921	181	—	—
1931	350	+93.3	+9.30
1941	335	-4.28	-0.43
1951	481	+43.5	+4.35
1956	642	+33.4	+6.68
1961	801	+24.7	+4.94
1966	861	+7.5	+1.50
1971	775	-10.0	-2.00
1976	817	+5.4	+1.08
1981	894	+9.4	+1.88
1986	861	-3.7	-0.74
1991	926	+7.5	+1.50
1996	929	+0.3	+0.06
2001	879	-5.4	-1.08
2006	816	-7.2	-1.44
2011	811	-0.6	-0.12

Source: Compiled from data acquired from Statistics Canada

FIGURE 1

Town of Milk River
Historic Population



Source: 1921-2011 (Statistics Canada)

In the early 1940s, early 1970s, mid 1980s and the 2001-2011 census periods, Milk River experienced a negative growth rate. The decrease in population during the early 1940s was the outcome of the young people enlisting in the forces. Whereas, the decrease in population during the early 1970s, and mid 1980s reflects the changes in the agricultural industry where the consolidation of farm parcels, together with an overall rural to urban movement and drop in the birth rate have led to the fluctuations in small town populations. The most recent population decline through the 2000-2011 census periods, is likely indicative of the challenges facing many smaller communities to attract and retain a younger demographic.

Of note, the town-conducted municipal census in 2015 reported the population at 892 people. The methods of data collection may differ between the federal and municipal governments. As such, for consistency purposes, the 2015 municipal census numbers are not included in the analysis and projections of this plan. With the release of the comprehensive 2016 federal census results in the coming years, the information in this plan will be reviewed as necessary. If the 2015 municipal census is consistent with the federal results, it may be used for future analysis. Based on the 2011 census information, the town has experienced a negligible decline in population of 0.66 percent over the last 20 years.

AGE STRUCTURE

A more significant measure for understanding future service needs and impacts from growth is an examination of the town's age structure. The simple numerical view of population values ignores the changes taking place within the population.

Two noteworthy changes in the town's age composition include the large increase in the percentage of seniors and the decrease in the portion of the population that is under the age of 15 (See Table 1 in Appendix B).

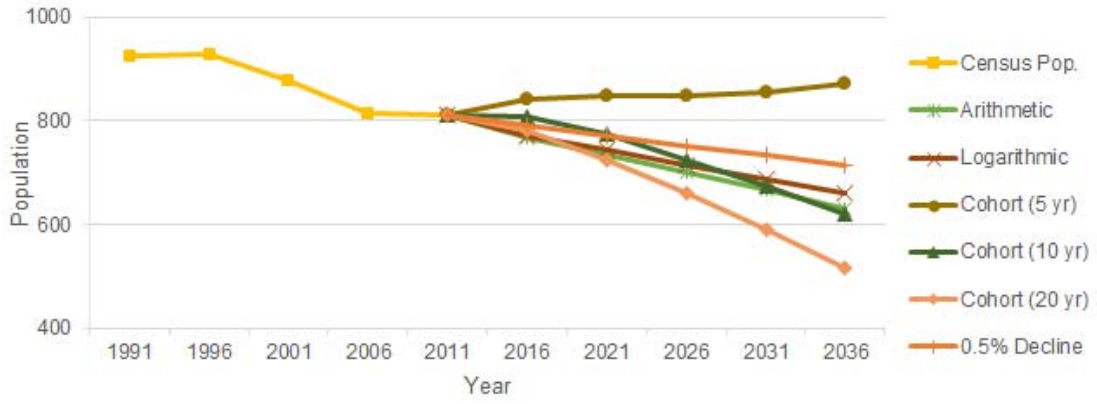
POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Several different methods of population projections are used in calculating future growth in order to provide the broadest scenario possible. It should be noted that projections are conditional; they show what a population would be if the assumed trends actually were to occur. Since population projections are based on past trends, they must be looked at with some degree of caution. A sudden influx of population at a certain time would forecast a high growth rate in the future, whereas a decrease in population in the past would portray a reduction in growth in the future. The Town of Milk River has generally experienced a slow increase in its population since the 1920s. However, for the 1940, 1971, 1986, 2001, 2006, and 2011 census periods, the town's population had decreased. Averaged over the past 20 year census periods (1991-2011), the town has experienced a slight decline in population at a rate of 0.66 percent per annum.

Figure 2 displays the range of results obtained from the various methods of population projections. Several different methods of population projections were used such as the arithmetic, logarithmic, and the cohort survival methods as well as annual growth rates of 0.5, and 1.0 percent. An annual declining rate of 0.5 percent was also included, consistent with the annual average decline over the past 25 years. It is somewhat difficult to choose the most likely projection for the Town of Milk River, as the town's economy is impacted by the agricultural operations in the area. The latest results indicate that a wide range of projections may be expected, from a population loss, to stable to slow growth expectations. Considering the town's past growth rate tendencies, and given the expected economic activity that will most likely occur, the most probable projections may fall between the cohort survival 5-year and the declining 0.5 percent growth rate.

FIGURE 2

Town of Milk River
2016-2036 Population Projection



Note: Vertical axis line break
Source: Population Projections 2016 - 2036 (based on 1991 - 2011 Census) - July 2016

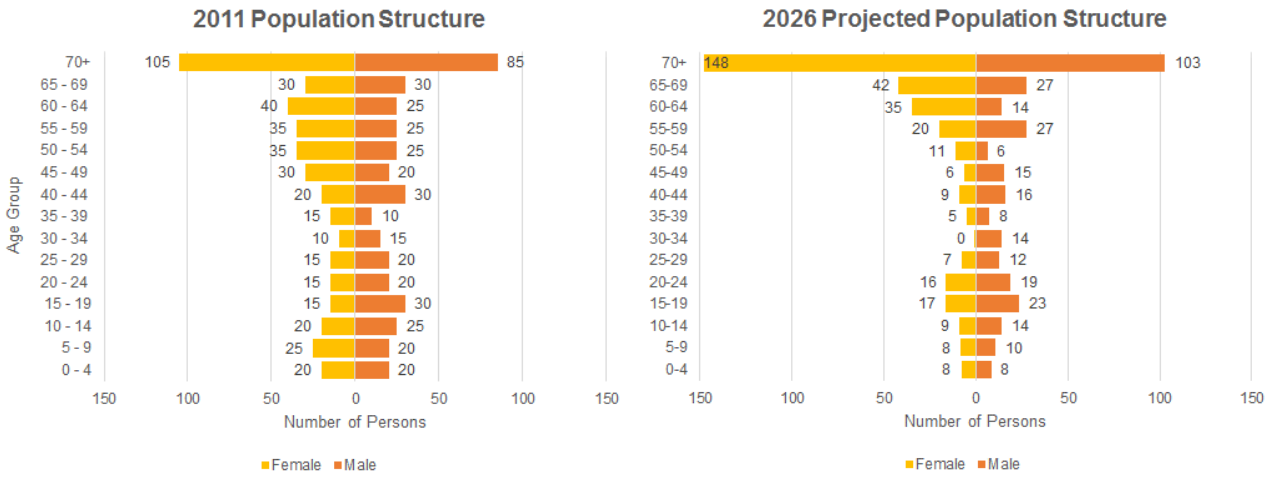
Therefore, the selected population projections indicate that in 2021 the probable population could be between 771 and 848 persons, fluctuating each year until 2036 when the population could range from a low of 715 to a high of 873. The 0.5 percent declining rate was used at the low end of the projection range, as this growth rate is consistent with what the Town of Milk River has averaged since 1991. The 5-year cohort component projection will also be used for comparison as it mirrors the population fluctuations over the most recent census periods, while also allowing for stable to slow growth. As noted earlier, the 2015 municipal census is not included in these growth projections to ensure consistency with the available historic Statistics Canada data.

The 20-year cohort component survival method, has been used to forecast population composition into the future (Figure 3). In analyzing the data some important points are to be noted:

- The 65 and over age group is expected to experience the most rapid growth of any of the age groups over the next 20 years. By 2026, this age category is forecast to comprise over half of the town's population. This is to be expected, as it is the national trend and a result of the 'baby boomers' moving through the age structure.
- The number of people age 20 and under is an important age group to consider because of the implications for future population growth and labour force growth. The percentage in this category is forecasted to decline, falling from approximately 22 percent of the population in 2011 to 15 percent in 2026.

FIGURE 3

Town of Milk River
Population by Age Structure – 20-Year Cohort Survival Projection



Source: Statistics Canada 2011

SUMMARY OF POPULATION PROJECTIONS

How fast the Town of Milk River grows depends on many variables, some of which cannot be forecasted or projected. If changes occur that affect future growth it may be necessary to re-evaluate and make another set of projections based on the new information. However, the projections that are being used for Milk River show slight decline to slow growth rates. The selected population projections, cohort survival 5-year and the 0.5 percent declining growth rate, indicate that in 2036 the population could range between 715 and 873.

3.2 Economic Overview

During the writing of the 2004 Municipal Development Plan, Alberta had the fastest growing economy in Canada over the ten years prior, with the annual rate of growth averaging 4.5 percent. In 2001, the estimated growth rate was 4.9 percent and experts predicted Alberta was to be among the nation's leaders in the future. Alberta's economy was expected to grow by 4.8 percent in 2003 with a sustained above-average pace of growth of approximately 4.5 percent though to 2004. The Bank of Canada identified both domestic momentum and continued strength in the energy sector as contributing factors to Alberta's economic growth.

Alberta's long-term economic prospects were very bright as a result of the Province's many economic advantages including low taxes, an entrepreneurial business climate and fiscal strength. Boosted by a rebound in oil and natural gas prices, Canadian Chartered Banks named Alberta's economy the fastest growing economy in the country at the time.

Circumstances are different in 2016. Primarily driven by a steep drop in oil prices beginning in June of 2014, the Alberta Gross Domestic Product (GDP) declined by 3.7 percent in 2015, with unemployment rising to 7.4 percent in January of 2016. Similarly, the Alberta government forecasts a GDP contraction in 2016, coupled with rising unemployment. While strength in non-oil and gas sectors and provincial infrastructure investments are to partially offset these declines, the present economic outlook demonstrates instability and variability in provincial economic well-being.

The current downturn in the provincial economy should be acknowledged, with further diversification away from provincial economic dependence considered prudent. As such, the town has been attempting to become more diversified in the types of industries and businesses locating in the municipality.

To promote economic diversification, the town has partnered with Community Futures Chinook, a non-profit organization that promotes small business and rural diversification through loans, specialized business programs, and education. Also, the Town of Milk River Improvement Program was piloted in 2014, as a way to encourage businesses to improve their streetscape facades and interiors, using municipal interest-free loans.

Given its proximity to the United States border and recreational and other tourist attractions such as Writing-on-Stone Provincial Park, the town is in a favourable position to attract travellers and therefore expand on the tourism trade. The visitor's centre on the southern boundary, variety of restaurants,

campground, and small town atmosphere are attractive to tourists. Therefore, there may be opportunities for the town to promote itself as a tourist destination.

Compatible alternative energy projects, such as solar power generation, present another possible opportunity for economic diversification. Ample sunlight hours and large undeveloped tracts of land both south and north of 10 Avenue may be favourable for such development.

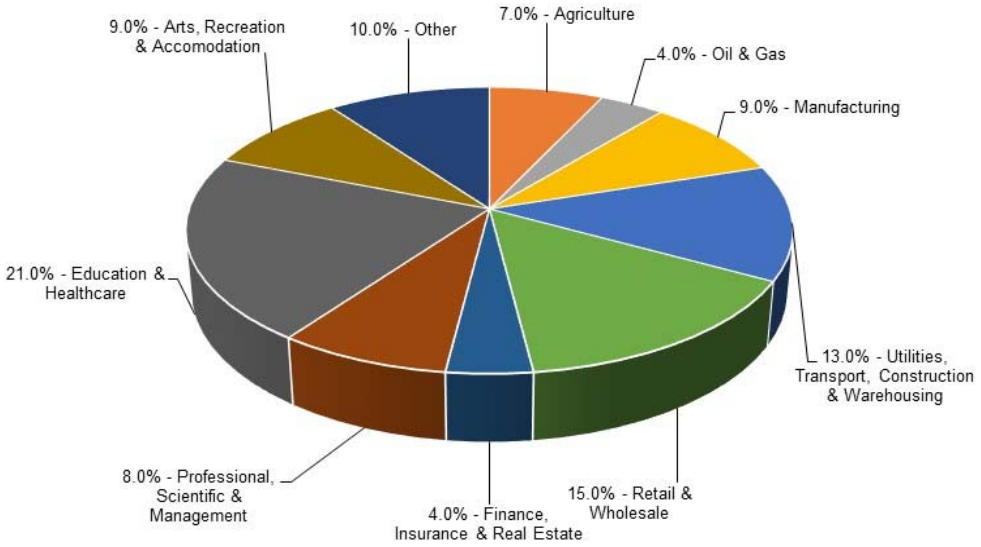
INDUSTRY - LABOUR CHARACTERISTICS

According to the SouthGrow Regional Initiative the total number of people in the Milk River labour force in 2011, those persons between the ages of 15 and 64, was approximately 440. Figure 4 illustrates the breakdown of the local labour force (those people 15 years of age and over) into the industry divisions. The three top industries by employment level are:

- Education and Healthcare (21 percent of the total);
- Retail and Wholesale Trade (15 percent of the total);
- Utilities, Transportation, Construction, Warehousing (13 percent of the total).

FIGURE 4

Town of Milk River
Employment by Industry



Source: SouthGrow Regional Initiative

Some of the major local employers include Alberta Health Services and Hughson Trucking. Where the labour force resides and where they work is an important indicator to consider when planning future needs. According to the 2006 census, some significant labour trends include:

- The bulk of the local labour force is able to find employment locally with approximately 76 percent working within the census division; only 22 percent of the labour force commute outside the census division for employment purposes.
- Approximately 11 percent of the town residents work at home. Often, certain types of home-based businesses will expand and eventually relocate into a commercial or industrial area.

SUBDIVISION AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

The majority of subdivision and development activity within the town is residential in nature. From 2005 to 2015, a total of nine subdivision applications were approved in Milk River (see Table 3, Appendix B). Residential development has been responsible for the majority of the subdivision activity, creating 26 of the 29 new lots during the last ten-year period. Largescale institutional projects, such as the Prairie Rose Lodge expansion, have increased the total value of building permits during the period, although residential building permits were still more numerous.

MUNICIPAL ASSESSMENT

According to the municipality's 2016 tax assessment breakdown, the total assessment in the Town of Milk River was valued at over 62 million dollars (see Table 2).

TABLE 2

2016 Equalization Tax Assessment Report
Comparison of Southern Alberta Communities in Dollar Values

Municipality	Residential $	Non-Residential $	Machinery/ Equipment $	Linear $	Grand Total $	% Residential	% Non-Residential	% Other
Milk River	**51,163,173**	**9,937,848**	**11,870**	**1,466,180**	**62,579,071**	81.8	15.9	2.4
Cardston	277,236,173	40,756,492	262,330	5,012,240	323,267,404	85.8	12.6	1.6
Coalhurst	205,708,874	8,076,220	17,330	2,156,230	215,958,654	95.3	3.7	1.0
Magrath	181,997,905	9,752,993	1,344,160	2,465,560	195,560,618	93.1	5.0	1.9
Picture Butte	127,512,214	21,567,461	1,036,370	2,246,590	152,362,635	83.7	14.2	2.2
Vauxhall	68,886,762	10,590,336	1,313,460	1,313,460	82,792,928	83.2	12.8	4.0
Vulcan	165,599,191	36,720,855	658,320	3,271,430	206,249,796	80.3	17.8	1.9
Average	154,014,923	21,045,658	663,406	2,660,086	176,967,301	86.1	11.7	1.9

Residential includes Residential and Farmland
Non-Residential includes Non-Residential Non-Regulated and Non-Regulated Rail
Source: Alberta Municipal Affairs, 2016

The majority, approximately 81 percent, of Milk River's tax roll is considered 'improved residential' in its nature. The community's residential tax assessment is slightly lower than the average compiled from tax assessments from similar communities in Southern Alberta. Conversely, the non-residential tax assessment percentage, when again compared to similar Southern Alberta communities, is greater than the average, 17 percent compared to 12 percent. This indicates the commercial and industrial sectors of town are contributing slightly more to the municipal tax base than in the other small Southern Alberta communities selected for comparison.

SUMMARY OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY AND GROWTH

Although the preceding economic activity review is not a complete and thorough analysis, it does illustrate some prevalent trends that are present in the local economy. These trends can be defined by the following observations:

- presently, the region is experiencing low unemployment rates relative to the rest of the province (2015);
- subdivision and development activity is quite minimal;
- Milk River has more non-residential development than other similar sized communities in Southern Alberta.

As Alberta's economy continues to grow and change, the Town of Milk River can expect to be influenced by it. A diverse economy is less likely to be adversely affected by market forces. The town administration should continue to promote a growing and diversifying economy; the future economic growth in the town should reflect that of the province. Milk River has not experienced significant growth since 1991 but a strong provincial economy and the commitment to the CANAMEX trade route could significantly impact the future of the community.

Town Of
Milk River

Municipal Development Plan

LAND USE ANALYSIS

4. LAND USE ANALYSIS

The shape and character of a community is directly related to the quality, quantity and location of land use within its boundary. By studying land use we can achieve an understanding of how various elements in the built environment function, specifically the amount of land they require and their relationships to one another. It is important to examine past and present land use studies to better predict future development requirements, manage prospective growth and prevent or minimize potential land use conflicts.

4.1 General Land Use

One of the key steps in preparing a long-term plan is a thorough appraisal of the various types of land use that make Milk River what it is. Map 2 and Tables 3 and 4 show the distribution of existing land use in the Town of Milk River. Residential development is a dominant use but a fair portion of land is also committed to commercial, industrial and recreational uses.

TABLE 3

Town of Milk River
Existing Land Use – May 2016

Type	Area (acres)	Area (hectares)	% Total Land Area
Residential - Single-Detached	68.97	27.91	12.1
Residential - Two-Unit	1.01	0.41	0.2
Residential - Multi-Unit	1.38	0.56	0.2
Residential - Manufactured Home	9.17	3.71	1.6
Residential - Senior Residence	2.37	0.96	0.4
Commercial	11.29	4.57	2.0
Industrial	36.35	14.71	6.4
Public Institutional - Community	3.78	1.53	0.7
Public Institutional - Educational	7.88	3.19	1.4
Public Institutional - Government	46.85	18.96	8.2
Greenspace, Parks & Outdoor Recreation	70.08	28.36	12.3
Agricultural *	131.19	53.09	22.9
Site Specific	6.00	2.43	1.1
Transport - Railway	9.32	3.77	1.6
Roadway	135.17	54.7	23.6
River	3.09	1.25	0.5
Vacant	27.77	11.24	4.9
Total	**571.68**	**231.35**	**100.0**

* The majority of the land categorized as Agricultural is within the Urban Reserve land use district

TABLE 4

Town of Milk River
Existing Residential Land Use

Type	Area (acres)	Area (hectares)	% Total Residential	% Total Land Area
Residential - Single-Detached	68.97	27.91	83.2	12.1
Residential - Two-Unit	1.01	0.41	1.2	0.2
Residential - Multi-Unit	1.38	0.56	1.7	0.2
Residential - Manufactured Home	9.17	3.71	11.1	1.6
Residential - Senior Residence	2.37	0.96	2.9	0.4
Total	**82.90**	**33.55**	**100.0**	**14.5**

Since the previous plan, development within the community has been quite limited. New residential construction has taken place in the northeast along the north end of Main Street and 7 and 8 Avenues, while the majority of new commercial and industrial development is located in the north end of town along the highway.

The industrial area has remained at approximately the same level of development since last reviewed in 1990, however, there will likely be a need for more industrial land for development in the near future. There has been infill development in the established central parts of town such as the Roman Catholic Church and the Town Centre. A significant amount of open space is to be found in the east central portion of town with both schools, Kinsmen Park, and the baseball fields located in this area.

4.2 Residential

In analyzing future needs for residential development, it is important to first examine the present state of residential land in the Town of Milk River. Historically, residential development has taken place on the northeast side of Highway 4, and the majority occurs to the east of Main Street. There are a few single-detached dwellings located between Railway Street and Main Street in a prime commercial area. Most of the development has occurred on a grid street pattern that was established by the CPR. The more recent development in the northeast corner of Milk River has started to use cul-de-sacs and a curvilinear road network. Land currently zoned for residential use totals approximately 84 acres (34 ha).

Single-detached dwellings (see Table 4) comprise the majority of the housing stock in town, located throughout the residential districts. Manufactured homes are concentrated along the north of Main Street, although units are interspersed alongside traditional single-detached dwellings. Two-unit and multi-unit homes are not common in the town, with many of the two-unit dwellings being owned by the provincial government. Two senior residences are located within town, with the larger Prairie Rose Lodge having been expanded in 2015, being located in the central part of town.

Town of Milk River
Municipal Development Plan
Bylaw No. 903 Amended to and Including Bylaw No. 1000

Map 2 - Existing Land Use

- Residential-Single Detached (27.91±ha)
- Residential-Two Unit (0.41±ha)
- Residential-Multi Unit (0.56±ha)
- Residential-Manufactured Home (3.71±ha)
- Residential-Senior Residence (0.96±ha)
- Commercial (4.57±ha)
- Industrial (14.71±ha)
- Agricultural (53.09±ha)
- Transport - Railway RY (3.77±ha)
- Greenspace, Parks & Outdoor Recreation (28.36±ha)
- Public Institutional-Community (1.53±ha)
- Public Institutional-Educational (3.19±ha)
- Public Institutional-Government (18.96±ha)
- Site Specific (2.43±ha)
- Vacant (11.24±ha)
- River (1.25±ha)
- Roads/Lane (54.70±ha)
- Town Boundary (231.35±ha)

In reviewing the household and dwelling analysis (see Tables 4, 5 and 6 in Appendix B) it is evident that there are a large number of people living alone, as over 30 percent of households contain only one person. This may be due to the high percentage of seniors that live in Milk River. Other significant points concerning residential development in the Town of Milk River include:

- According to Table 5, and in comparison to other small communities in southern Alberta, Milk River has one of the lowest average number of persons per dwelling, at 2.3 persons.
- According to the 2006 census the average value of a dwelling in Milk River was $110,694. This was the lowest average value for residences in comparison to other southern Alberta communities (Table 5).
- Of the 2006 housing stock, only 12 percent was built in the past 20 years. This indicates that the municipal housing stock is ageing.
- Approximately 77 percent of the present dwellings are owner occupied and 23 percent are rentals (see Table 5).

TABLE 5

Comparison of Various Southern Alberta Communities: Dwelling and Population Characteristics

Structural Type (as percentage of dwelling stock)	Milk River	Coaldale	Claresholm	Fort Macleod	Nanton	Vulcan	Picture Butte
Single-detached house	**81.6**	81.0	70.5	77.5	88.0	80.4	84.7
Semi-detached house	**0.0**	3.1	4.8	4.1	3.6	6.5	4.2
Row house	**0.0**	3.8	3.5	0.8	3.0	5.9	1.7
Apartment, detached duplex	**0.0**	1.3	0.6	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
Apartment building, fewer than five storeys	**10.5**	4.7	13.3	4.1	4.8	0.0	0.0
Apartment building, five or more storeys	**0.0**	0.0	0.0	1.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other dwellings	**6.6**	6.0	6.7	11.1	1.2	6.5	9.3
Other Dwelling Status Information							
Percentage Owned	**77.6**	83.7	71.7	85.7	86.2	85.6	74.6
Percentage Rented	**22.4**	16.3	28.3	14.3	13.8	14.4	25.4
Average number of persons per dwelling	**2.3**	2.7	2.3	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.6
Average value of dwelling: $	**110,694**	161,857	159,870	124,667	196,650	152,108	134,780
Population Characteristics							
Median income (15 years of age & older)	**22,065**	25,701	24,106	22,885	23,809	24,887	21,930
Median family income: $	**53,140**	62,115	57,868	56,149	55,033	59,448	53,540
2006 unemployment rate	**2.3**	3.3	2.4	4.7	1.9	2.2	2.6

All data has been obtained from Statistics Canada 2006 and 2011 Census information.

The population structure reveals that Milk River has an ageing population, and the percentage of seniors is expected to continue to increase over the next 20 years. Milk River may expect more retired-age persons to relocate from the surrounding area, as it provides many of the necessary services and conveniences found in a large urban centre. The ageing population will alter the demand for housing within the municipality. With a growing, ageing population, the number of persons with special needs can be expected to increase and the need for accessible, supportive and specialized housing must be increased accordingly. Therefore, more suitable housing should be planned for to accommodate this age group, such as senior housing and nursing homes and the trend of "ageing in place" where seniors choose to stay in their current dwellings, should be studied and any implications understood by municipal

officials. There may also be more of a demand for adult housing, townhouses and condominium units as people retire and want low maintenance housing.

RESIDENTIAL LAND REQUIREMENTS

Using the population projections from the previous section of this plan and the following assumptions, the future residential land consumption range (see Table 6) can be calculated to help determine residential land needs:

- growth rate based on population projections ranging from the low-end (0.5 percent annual decline) and the high-end (5 year cohort survival method);
- 2.3 persons per dwelling unit;
- single-detached dwellings with a density of 4.7 units per acre.

TABLE 6

Town of Milk River
2011 Residential Land Consumption Range

Year	Population Levels		Assumed Persons Per D.U.**	Total Required D.U.s		Existing D.U.s	New Dwelling Units Required		Land Acreage Requirement*	
	High	Low		High	Low		High	Low	High	Low
2011		811								
2016	842	785	2.1	401	374	357	44	17	9.4	3.6
			2.3	366	341	357	9	0	1.9	0
			2.5	337	314	357	0	0	0	0
2021	848	760	2.1	404	362	357	47	5	10.0	1.1
			2.3	369	330	357	12	0	2.6	0
			2.5	339	304	357	0	0	0	0
2026	849	736	2.1	404	350	357	47	(0	10.0	0
			2.3	369	320	357	12	0	2.6	0
			2.5	340	294	357	0	0	0	0
2031	855	712	2.1	407	339	357	50	0	10.6	0
			2.3	372	310	357	15	0	3.2	0
			2.5	342	285	357	0	0	(3.2)	0
2036	**873**	**689**	2.1	416	328	357	59	0	12.6	0
			2.3	**380**	**300**	**357**	**23**	**0**	**4.9**	**0**
			2.5	349	278	357	0	0	0	0

Note: *This future land need analysis was done for projections over a 25-year period of additional land acreage required to accommodate new dwelling units. It does not take into consideration such factors as the existing vacant land acreage; land available for infill development, etc. The low population level was based upon a 0.5% annual rate of decline, while the high-end population level was projected with the 5-year cohort model.*

* Acreage based on 4.7 units per acre

**D.U. = dwelling unit

(The 2011 Census persons per dwelling unit was 2.3 for Milk River.)

Based on the assumptions, two very different land consumption scenarios are possible. Under the growth scenario, approximately 3 acres of land would be required for residential development through 2026. On the low-end, under the declining growth rate scenario, a surplus of approximately 8 acres would exist. As such, residential land requirements could reasonably be accommodated upon vacant parcels within the town limits assuming there are no development constraints. A significant portion of vacant land within the town boundary is subject to development constraints – including high servicing costs and proximity to the closed landfill, which may necessitate future expansion of the town boundaries. The population will need to be monitored as well as the state of the local housing market, in order to respond flexibly to growth or decline.

4.3 Commercial

The majority of commercial development has occurred in the downtown area along Main Street between 1 Avenue South and 3 Avenue North and along the east side of Highway 4. Although development has spread down some of the side streets, the presence of the existing Highway 4 limits the expansion of the business district to the west. Historically, commercial development evolved as a response to the demands of the surrounding rural community to provide goods and services locally. Agri-business is an important part of the economy and one of the reasons Milk River remains the primary service centre for residents, as well as the surrounding rural area. The businesses are typical of small rural centres and include retail businesses, financial institutions, automotive service and repair shops, professional offices, restaurants and hotels, and a pharmacy. There are some vacant buildings as well as vacant lots within the downtown core that could be renovated or developed in the future. There may be opportunity for westward expansion of the downtown, should the existing rail-lines be decommissioned in the future.

According to the Land Use Bylaw, the commercial land for the Town of Milk River is divided into two districts: Retail/General Commercial – C1 and Highway Commercial – C2. The Retail/General Commercial district is found along the south end of Main Street and the east side of Highway 4. Highway Commercial is located along the east side of Highway 4 and includes development that is compatible to being located next to a major thoroughfare.

A dependence on the surrounding agricultural community is evident by the presence of highway commercial businesses located along the northern section of Highway 4. These include two large farm machinery implement dealers, transport and auto service and an automotive dealership. Lands that are currently zoned for commercial purposes amount to about 14 acres (5 ha).

RETAIL/GENERAL COMMERCIAL (DOWNTOWN)

The retail/general commercial designation covers most types of commercial land use includes retail outlets, personal services, government and institutional, assembly, personal services, hotels and licensed premises, restaurants and office. Discretionary retail/general commercial use includes accessory buildings, residential accommodation in conjunction with an approved commercial use, service stations and utilities.

Expansion of the downtown area is somewhat constrained given the proximity of the highway to the west and existing development patterns to the north, south and east. Nevertheless, there may be some commercial redevelopment opportunities to the west, should the existing spur line and associated uses be decommissioned – an environmental assessment would likely need to be undertaken as part of any redevelopment proposals for this area.

For the foreseeable future there appears to be enough downtown commercial space with infill development and redevelopment in the core. It is observed that some of the buildings in the downtown area are in poor condition and in need of redevelopment. The most logical direction of expansion in the downtown core would be between Railway Street and Main Street along both sides of 2 Avenue North. The residences in this area could be zoned transitional commercial.

HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL

Highway commercial use caters to the travelling public and is not aimed at the local market. Requirements for highway commercial lands are hard to determine, as this type of land is often a function of supply and demand. By their nature, highway commercial uses:

- require sites with both high visibility and ready access;
- often require larger lot sizes to accommodate semi-trailer or recreational vehicles, provide suitable parking, enable drive-in services, etc.

The majority of existing highway commercial uses are located along the north end and east side of Highway 4.

Future growth and development of highway commercial activity is more closely related to increased traffic on the highway rather than actual population growth in the town itself. As will be discussed in the transportation section of this plan, highway traffic volumes have been increasing over the last ten years potentially creating demand for highway commercial.

4.4 Industrial

Industrial activity plays an important role in the economy of the Town of Milk River, in terms of providing a source of tax revenue for the town and in offering employment opportunities to local residents. The purpose of land use planning is to manage and direct growth in a way that minimizes the adverse impacts from the negative externalities associated with certain types of industry. Municipalities often attempt to restrict industrial land use activities to industrial parks, to help mitigate problems with adjacent non-industrial land uses. An unfortunate situation in Milk River is that due to the location of the rail line and later the highway, industrial land has historically developed on the west side of town rather than the east, and out of the prevailing winds. This has resulted in the residential area being located to the east of the industrial activity. Future industrial development should be considerate of the proximity of residential uses when siting decisions are made.

According to the Land Use Bylaw, Milk River has zoned areas for both light (I1) and general industrial (I2) uses. The majority of general industrial uses can be found along the western side of Highway 4. These include such industries as grain elevators, bulk fuel stations, bulk fertilizer suppliers, and grain storage. The transportation systems offered by both Highway 4 and the main line rail provide a particular advantage to the agricultural industry. In addition, lighter industrial uses such as a trucking company, concrete and lumber company, and storage and warehousing companies have developed to the east of the highway, along 8 Avenue North. Many of these uses reflect the role of Milk River as a service centre to the surrounding agricultural community.

The municipality has about 56 acres (23 ha) of land zoned as industrial under the Land Use Bylaw. Of that land, however, only a limited amount is vacant (approximately 13 acres; 5 ha). It is often difficult to determine future land requirements for industrial use as some industries will require different land bases than others. Future expansion should take into consideration the provision of adequate services to the existing and future industrial development as well as the residential development patterns. Given the compatibility of light industrial and highway commercial uses, future land use decisions should be flexible enough to reasonably accommodate both types of activities. Future industrial growth considerations are accommodated for in the growth strategies of this plan.

4.5 Recreation and Open Space

The location of Milk River places it in close proximity to Waterton Lakes National Park, Writing-On-Stone Provincial Park, the United States border to the south and many camping and recreation facilities. Milk River also boasts a variety of recreational facilities, which provide services and facilities to the residents of Milk River and the surrounding region. These include ballparks, soccer fields, bowling alley, a 9-hole golf course and the Milk River and District Civic Centre that houses the library, a curling rink and outdoor swimming pool. The two schoolyards, Block 39 Park, ball diamonds and the Kinsmen Park provide a concentrated amount of open space in the north central part of town. A campground, picnic area and the tourist information centre are located on the southeast end of town, making them very accessible to tourists.

The ageing population in Milk River will define the way in which parks, recreation facilities and open systems are used and how they evolve. The difficult task will be to successfully maintain activities for children while expanding passive recreation services for adults.

According to Table 3, the most recent existing land use analysis, Milk River has approximately 70 acres (29 ha) of land categorized as Recreation/Open Space. However, a large portion of this is comprised of the Milk River Golf Course, which consists of approximately 40 acres (16 ha) of land. Not including the golf course, Milk River has approximately 32 acres (12 ha) or 35 acres per 1000 persons of existing land used for recreation/open space type purposes. This figure is above the average, as the North American standard for the provision of open space is usually between 10 and 30 acres per 1000 people.

4.6 Public and Institutional

The type of services and amenities available often determines the quality of life enjoyed by residents of a community. Many of these services and amenities are provided by outside agencies rather than the municipality. The economic prosperity of the town is dependent on the provision of fundamental services such as health care and education. These services are necessary to retain existing residents and attract new residents, especially young families and retirees. Although these services fall under provincial jurisdiction it is important that the town continue to work with the provincial government and their representatives to maintain the services offered to town residents.

The coordination of needs, wants and available space can be difficult. The designation of appropriate sites for future development of a public or institutional nature can assist the providing agencies in attaining a high level of service delivery and meeting the needs of a growing population.

Public and institutional land uses comprise such activities as health and protective services, and educational and cultural facilities. In the Town of Milk River this includes such uses as the hospital, seniors' facilities, fire hall, RCMP office, Town Office, library, churches, schools and other public service land uses. According to Milk River's existing public and institutional land use, Table 3, approximately 10 percent of the total land is comprised of public and institutional land uses.

4.7 Urban Reserve

Four parcels of land within the town boundary are currently used for agricultural purposes (three of which are under municipal ownership). Three of these parcels are contiguous to 10 Avenue N, designated as "Urban Reserve" in the Land Use Bylaw with the intent of supporting urban development in the future. These three parcels total 123 acres (49 ha) and comprise approximately 20 percent of the municipal land base. These parcels are key elements of the municipal growth strategy, however a significant portion is subject to development constraints for residential purposes due to the proximity to the closed landfill. Pursuing a variance from the Minister of Environment would be necessary to expand the development potential for residential lands south of 10 Avenue. As an alternative, the lands south of 10 Avenue may provide opportunities for recreational or other compatible uses which could possibly include solar energy development. Preliminary engineering analysis has been completed on the lands north of 10 Avenue and west of the municipal water treatment facility for potential industrial and highway commercial expansion. The preliminary investigations indicate that servicing costs for the area north of 10 Avenue are likely to be considerable.

4.8 Transportation

Road systems that link communities are extremely important for the movement of people, goods and services. The Town of Milk River is located at an intersection point of three major transportation routes: Highway 4, designated as part of the CANAMEX Trade Corridor, serving as the main north-south route for the province of Alberta and linking the municipality to Lethbridge to the north, and the USA to the south; Highway 501 provides an east-west route across the southern portion of the province; and the main CPR

railway tracks that run parallel to Highway 4 in a north-south direction. At present, the road network within the town is adequate for the efficient transportation of people, goods and services.

Both Highways 4 and 501 experienced an increase in traffic during the summer months, with the average daily summer traffic for the two links on average 4 percent higher than the annual average daily traffic (see Table 7). The traffic volume history table (Table 8) shows the traffic counts for the years 2008, 2010, 2012 and 2014. It breaks down the traffic flow by using various intersecting points. Overall, the average annual daily traffic volume on the two highways has not seen a significant increase (see Table 9).

TABLE 7

2015 Traffic Volume Statistics for Highways 4 and 501

FROM	TO	Length in Km	WAADT	WASDT
Highway 4				
E of 500 at Coutts	S of 501 S of Milk River SJ	16.26	2220	2280
N 501 S of Milk River SJ	S of 501 At Milk River NJ	3.08	2500	2570
N of 501 at Milk River NJ	S of 36 N of Warner	18.67	2425	2535
Highway 501				
E of 4 at Milk River NJ	Milk River E.C.L.	1.79	930	960
Milk River E.C.L.	W of 877 E of Milk River	19.85	550	580

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).

Source: CornerStone Solutions, 2016 (on behalf of Alberta Transportation)

TABLE 8

Traffic Volume History Report for Highways 4 and 501
Selected Periods (2008, 2010, 2012, 2014)

LOCATION DESCRIPTION	2008 AADT	2010 AADT	2012 AADT	2014 AADT
S of 501 S of Milk River SJ	2290	2210	2440	2490
N of 501 S of Milk River SJ	2480	2380	2570	2620
S of 501 at Milk River NJ	-	2560	2780	2840
N of 501 at Milk River NJ	-	2080	2260	2290
W of 4 S of Milk River SJ	250	250	180	180
E of 4 at Milk River NJ	-	1190	1230	1230

AADT 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).

Source: CornerStone Solutions, 2016 (on behalf of Alberta Transportation)

Table 9 illustrates the future traffic volume projections for the existing Highway 4. These projections are based on 2006-2015 traffic counts and show an increase in traffic volume of approximately 9 percent every five years (1.75 percent per annum) for the next 20 years.

TABLE 9

2015 Projected Traffic Volume Statistics for Highway 4

FROM	TO	2015 WAADT	2020 WAADT	2025 WAADT	2030 WAADT	2035 WAADT
Highway 4						
E of 500 at Coutts	S of 501 S of Milk River SJ	2220	2414	2625	2855	3105
N of 501 S of Milk River SJ	S of 501 at Milk River NJ	2500	2719	2957	3215	3497
N of 501 at Milk River NJ	S of 36 N of Warner	2425	2637	2868	3119	3392

WAADT Weighted Average Annual Daily Traffic is the average daily two-way traffic for the expressed as vehicles per day for the period of January 1 to December 31 (365 or 366 days).

Source: CornerStone Solutions, 2016 (on behalf of Alberta Transportation)

The type of vehicles that make up the traffic flow is broken down in Table 10. The largest proportion of the traffic on Highways 4 and 501 is passenger vehicle traffic. Commercial traffic, which includes buses, single unit trucks and tractor-trailer combinations, makes up the second largest percentage of trips, with recreation vehicles making up the last category.

Prior to the completion of the CANAMEX realignment, expectations were that substantial economic development and municipal growth would occur as a result. However, a steady increase in highway traffic has not occurred and the CANAMEX has not dramatically affected the community's development and growth. While the highway traffic may be a market that can be exploited, it is unlikely to be a major municipal growth driver.

TABLE 10

2015 Traffic Vehicle Classification for Highways 4 and 501

FROM	TO	%PV	%RV	%BU	%SU	%TT	%CM
Highway 4							
E of 500 at Coutts	S of 501 S of Milk River SJ	65.0	5.6	0.3	1.7	27.4	29.4
N 501 S of Milk River SJ	S of 501 At Milk River NJ	66.0	5.8	0.4	2.1	25.7	28.2
N of 501 at Milk River NJ	S of 36 N of Warner	58.5	5.3	0.3	2.8	33.2	36.3
Highway 501							
E of 4 at Milk River NJ	Milk River E.C.L.	84.9	4.6	1.1	2.9	6.5	10.5
Milk River E.C.L.	W of 877 E of Milk River	82.2	3.9	1.1	4.4	8.0	13.9

PV: Passenger vehicles
RV: Recreation vehicles
BU: Buses
SU: Single Unit Trucks
TT: Tractor Trailer Combinations
CM: Commercial Vehicles (BU+SU+TT)

Source: CornerStone Solutions, 2016 (on behalf of Alberta Transportation)

LOCAL ROADS

The efficient flow of traffic is important for all aspects of the community. From industry to tourism, all sectors of the economy will benefit from a good road system. The road pattern in the town is that of the traditional grid system. The grid was laid out northeast of the railway. The newer area in the far northeast corner of Milk River has been designed in a modified grid using cul-de-sacs.

The Town of Milk River consists of the numbered highways (4 and 501) that can be considered arterial roads funnelling traffic into town, while other streets within the community can be considered local. Main Street, along the downtown core, and Centre Avenue could be considered the collector streets that conduct traffic from the local streets to the arterials. The majority of the town's streets are paved and in good condition with most having curbs and gutters to handle storm water. Respondents to the Municipal Development Plan Questionnaire commented that the most noted improvement in Milk River was the paved streets. A sidewalk replacement program is ongoing, in order to address resident concerns and enhance pedestrian safety.

RAILWAY AND AIRPORT

A CP Rail spur line parallels Railway Street; the adjacent land is currently industrial in nature. As discussed previously, there may be commercial redevelopment opportunities for the land should the spur line be decommissioned.

The local airport is located approximately 5 kilometres east of town and is equipped with weather facilities, and a lighted, hard surface 914-metre runway. The airport facilities are suitable for small aircraft operations.

4.9 Municipal Services

The municipal public works function is to efficiently maintain public parks, roads, sidewalks, storm water drainage, the water distribution system, sewage collection system, and solid waste collection and disposal.

WATER SUPPLY, SEWER, AND WASTEWATER

The town's water reservoir, located in the northeast, was recently expanded. While reservoir capacity is adequate, at times, water supply from the Milk River is an issue. As a water conservation measure, a municipal bylaw has been enacted to ensure water conservation during dry periods. A regional water partnership has also been established between Milk River, Coutts, and Sweetgrass, with a long-term agreement established for the line that originates in Milk River, providing treated water to the two municipalities.

The sewage system is designed to drain all of the developed areas by gravity, with three lift stations used to transport sewage to the treatment facility. The sewage lagoons are 0.8 kilometres southeast of the town boundary, an adequate distance to ensure no development constraints due to the minimum setback

requirements established in the Subdivision and Development Regulation. An upgrade to the lift station was completed in 2016, although capacity constraints do exist with the inbound sewage lines.

Storm drainage is accomplished through overland courses and approximately 1 kilometre of underground storm sewers. Once collected, the storm water is directed toward the Milk River. The area north of 8 Avenue has been identified as a possible problem area due to the topography. This area drains towards the south and then slightly west in the vicinity of 5 Avenue and the park area. Concerns of incidents of flash flooding and erosion due to run-off have been expressed. Adequate planning and precautions are necessary to limit the effects of storm water run-off.

WASTE, RECYCLING AND UTILITIES

Solid waste removal services are provided by the town Public Works department, with waste transferred to a landfill site operated by the Chief Mountain Solid Waste Authority, east of Cardston. Recyclables are collected at a depot in the industrial section of town, and are transferred to Lethbridge for processing.

The electrical distribution system is maintained and monitored by FortisAlberta, with the system capable of meeting current load requirements. ATCO Gas maintains the gas distribution system within the town.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

In order to improve resident quality of life, a wide range of community services are provided within the town. Essential services include the Milk River Health Centre (hospital), medical and dental facilities, senior's housing, police services (Royal Canadian Mounted Police) and fire services (volunteer fire department).

Public education is offered through the Milk River Elementary School and Erle Rivers High School, part of the Horizon School Division. Recreational facilities include a golf course, curling rink, swimming pool, and civic centre.

Cultural services are provided by the four local churches and a diverse range of clubs.

4.10 Municipal, School and Environmental Reserve

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

- The town will coordinate the location of new schools and the allocation of school reserves in the town with the local school division.
- Municipal reserve will be provided in accordance with section 663 of the MGA and, subject to sections 666(2), (3) and (4), in either land or money in lieu of land dedication.

- Municipal reserve dedication in residential subdivisions will generally be provided in the form of land, unless in the opinion of the town, land dedication is unnecessary or not desirable. In such circumstances, the municipal reserve may be taken in the form of money-in-lieu of land dedication or a combination thereof. A deferred reserve caveat may be considered on residual land where there is additional development potential.
- Municipal reserve dedication in non-residential subdivisions will generally be provided as money in-lieu-of land dedication unless, in the opinion of the town, land is required to provide buffers between land uses or for other community benefits.
- Developers will typically be responsible for landscaping municipal reserve land to the town's satisfaction.
- When the requirement for reserve is to be provided as money in place of land, Council, subject to section 667 (1)(b) of the *MGA*, will establish the rate of payment from time to time. Since Council may change these values, applicants should confirm values with the municipality.

The municipality also has the authority to request environmental reserve to be provided at the time of subdivision in accordance with section 664(1) of the *MGA*. In most instances, environmental reserve must be left in its natural state or be used as a public park. Also, the owners of a parcel of land of a proposed subdivision and the municipality have the option to consider registering a reserve easement on an identified parcel of land. Generally:

- Environmentally sensitive areas, unstable land, land subject to flooding or land consisting of a swamp, gully, ravine or natural drainage course should be dedicated as environmental reserve or placed under an environmental reserve easement in accordance with the provisions of the *MGA*.

4.11 Sour Gas Facilities

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

Currently, there are no sour gas facilities within the Town of Milk River or its urban fringe within the County of Warner. If such facilities are established in the future, the setback distances for development will need to be in accordance with the provincial requirements.

4.12 Regional Cooperation

The Town of Milk River regularly works in cooperation with the County of Warner to address fringe area issues. The fringe area around town has historically been unaffected by conflicting land use development. The town and county had adopted an intermunicipal development plan in 2003, however, this plan has since expired. Nevertheless, the plan is still used to guide decision-making within the two municipalities and the council should continue to work in cooperation with the county to ensure orderly and harmonious

growth in this area. The adoption of a new intermunicipal development plan should be a municipal priority.

The town also participates in a number of regional partnerships and initiatives, including:

- SouthGrow Regional Initiative – an economic development alliance of 23 municipalities;
- regional firefighting cooperation agreement; and
- water partnership between Coutts and Sweetgrass.

4.13 Urban Design and Community Image

Tree-lined streets and mainly neat, tidy yards characterize the residential neighbourhoods of Milk River. The older sections of town are designed in a traditional grid pattern, while the newer subdivisions have incorporated more modern, curvilinear streets and cul-de-sacs. It will be important for the community to continue to strive to maintain its development standards regarding subdivision design, lot size, and community appearance. A review of the existing townscape and the comments made in the Municipal Development Plan Questionnaire indicate the following:

- the entrances to town could be improved with landscaping;
- Railway Street is commercially undeveloped;
- landscaping is not evident in the commercial areas downtown;
- the issue of revitalizing the downtown commercial area has been a concern for many residents in past years and the community should continue to support efforts of business owners to improve the appearance of the business district;
- in the Municipal Development Plan Questionnaire the general appearance of the town, the new residential areas and new residential development were rated as good, with the downtown, main entrance and older residential rated as average to poor.

4.14 Municipal Finance

In providing services to residents, the town attempts to achieve the goal of creating an atmosphere that provides a tax base both diversified and large enough to provide and maintain a consistent level of quality municipal services, while at the same time creating a positive economic environment to attract businesses. This is a difficult task at the best of times.

In Milk River, the town's finances are associated with a large number of issues, but overall, are looked at in terms of revenues and expenditures per capita. Some of the main municipal concerns that affect the town's financial picture include:

- staff levels;
- water and sewer expenditures;
- transportation, sidewalk and road maintenance;

- recreation facilities and park maintenance; and
- provision of community and emergency services.

The delivery of water, sewer and road services makes up a substantial portion of a municipality's expenditures. It should also be noted that the school requisition portion of the tax assessment comprises a significant proportion of the tax bill and the town has no way of compensating for any increase in this, except to raise taxes or lower the provision of other services.

There are a few options to pursue when striving to maintain a consistent level of municipal services. The following could potentially be utilized to achieve the goal:

- investigate both programs and sources of funding from senior levels of government and other non-government organizations that may be available for infrastructure upgrades as well as other municipal projects;
- developers should pay the full cost associated with new development. This could be achieved through the use of development agreements, off-site levies or impact fees, in accordance with legislation authorized under the *Municipal Government Act*;
- a local improvement tax may be charged for any type of work constructed adjacent to properties that would increase either the value of such property or improve the standards of such property.

Town Of
Milk River

Municipal Development Plan

FUTURE LAND USE CONCEPT

5. FUTURE LAND USE CONCEPT

The town's land use concept is illustrated in Map 3. The concept is intended to establish a framework to accommodate a variety of future land uses in an efficient manner that sustains and promotes a healthy local economy and a vibrant community. The concept provides a guide for future decisions about land use and growth directions. The concept does not identify the precise locations and district designations for future uses and growth directions — it serves to identify potential development areas and uses generally.

5.1 Growth Strategy

In looking for suitable land to accommodate future growth and expansion, there are a number of factors to consider:

- adequate and accessible provision of municipal services;
- topographical limitations and sensitive environmental sites;
- transportation concerns including traffic flow, volumes, and access in town as well as limitations imposed by the current Highway 4;
- infill development and underutilized or undeveloped parcels within town;
- the future development in any area is dependent on the possibility of upgrades to the present infrastructure and feasibility of municipal expenditures.

As such, some of the identified future growth areas will require additional analysis (at the cost of the developer) to determine feasibility of development at the planning stages and through the appropriate planning mechanism deemed acceptable by the town, such as an area structure plan, conceptual scheme or information demonstrating site suitability and feasibility.

Likewise, future development within town will likely be affected by:

- Development that caters to an ageing population. Milk River's ageing population will not only place demands on different housing requirements, but also on commercial and recreational opportunities that cater to their changing lifestyle.
- Proximity to shopping and health services will become a priority when selecting future development sites to accommodate the ageing members of the community. As well, this segment of the population will have different recreation demands than that of a younger population, often resulting in the demand for passive recreation options such as walking paths, community parks and open space.
- The status of Milk River retaining their hospital services will also affect the town's ability to keep and attract not only retirees, but new people to the community as well.

- Promotion of the town as a service centre, offering a mix of community services and commercial and industrial growth opportunities, including compatible alternative energy development.
- Marketing the town as an attractive destination for residents and tourists alike.

5.2 Future Residential Development

Population forecasts for the town suggest a slow rate of growth. As such, only a minimal amount of land would be necessary to accommodate forecasted residential development. It is likely that the majority of residential growth pressures for the next 10 years can be fulfilled through development of land currently within the town boundary. Provided there are no significant development constraints, such a strategy would promote efficient use of land and infrastructure.

The following strategies should be considered to accommodate residential growth within the current town boundary:

- extend municipal servicing to the vacant residential lots on 8 Avenue North and promote continued development of the lots on 7 Avenue North;
- encourage residential infill of undeveloped or underdeveloped lots throughout the residential district;
- investigate the feasibility of converting the underdeveloped municipal reserve lot west of the baseball diamonds on the north side of 5 Avenue for residential use;
- initiate a study of the area affected by the landfill buffer south of 10 Avenue to determine the feasibility of potential residential development and undertake the necessary studies to request a reduced setback from the closed landfill;
- intensification of residential density by incorporating consideration for accessory dwellings and variety of housing opportunities in the Land Use Bylaw.

If it is determined that residential needs cannot be accommodated within the town boundary, the town will then need to examine outward growth through the annexation of land from the County of Warner. The preferred direction of growth for residential development is to the east through the continuation of the existing grid and cul-de-sac development patterns.

The residential housing stock is dominated by single-detached dwellings, many of which are ageing. While such form of housing may fulfill current demand and preferences, the following considerations should be made when preparing for residential growth:

- demand for senior-supporting housing can be reasonably expected to increase;
- duplex and multi-unit development can be used to efficiently increase density levels within the town, subject to servicing considerations and fit within the neighbourhood and may be considered a viable redevelopment option;
- mixed-use buildings in the downtown core which can increase housing options and enhance the viability of the downtown;

Commercial/ Industrial

Commercial/ Industrial

Commercial/ Industrial

Public & Institutional

COMMERCIAL/ INDUSTRIAL

COMMERCIAL/ INDUSTRIAL

300m Buffer From Non-Operating Land Fill

COMMERCIAL

RESIDENTIAL OR PUBLIC & INSTITUTIONAL OR OTHER COMPATIBLE LAND USE (Refer to Policy 6.8.1(d))

REDEVELOPMENT AREA (Refer to Policy 6.7.4)

Non-Residential

Non-Residential

DOWNTOWN

COMMERCIAL

RESIDENTIAL

RESIDENTIAL

RESIDENTIAL

RESIDENTIAL

RESIDENTIAL

Recreational/Public Institutional

10 AVE N

8 AVE N

7 AVE N

6 AVE N

4 AVE N

3 AVE N

2 AVE N

1 AVE N

1 AVE S

CENTRE AVE (HIGHWAY 501)

HIGHWAY 4

SERVICE ROAD

MAIN ST

1 ST W

3 ST E

RAILWAY ST

Town of Milk River
Municipal Development Plan
Bylaw No. 903 Amended to and Including Bylaw No. 1000

Map 3 - Future Land Use and Growth Areas

Town Boundary

Future Growth Areas and Land Use

Likely Growth Directions & Potential Future Uses

N

- the need for affordable housing in the town could be studied and a strategy developed to offer lower-income units if demand exists.

5.3 Future Commercial Growth

The existing pattern of commercial development within Milk River includes a somewhat compact central business district and linear highway commercial development along the northern portion of Highway 4.

Possible future growth directions for commercial development include:

- Infill development on vacant and underdeveloped parcels and redevelopment of deteriorating buildings will strengthen the viability of the area while limiting the need for outward municipal expansion.
- Encouragement of mixed-use development in the downtown core.
- Expansion of highway commercial or retail general commercial along the west side of Railway Street should the grain elevators and spur lines be decommissioned.
- Land should continue to be provided for highway commercial, given the town's proximity to Highway 4. Potential expansion areas south of 10 Avenue could be examined for such uses along with redevelopment of industrial land.
- Instead of designating industrial and highway commercial uses in an exclusive manner, consideration may be given for inclusion of a combined district in the Land Use Bylaw which could flexibly accommodate both types of development in a compatible manner.

5.4 Future Industrial Growth

Currently the town's industrial uses are concentrated in the area east of the service road and north of 4 Avenue. The close proximity of residential development is a limiting factor for intensive industrial development given potential impacts. Also, there is currently limited land area available for additional industrial uses. Expansion of future industrial uses is most likely to occur north of 10 Avenue on the lands currently designated urban reserve. The proximity of this area to Highway 4 is a benefit for companies with transportation needs.

Possible future growth directions for industrial development include:

- Development of the area north of 10 Avenue as an industrial area. An area structure plan should be undertaken to determine feasibility for development and guide future land uses for this urban reserve land.
- A mixed commercial/industrial use district should be considered for incorporation into the Land Use Bylaw to ensure adequate buffer areas or transition zones between incompatible land uses.
- Possible transitioning of the existing industrial area to highway commercial uses or mixed commercial/light industrial.
- Compatible alternative energy projects, such as solar energy if deemed suitable.

5.5 Future Recreation/Open Space/Public and Institutional Growth

The provision of greenspace for active recreation, relaxation and enjoyment has a positive effect on resident quality of life and can make the town more attractive to prospective residents. Likewise, recreational facilities and community services enable individuals of all ages to engage in community-oriented programming which contributes to a sense of place.

The cost of providing and maintaining adequate recreation facilities and community services is a major financial expenditure for a municipality. The challenge for the community is to ensure that sufficient facilities are available to accommodate the various needs of residents while, at the same time, not creating a financial burden for the town. To help determine future needs, the town should consider developing a municipal recreation plan which coordinates present and future development needs.

Future growth strategies should consider:

- Promoting open space use on existing lots. Larger open space lots could be converted to tot-lots and parkettes. Smaller open spaces interspersed in residential neighbourhoods can act as community gathering spaces and may be more accessible to individuals with reduced mobility.
- As development occurs, open space provisions are ensured through adequate acquisition of municipal reserve land and fees in lieu of land dedication.
- If residential or other compatible development is not feasible in the vicinity of the closed landfill south of 10 Avenue, consideration for use of the land as a large active recreation area, if sufficient demand and financial capacity exists.

5.6 Summary

Given the level of development expected, it appears that the Town of Milk River has sufficient land within its boundaries to support projected growth. Through the efficient use of land within the town boundary and the redevelopment of underutilized parcels, Milk River is well positioned to grow in a sustainable and efficient manner.

While development within the town boundaries is the municipality's preferred growth strategy, annexation of land to support future development may at times be necessary. The Town will continue to cooperate with the County of Warner to discuss future expansion needs and pursue entering into an intermunicipal development plan to establish agreed upon annexation policies.

Town Of
Milk River

Municipal Development Plan

OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

6. OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

6.1 Plan Implementation and Public Engagement

OBJECTIVES

- To adopt a plan which provides guidance for future land use decisions in the Town of Milk River.
- To establish a mechanism whereby the Municipal Development Plan may be revisited, refined and amended to accommodate changes in the municipality.
- To establish practices which promote public engagement and on-going public participation in the municipal planning process.
- To foster awareness of land use planning policies and participation opportunities in planning processes.
- To promote objective and transparent communication processes with respect to land use and planning matters.

POLICIES

6.1.1 The town will ensure that the Municipal Development Plan and other statutory and non-statutory planning documents are readily available for public review.

6.1.2 The Land Use Bylaw is a key implementation tool for the objectives and policies of the Municipal Development Plan and should be regularly reviewed and amended as necessary to ensure that policy directions can be realized.

6.1.3 This plan should be reviewed every five years by Council, with community participation, to ensure the goals and polices are consistent with directions of future development. On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of land use planning decisions should be conducted when possible.

6.1.4 The town shall provide a positive environment for listening, evaluating and responding to the concerns of its citizens.

6.1.5 The town supports ongoing public involvement and encourages the public to provide input on matters of specific and general planning interest wherever possible.

6.1.6 The town will be proactive in providing transparent communication to the public regarding opportunities for involvement and upcoming municipal decisions.

6.1.7 The town will continue to make information regarding the subdivision and development processes available to the public and applicants.

6.1.8 The town will monitor federal, provincial and regional legislation, regulations and other relevant documents and update municipal policy, regulations and other relevant documents as appropriate.

6.2 General Plan Policies

OBJECTIVES

- To promote and maintain the small town atmosphere within the Town of Milk River.
- To maintain a high quality of development and subdivision and to ensure that orderly and efficient planning and development occurs.
- To give guidelines to developers and the appropriate approval authority for the development of land within the town.

POLICIES

6.2.1 Population growth rates should be monitored and an appropriate growth strategy developed to ensure adequate facilities and services can continue to be sustained for residents.

6.2.2 Council should attempt to ensure that new growth and development occurs in a stable, balanced and fiscally sound manner with regard to high aesthetics standards to ensure the attractiveness of the community.

6.2.3 Pursuant to sections 650 and 655 of the *Municipal Government Act*, the approval of any development or subdivision may require that the developer enter into a development agreement with the town to provide for the construction of roads, the provision of water or waste water services, various municipal services, and any other matter to which Council or the Subdivision and Development Authority may require to be addressed.

6.2.4 The town may require the preparation and adoption of an area structure plan or conceptual design scheme:

(a) before land is reclassified from the urban reserve area or other type of land use district to another land use designation,

(b) when multiple parcels of land are involved,

(c) more than four lots could be created,

(d) several pieces of fragmented land are adjacent to the proposal,

(e) internal public roads would be required,

(f) municipal services would need to be extended, or

(g) as deemed necessary by the town.

6.2.5 All future subdivision and development shall be evaluated with respect to its compliance with the objectives and polices of this plan, the current Land Use Bylaw, and any other statutory plan.

6.2.6 When evaluating applications for the subdivision of land, the Subdivision and Development Authority should consider the impact of the proposals on existing residential, commercial and industrial activities in the area and appropriate setbacks from waterbodies.

6.2.7 Future urban growth should be directed to areas with existing municipal infrastructure capacity or to locations where infrastructure extensions can be made most logically and economically. All residential and commercial development shall be required to connect to the municipal sewer and water service, unless it is demonstrated to the Subdivision and Development Authority that circumstances exists that services are not required for a commercial development.

6.2.8 The burden (costs) of supplying infrastructure, services, and amenities to new developments shall be borne by the developer and not by the town. The town may require that developers/ private sector provide or pay for:

(a) the landscaping costs in new residential, commercial and industrial subdivisions, such as on boulevards, reserve land, etc.;

(b) the costs of providing roads, sidewalks and public utilities that are necessary to serve the subdivision; and

(c) any other infrastructure, services and amenities necessary to serve the subdivision.

6.2.9 Decisions regarding future land use and growth directions should be consistent with the concepts illustrated in the Future Land Use and Growth Areas Map (Map 3) and growth strategies of this plan. The feasibility of developing the future growth areas will require additional analysis at the planning stages (at the cost of the developer) through the appropriate planning mechanism deemed acceptable by the town, such as an area structure plan, conceptual scheme or other information demonstrating site suitability and feasibility.

6.2.10 Efficient use of land and infrastructure within the town is a priority. Mechanisms to enhance the efficient use of land in the design of future subdivisions and development through innovative implementation tools such as those identified in the Government of Alberta document "Efficient Use of Land Implementation Tools" or other strategies deemed appropriate by the Town of Milk River, may be considered as necessary to address community needs.

6.2.11 Development of land within the current town boundary is the preferred growth strategy. However, there may be times when annexation of land is necessary to support the needs of the community. At such time, the town will discuss future expansion needs with the County of Warner in advance of pursuing an annexation proposal.

6.2.12 Subdivision and development of urban reserve land is generally discouraged until such time those lands are required for urban or economic development.

6.2.13 The town will endeavour to maintain an appropriate balance of residential, commercial and industrial uses to serve the needs of the community.

6.3 Intermunicipal Cooperation

OBJECTIVES

- To ensure cooperation between the Town of Milk River and the County of Warner on matters of mutual interest or concern.
- To maintain a coordinated approach to development that takes advantage of mutual opportunities for municipalities to maximize efficient use of land, transportation systems and infrastructure, and other matters of common interest.
- To pursue regional partnerships that provide community benefits and maximize efficient use of transportation systems, infrastructure and other mutual interests.

POLICIES

6.3.1 The town should continue to build partnerships with neighbouring municipalities to promote regional interests, where deemed appropriate, including the support of mutually beneficial service agreements and shared environmental, economic and social outcomes.

6.3.2 The town will continue to cooperate with the County of Warner, Alberta Transportation, CP Rail and private transportation and utility companies in the future planning and to coordinate compatible land uses and enhance servicing and transportation interconnectivity.

6.3.3 The town will endeavour to identify new areas for collaboration in the delivery of programs, services, facilities, economic development and land use planning and may foster new partnerships with business, government, school boards, health authority, and non-profit sectors where deemed appropriate.

6.3.4 The town will continue its collaborative relationship with the County of Warner, especially with respect to matters of mutual planning interests, opportunities and concerns.

6.3.5 The town will ensure compatibility with the policies contained in this plan with the policies contained in any Intermunicipal Development Plan with the County of Warner.

6.4 Sour Gas, Reserves, and Protection of Agricultural Land

OBJECTIVES

- To meet provincial legislative requirements of the *Municipal Government Act*.
- To ensure that any applicable municipal and/or school reserves are addressed or acquired at the time of subdivision.
- To minimize impact of development on agricultural land and operations.

POLICIES

6.4.1 Setback guidelines for sour gas facilities shall be in accordance with standards established by the Alberta Energy Regulator or any subsequent standards should these existing guidelines be revised.

6.4.2 Municipal and/or school reserve will be provided in accordance with sections 666 and 667 of the *Municipal Government Act*. The town shall continue to collect school reserves until such time as an agreement is entered into with the school authorities.

6.4.3 The municipal assessor shall establish the rate of payment when the reserve requirement is to be satisfied in money rather than the provision of land.

6.4.4 Municipal reserve dedication in residential subdivisions will generally be provided in the form of land, unless in the opinion of the town, land dedication is unnecessary or not desirable. In such circumstances, the municipal reserve may be taken in the form or money in-lieu of land dedication or a combination thereof. A deferred reserve caveat may be considered in accordance with policy 6.4.6.

6.4.5 Municipal reserve dedication in non-residential subdivisions will generally be provided as money in-lieu of land dedication, unless in the opinion of the town, land is required to provide buffers between land uses or for other community benefits.

6.4.6 Where the town is of the opinion that certain lands may be resubdivided in the future, the Subdivision and Development Authority may require that municipal or school reserves be deferred by caveat pursuant to section 669 of the *Municipal Government Act*.

6.4.7 Developers will typically be responsible for landscaping municipal reserve land to the town's satisfaction.

6.4.8 Environmentally sensitive areas, unstable land, land subject to flooding or land consisting of a swamp, gully, ravine or natural drainage course should be dedicated as environmental reserve or placed under an environmental reserve easement in accordance with the provisions of the *Municipal Government Act*.

6.4.9 The town shall protect agricultural operations by ensuring land within town is used to its best potential before expansion into agricultural areas; and, by ensuring approved land uses within town do not conflict or create adverse effects on existing agricultural operations that may be located on adjacent lands in the County of Warner.

6.5 Residential

OBJECTIVES

- To have bylaws and policies that allow for housing and residential design to relate to a variety of lifestyles.

- To provide a variety and mix of housing that should be pursued to adequately meet the needs of the population.
- To ensure that adequate serviceable land is to be available to accommodate housing in the future.
- To provide land use districts that ensure compatible uses and limit non-conforming uses.
- To outline the location of future residential areas both inside and outside the current boundaries.
- To encourage the improvement and protection of existing residential areas.

POLICIES

6.5.1 All future residential development in the town:

(a) shall comply with the objectives of this plan and the current Land Use Bylaw,

(b) should be directed to the areas of the town identified in Map 3 as future residential growth areas,

(c) should take into consideration the availability and ease of servicing, and

(d) should be evaluated to be suitable based upon engineering studies in conjunction with the costs of providing municipal servicing.

6.5.2 Future residential development shall be located pursuant to any setbacks contained within the Subdivision and Development Regulation or any subsequent provincial legislation.

6.5.3 At such a time in the future when residential expansion needs to occur east of the town into the NW¼ 27-2-16-4 and SW¼ 27-2-16-4, the town shall prepare a current land use study, consult with the County of Warner and any affected land owner, and undertake an annexation report, before proceeding with an annexation request to the province.

6.5.4 Area structure plans for residential development should take into consideration the following:

(a) ease of municipal servicing and logical tie-in with existing utility corridors,

(b) density of development,

(c) storm water management,

(d) provision of alternative types of housing,

(e) transportation patterns,

(f) compatibility with existing adjacent land uses,

(g) linking open space areas with any existing parkways,

(h) any other matter Council deems necessary.

6.5.5 The town should regularly monitor the vacancy rate and volume of building permits so that short-term needs for serviced residential land can be anticipated.

6.5.6 The town should, for the convenience and enjoyment of residents, emphasize the provision of parks, space, and walkways for pedestrian traffic in new residential neighbourhoods.

6.5.7 As the community ages, the town should encourage the development of multi-unit, row house development, or other higher density housing types and styles to provide an alternative to traditional *single-detached* housing while also increasing density.

6.5.8 The town should accommodate seniors' housing needs by ensuring suitable lands are made available for these types of development, encouraging developers to provide this type of housing, and to support and work cooperatively with various agencies and provincial departments involved with seniors' housing.

6.5.9 The town, through its Land Use Bylaw, shall provide for a variety of housing types by ensuring there is suitable land designated for residential uses and including a variety of housing types (e.g. manufactured homes, multi-unit, accessory, seniors' housing, etc.) as either permitted or discretionary uses in the district to serve the needs of different social, age and income groups.

6.5.10 The town should encourage infill development in older neighbourhoods and on vacant parcels and underdeveloped lots, which could possibly be redeveloped with higher densities to provide efficient use of existing infrastructure and accommodate community needs.

6.5.11 The town should encourage existing residential uses in the downtown area that are not compatible with adjacent commercial land uses to relocate to designated residential areas, which may be accomplished through land swapping agreements.

6.5.12 The presence of incompatible land uses in residential areas should be reduced by:

(a) encouraging the owners to relocate to more suitably-zoned sites; and

(b) where there is a discretionary use under the Land Use Bylaw, withholding a development permit where a potential conflict exists.

6.5.13 The town recognizes that accessory dwelling units such as garden suites and basement suites will assist in diversifying the housing stock and may incorporate provisions for such uses in the Land Use Bylaw.

6.5.14 The pattern of storm drainage and the systems used to handle storm drainage shall be evaluated and updated as new development occurs. The north end of town is identified as a problem area and new development shall be evaluated in terms of effects on the storm drainage system and the development of an adequate storm drainage management system.

6.6 Commercial

OBJECTIVES

- To develop strategies for promoting commercial and tourist related growth.
- To promote infill, redevelopment and beautification in the downtown core.
- To expand and promote the commercial districts as a vital component of the local economy.
- To develop a strategy to expand and accommodate highway commercial uses.

POLICIES

6.6.1 All commercial development shall be required to connect to municipal sewer, water and electrical utility system services, unless it is demonstrated to the Subdivision and Development Authority that circumstances exist that services are not required.

6.6.2 The town should require and apply landscaping minimums in future commercial developments, which may be placed as a condition of approval on a development permit.

6.6.3 Commercial development should be encouraged to concentrate in the existing commercial areas by infilling vacant lots, by consolidating sites for redevelopment projects, and by the redevelopment of older properties in the various commercial districts.

6.6.4 The downtown is envisioned to encompass the areas along Main Street, Centre Avenue and blocks to the west as illustrated in Map 3, and is intended to serve as the core for commercial, cultural and civic activities.

6.6.5 Expansion of highway commercial and retail general commercial uses should be consistent with the future commercial growth areas identified in Map 3.

6.6.6 Mixed use developments (residential and commercial uses in a single building) should be encouraged in the downtown.

6.6.7 The town should examine the feasibility of purchasing vacant parcels in the downtown and making them available for appropriate commercial development.

6.6.8 Future commercial development or redevelopment projects occurring in the downtown should be encouraged to provide pedestrian features to improve pedestrian safety, comfort and convenience.

6.6.9 Whenever possible, new commercial uses in the downtown area should be required to provide off-street parking. If such parking cannot be provided, then off-street levies should be collected.

6.6.10 The town should consider developing a downtown business plan or implement some form of a business renewal program, which may be carried out individually or in partnership with community groups, private business owners or the town.

6.6.11 The town should complete a detailed study of Milk River's downtown area, which may include recommendations as to how this area may be improved and revitalized.

6.6.12 The town should formulate a plan with business owners and community groups to improve both the entrances to town and the downtown commercial area with landscaping.

6.6.13 The town should continue to support efforts of business owners to improve the appearance of the business district.

6.6.14 A local improvement tax may be levied to a property until it is brought up to the higher standards of an adjacent property, due to improvements done on the neighbouring parcel that would either increase the value or improve the standards of that adjacent property.

6.6.15 Uses that are not compatible with the downtown area (i.e. automotive) should be encouraged to relocate to a more suitable district, such as light industrial or highway commercial.

6.6.16 Future highway commercial development should be directed to the areas identified in Map 3 of this plan, with the intent to concentrate expansion in a northward direction.

6.6.17 The town shall consult with Alberta Transportation when evaluating proposed highway commercial land use designations adjacent to primary and secondary highways.

6.6.18 The town should encourage highway commercial land use developments such as motels, restaurants, service stations, truck stops, etc. to be located within easy access and visibility to the new Highway 4.

6.6.19 Commercial zoning districts and uses will be reviewed periodically to ensure they adequately encompass the needs of the community and business.

6.6.20 The preservation and restoration of historic buildings and sites important to the town's character and identity should be encouraged.

6.6.21 A mixed highway commercial/light industrial district for inclusion in the Land Use Bylaw should be investigated to provide adequate buffer areas and transition zones between commercial, industrial and residential districts.

6.7 Industrial

OBJECTIVES

- To prevent or minimize any potential land use conflicts with existing or proposed industrial uses.
- To attract new investment and industries to the community to balance the assessment base and provide employment opportunities.
- To accommodate the less-desirable effects of industry.

POLICIES

6.7.1 Future industrial expansion should be directed to the potential future industrial sites as indicated in Map 3.

6.7.2 The town should consider discussing with the County of Warner the possibility to swap land parcels for parcels that are no longer suitable due to the realignment of the highway, to accommodate potential commercial and industrial growth areas.

6.7.3 An area structure plan should be prepared for the northwest area, east of the Highway 4 realignment (parcels north of 10 Avenue North), to establish areas suitable for future industrial development.

6.7.4 If a new industrial area is established north of 10 Avenue North, redevelopment of the existing industrial area to highway commercial or a mix of light industrial and highway commercial uses, or even possibly residential uses should be considered.

6.7.5 Industrial activities should be compatible with the town's physical environment and industrial activities shall comply with Alberta Environment and other provincial, federal or municipal standards in respect to noise, odour, and other noxious emissions and fire or explosive hazards.

6.7.6 Land use classification should be flexible so as to permit a wide range of light industrial, service, limited retail and recreational land uses to locate on industrial land.

6.7.7 Existing industrial uses that are not compatible with adjacent land uses should be encouraged to relocate (land swapping) to better-designated industrial areas.

6.7.8 The town should identify suitable land for a possible new industrial park. In locating the new industrial park, consideration should be given to such matters as adjacent land uses, municipal services, transportation access and future growth directions.

6.7.9 The approval of any industrial development or subdivision may require the developer to enter into an agreement with the town pursuant to the *Municipal Government Act*, to provide or pay for the construction of roads, the provision of services, and any other matter which the Council or the Subdivision and Development Authority may require to be addressed.

6.7.10 Any proposed industrial development:

(a) shall meet all the required and appropriate regulations of the Alberta Building Code; and

(b) shall be serviced through the town's water, sewage and electrical utility systems, unless it is determined by the Development Authority that this is not required.

6.7.11 The town may institute architectural and design controls for structures within the industrial areas for the purpose of maintaining the appearance of the area and the image of the community.

6.7.12 Industrial buildings situated adjacent to non-industrial areas or major roadways should have a high standard of building design and exterior finishing. Building exteriors on all four sides shall be constructed of materials considered first class exterior finishes.

6.7.13 The town should require and apply landscaping minimums in future industrial developments, which may be placed as a condition of approval on a development permit. Buffering, berming or fencing may be required by the Development Authority in areas where industrial uses abut non-industrial uses, or are clearly visible from major roadways.

6.7.14 Municipal servicing and road paving in industrial areas should coincide with potential growth and the town may allow construction to be completed in phases to lessen the costs. This will be allowed at the discretion of Council or the Subdivision and Development Authority.

6.7.15 The identification and reclamation of brownfield sites in a timely manner is encouraged.

6.7.16 Opportunities for alternative energy development, such as solar energy, should be considered.

6.8 Recreation/Parks and Community Facilities

OBJECTIVES

- To provide and maintain quality parks and recreational facilities to serve all residents.
- To consider the preparation of a recreation services and facility master plan.
- To ensure that future land developments preserve natural features and provide adequate or open space for residents.
- To encourage new partnerships or proposals that would assist the town in providing parks and recreational facilities in a cost-effective method.

POLICIES

6.8.1 Future recreational growth and development strategies for the town should take into consideration:

(a) Promoting open space development on existing vacant lots.

(b) Future residential development east of town, should incorporate smaller open spaces interspersed in residential neighbourhoods to serve active and passive recreational needs to be identified in an area structure plan.

(c) Opportunities for accommodating parking facilities should be examined, as parking is a concern around the Civic Centre.

(d) The town should investigate the viability of establishing a large active recreation area south of 10 Avenue North in the vicinity of the closed landfill if development of the area for other uses is not feasible.

6.8.2 The town should continue to encourage the commitment of residential developers to incorporate green space and community parks into future developments that meet the town's needs.

6.8.3 The provision of new parks, playgrounds, open space, and walkways may be accomplished through allowing smaller tot lots in new residential areas, and encouraging open space to be left in a more natural state, including landscape elements of native prairie vegetation, to help lower maintenance costs and irrigation needs.

6.8.4 The town should encourage citizen organizations and volunteers to fundraise and/or donate sweat equity to upgrade playground or park areas.

6.8.5 The town should review and update the Recreation Master Plan to reflect current facility management and direct future recreation expansion.

6.8.6 Future recreational development should have regard to optimizing the use of land for both social and recreational facilities. The use of open space areas to accommodate a broad range of activities and user groups without creating unsafe conditions or potential conflicts among users is encouraged.

6.8.7 The operation of recreation facilities should be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure they are meeting the public's needs and are operating in an efficient manner.

6.8.8 The town should continue to work with school authorities and support the shared use of open space and playground areas.

6.8.9 The town, pursuant to section 666 of the *Municipal Government Act*, shall require that open space provisions are ensured through adequate acquisition of municipal reserve land and fees in lieu-of-land dedication. The dedication of municipal and environmental reserves shall be carried out at the time of subdivision.

6.8.10 Public access and enjoyment of water features will be encouraged, where feasible.

6.8.11 Storm water management facilities should be designed to function as part of the open space system, where feasible.

6.9 Municipal and Community Service/Support

OBJECTIVES

- To evaluate the need for new community services, programs or facilities.
- To continue cooperation with service clubs, volunteer organizations and government agencies.
- To continue cooperative roles with health authorities and protection services to ensure town residents' needs are met.
- To achieve and maintain a high level of community and social services in the town.

POLICIES

6.9.1 The town shall attempt to balance the needs of natural and cultural environments with economic development, recreation and individual landowners as a reflection of community values.

6.9.2 The town should continue to support and work in mutual agreement with other government departments or agencies that help provide various community services to residents.

6.9.3 Where possible, the town should continue to cooperate with the town's service clubs and other volunteer agencies.

6.9.4 The town should encourage non-profit groups/organizations and provincial service agencies to establish services and operate in the community to enhance the level and quality of existing community services.

6.9.5 Programs and initiatives should be developed that encourage and enhance volunteerism and community service organizations as they contribute considerably to the quality of life in the town.

6.10 Transportation and Utilities/Municipal Services

OBJECTIVES

- To ensure that future land developments have adequate transit and utility services provided, which also meet the minimum standards or capacities required by the town.
- To maintain a transportation network that meets the needs of the community and provides both safe and efficient routes.
- To ensure that future land developments have adequate infrastructure and that water and sewage treatment services are able to handle the minimum capacities required for future growth.
- To establish guidelines for developers regarding the provision of municipal services that are necessary to serve subdivisions or developments.

POLICIES

Transportation

6.10.1 The town should endeavour to maintain open dialogue with Alberta Transportation regarding Highway 4 and Highway 501, including any changes to the highways that may have important impacts on the community and may explore the development of highway vicinity agreements with the Ministry.

6.10.2 Residential street designs shall continue to employ a hierarchical road pattern, which provides local, collector and arterial roadways to service the population.

6.10.3 Street designs should consider opportunities to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists.

6.10.4 Pedestrian and cycling routes are integral components of the transportation, recreation and open space systems; residential designs should focus on linking parks, recreation, and community and education facilities through pedestrian and cycling routes.

6.10.5 All utilities for new developments shall be underground. Utilities in this context also include shallow utilities such as electrical power lines, cable services and telephone services.

6.10.6 The town shall maintain a consistent standard of road design in all new subdivisions.

6.10.7 The minimum setback of developments from public roadways that developers must adhere to shall be the standards established under the town's Land Use Bylaw in effect.

Municipal Services

6.10.8 Developers of residential, commercial or industrial lots shall ensure that adequate and safe lighting is provided on their development and shall meet the specifications and standards required by the Development Authority.

6.10.9 The burden of supplying or upgrading infrastructure services to subdivisions or new developments shall be borne by the developer and not the town.

6.10.10 The town should monitor the condition of utilities that exist in town in order to ensure a sufficient infrastructure framework to support community growth and development.

6.10.11 The town should review the quality of municipal services and, where appropriate, individual services should be improved, to ensure a consistently high level of services and facilities is achieved and maintained.

6.10.12 The design capacity of water and sewage treatment facilities shall be taken into consideration as new developments tie into the existing distribution and treatment systems.

6.10.13 The pattern of storm drainage and the systems used to handle storm drainage shall be evaluated and updated as new developments occur. The north end of town should be identified as a potential problem area and given due consideration in the planning and design of any new subdivision or development.

6.10.14 The town should continue to work in conjunction with the community committee, which is reviewing the possibility of pursuing an on-river storage reservoir concept to capture and store more of the province's share of the spring runoff from the Milk River as it flows by the town.

6.10.15 The town should ensure adequate planning and precautions are needed to limit the effects of storm water run-off or flash flooding, as the area north of 8 Avenue North has been identified as a possible problem area due to the topography.

6.10.16 Pursuant to section 648 of the *Municipal Government Act*, the town may require that developers pay off-site levies to help offset the capital costs for expanding municipal services, such as roads, water, sewage or storm water drainage facilities or land required for the connection with any of these facilities, if it is determined that a subdivision or development may directly impact these facilities.

6.10.17 Concurrency of services and facilities with impacts of development is expected. Development will not be permitted to outpace infrastructure capacity.

6.10.18 The town will continue to encourage residents, business and institutions to reduce their overall consumption of treated municipal water.

6.10.19 A water use and sewer assessment may be required as part of an area structure plan, conceptual design scheme, subdivision application, and/or development permit application to determine water demand and infrastructure requirements.

6.11 Community Economy and Finance

OBJECTIVES

- To attempt to increase employment opportunities and to integrate tourism and trucking industry-support policies into economic development.
- To protect and support existing industry and commercial uses and to diversify local economic base by attracting new retail and manufacturing firms.
- To provide suitable land for future growth and development needs.
- To promote the improvement of the community image through encouraging both public and private support.

POLICIES

6.11.1 The town should investigate both programs and sources of funding from senior levels of government and other non-government organizations that may be available for some infrastructure upgrades as well as other municipal projects.

6.11.2 Attempts should be made to make the town a clean, attractive community by encouraging the cleanup of unsightly premises, redevelopment, and enforcing regulations through a municipal bylaw.

6.11.3 Home-based occupations are encouraged and permitted in residential areas as long as it is determined there will be no negative impacts to neighbouring property owners. The criteria for home-based businesses shall continue to be administered through the standards established under the town's Land Use Bylaw.

6.11.4 The town should continue to encourage and support local business, and the promotion of Milk River by local bodies as a service centre for residents and tourists should be given a high priority.

6.11.5 The town will continue to work with the Chamber of Commerce, Milk River Business Association, Regional Economic Development and Tourism Committee, and other business or government organizations to attract quality jobs or businesses without a host of negative impacts.

6.11.6 The town should continue to work with developers in creating a positive atmosphere for development and ensuring that land and municipal services will be available for future growth.

Town Of
Milk River

Municipal Development Plan

Appendix A

SOUTH SASKATCHEWAN REGIONAL PLAN

Appendix A: SOUTH SASKATCHEWAN REGIONAL PLAN

South Saskatchewan Regional Plan Conformance

The Alberta Land Use Framework, implemented by the Provincial Government in 2008 provides a blueprint for land-use management and decision-making that addresses Alberta's growth pressures. The Land Use Framework established seven new land-use regions and requires the development of a regional plan for each. The Town of Milk River is located within the geographical area of the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (SSRP) which was effective the fall of 2014. The SSRP lays out a number of key desired outcomes and strategic directions relating to the region's economy, people, environment, and resources.

All statutory plans and relevant documents must comply with the SSRP by September 1, 2019. Compliance can be achieved by updating relevant statutory and other relevant documents, and filing a statutory declaration declaring compliance with the province. The timing of the 2017 update of the Municipal Development Plan provides the opportunity for Milk River to align this plan with the SSRP. However, on-going consideration of what alignment means is recommended, as the implications of the SSRP continue to be determined and realized at all levels of government in Alberta.

The following excerpts from the SSRP relevant to the Municipal Development Plan (MDP) are identified and the most pertinent MDP policies highlighted:

Section 1: Use Land Efficiently

1. All land use planners and decision-makers responsible for land-use decisions are encouraged to consider the efficient use of land principle in land-use planning and decision making. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 5.1)

    1.1 Reduce the rate at which land is converted from an undeveloped state into permanent, built environment.

    Relevant MDP Policy: 6.2.1; 6.2.7; 6.2.9-6.2.12; 6.4.9; 6.5.7; 6.5.10; 6.6.3; 6.7.15

    1.2 Utilize the minimum amount of land necessary for new development and build at a higher density than current practices.

    Relevant MDP Policy: 6.2.1; 6.2.10; 6.5.7; 6.5.9; 6.5.10; 6.5.13; 6.6.3

    1.3 Increase the proportion of new development that takes place within already developed or disturbed lands either through infill, redevelopment and/or shared use, relative to new development that takes place on previously undeveloped lands.

    Relevant MDP Policy: 6.2.10; 6.5.10; 6.5.13; 6.6.3; 6.6.6; 6.6.10; 6.6.15; 6.7.4

    1.4 Plan, design and locate new development in a manner that best utilizes existing infrastructure and minimizes the need for new or expanded infrastructure.

    Relevant MDP Policy: 6.2.4; 6.2.7; 6.2.10; 6.5.1; 6.5.4; 6.5.10; 6.10.10

1.5. Reclaim and/or convert previously developed lands that are no longer required in a progressive and timely manner.

Relevant MDP Policy: 6.6.5-6.6.7; 6.6.10; 6.7.4; 6.7.7; 6.7.15

1.6 Provide decision-makers, land users and individuals the information they need to make decisions and choices that support efficient land use.

Relevant MDP Policy: 6.1.1; 6.1.2; 6.1.4; 6.1.5-6.1.8; 6.2.4; 6.2.9; 6.2.10; 6.6.4; 6.10.2; 6.10.19

2. Build awareness and understanding of the efficient use of land principle and the application of land-use planning tools that reduce the footprint of the built environment, how they might be applied and how their effectiveness would be measured over time with municipalities, land-use decisions-makers and land users, on both public and private lands. (5.2)

Relevant MDP Policy: 6.2.1; 6.2.2; 6.2.6; 6.2.7; 6.2.10; 6.5.10; 6.10.10

Section 2: Planning Cooperation and Integration

Work together to achieve the shared environmental, economic and social outcomes in the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan and minimize negative environmental cumulative effects. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.1)

Relevant MDP Policy: 6.1.2; 6.3.1; 6.3.3

Address common planning issues, especially where valued natural features and historic resource are of interests to more than one stakeholder and where the possible effect of development transcends jurisdictional boundaries. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.2)

Relevant MDP Policy: 6.3.2; 6.3.3

Coordinate and work with each other in their respective planning activities (such as in the development of plans and policies) and development approval processes to address issues of mutual interest. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.3)

Relevant MDP Policy: 6.1.3; 6.3.4; 6.7.2

Work together to anticipate, plan and set aside adequate land with the physical infrastructure and services required to accommodate future population growth and accompanying community development needs. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.4)

Relevant MDP Policy: 6.2.1; 6.5.5; 6.9.1; 6.10.10; 6.10.11; 6.10.17; 6.11.6

Build awareness regarding the application of land-use planning tools that reduce the impact of residential, commercial and industrial developments on the land, including approaches and best practices for promoting the efficient use of private and public lands. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.5)

Relevant MDP Policy: 6.2.10; 6.6.10; 6.6.11; 6.11.6

Pursue joint use agreements, regional services commissions and any other joint cooperative arrangements that contribute specially to Intermunicipal land use planning. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.6)

Relevant MDP Policy: Section 6.3

Consider the value of intermunicipal development planning to address land use on fringe areas, airport vicinity protection plans or other areas of mutual interest. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.7)

Relevant MDP Policy: 6.3.4; 6.3.5

Coordinate land use planning activities with First Nations, irrigation districts, school boards, health authorities and other agencies on areas of mutual interest. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.8)

Relevant MDP Policy: 6.3.3; 6.4.2; 6.8.8; 6.9.2-6.9.5

Section 3: Building Sustainable Communities

Provide an appropriate mix of agricultural, residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, public and recreational land uses; developed in an orderly, efficient, compatible, safe and economical manner. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.11)

Relevant MDP Policy: 6.2.2; 6.2.13; 6.5.9; 6.6.19; 6.8.7; 6.6.21; 6.7.6; 6.9.1; 6.11.3

Contribute to a healthy environment, healthy economy and a high quality of life. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.12)

Relevant MDP Policy: 6.5.6; 6.5.9; 6.6.8; 6.7.5; 6.7.7; 6.7.11-6.7.13; Section 6.8; Section 6.9; 6.10.3; 6.10.4; Section 6.11

Provide a wide range of economic development opportunities, stimulate local employment growth and promote a healthy and stable economy. Municipalities are also expected to complement regional and provincial economic development initiatives. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.13)

Relevant MDP Policy: Section 6.3; Section 6.9; Section 6.11

Feature innovative housing design, range of densities and housing types such as mixed use, cluster development, secondary suites, seniors' centres and affordable housing. Provide the opportunity for the variety of residential environments which feature innovative designs and densities and which make efficient use of existing facilities, infrastructure and public transportation. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.14)

Relevant MDP Policy: Section 6.5

Minimize potential conflict of land uses adjacent to natural resource extraction, manufacturing and other industrial developments. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.15)

Relevant MDP Policy: 6.4.1; 6.7.3; 6.7.5; 6.7.7; 6.7.8; 6.7.12; 6.7.13

Minimize potential conflict of land uses within and adjacent to areas prone to flooding, erosion, subsidence, or wildfire. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.16)

Relevant MDP Policy: 6.4.8; 6.5.14; 6.10.15

Complement their municipal financial management strategies, whereby land use decisions contribute to the financial sustainability of the municipality. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.17)

Relevant MDP Policy: 6.2.3; 6.2.7; 6.2.8; 6.5.1; 6.7.9; 6.7.10; 6.7.14; 6.8.9; 6.10.8-6.10.19; 6.11.1

Locate schools and health facilities, transportation and transit and other amenities appropriately, to meet increased demand from a growing population. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.18)

Relevant MDP Policy: 6.2.1; Section 6.9

Section 4: Agriculture

Identify areas where agricultural activities, including extensive and intensive agricultural and associated activities, should be the primary land use in the region. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.19)

Relevant MDP Policy: The Town has determined that this strategy is most appropriately addressed within an Intermunicipal Development Plan.

Limit the fragmentation of agricultural lands and their premature conversion to other, non-agricultural uses, especially within areas where agriculture has been identified as a primary land use in the region. Municipal planning, policies and tools that promote the efficient use of land should be used where appropriate to support this strategy. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.20)

Relevant MDP Policy: 6.2.10; 6.2.11; 6.4.9; and most appropriately addressed within an Intermunicipal Development Plan.

Employ appropriate planning tools to direct non-agricultural subdivision and development to areas where such development will not constrain agricultural activities, or to areas of lower-quality agricultural lands. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.21)

Relevant MDP Policy: 6.2.12; 6.4.9; and most appropriately addressed within an Intermunicipal Development Plan.

Minimize conflicts between intensive agricultural operations and incompatible land use by using appropriate planning tools, setback distances and other mitigating measures. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.22)

Relevant MDP Policy: The Town has determined that this strategy is most appropriately addressed within an Intermunicipal Development Plan

Section 5: Water and Watersheds

Utilize or incorporate measures which minimize or mitigate possible negative impacts on important water resources or risks to health, public safety and loss to property damage due to hazards associated with water, such as flooding, erosion and subsidence due to bank stability issues, etc., within the scope of their jurisdiction. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.23)

Relevant MDP Policy: 6.2.6; 6.4.8; 6.10.13; 6.10.15

Incorporate measures in future land-use planning decisions to mitigate the impact of floods through appropriate flood hazard area management and emergency response planning for floods. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.24)

Relevant MDP Policy: 6.5.4; 6.10.15

Prohibit unauthorized future use or development of land in the floodway in accordance with the *Flood Recovery Reconstruction Act* and the Floodway Development Regulation under development, which will control, regulate or prohibit use of development of land that is located in a floodway and define authorized uses. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.25)

Relevant MDP Policy: Flood mapping data is not available for the Milk River. The Town of Milk River Land Use Bylaw contains requirements for consideration of development in proximity of areas subject to potential flooding.

Identify and consider, based on available information including information from the Government of Alberta, the values of significant water resources and other water features, such as ravines, valleys, riparian lands, stream corridors, lakeshores, wetlands, and unique environmentally significant landscapes within their boundaries. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.26)

Relevant MDP Policy: 6.10.18; 6.10.19

Determine appropriate land-use patterns in the vicinity of these significant water resources and other water features. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.27)

Relevant MDP Policy: 6.9.1

Consider Local impacts as well as impacts on the entire watershed. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.28)

Relevant MDP Policy: 6.10.18; 6.10.19

Consider a range of approaches to facilitate the conservation, protection or restoration of these water features and the protection of sensitive aquatic habitat and other aquatic resources. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.29)

Relevant MDP Policy: 6.10.18; 6.10.19

Establish appropriate setbacks from waterbodies to maintain water quality, flood water conveyance and storage, bank stability and habitat. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.30)

Relevant MDP Policy: 8.2.6

Assess existing developments located within flood hazard areas for long-term opportunities for redevelopment to reduce risk associated with flooding, including human safety, property damage, infrastructure and economic loss. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.31)

Relevant MDP Policy: Flood mapping data is not available for the Milk River. Existing development in proximity of the Milk River is already limited and comprised of a golf course, camp ground and visitor centre.

Facilitate public assess and enjoyment of water features, to the extent possible. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.32)

Relevant MDP Policy: 6.8.10; 6.8.11

Use available guidance, where appropriate, from water and watershed planning initiatives in support of municipal planning. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.33)

Relevant MDP Policy: 6.3.3

Section 6: Historic Resources

Identify significant historic resources to foster their preservation and enhancement for the use and enjoyment by present and future generations. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.34)

Relevant MDP Policy: 6.6.20

Work toward the designation of Municipal Historic Resources to preserve municipally significant historic places. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.35)

Relevant MDP Policy: 6.6.20

Formulate agreements with the Ministry for development referrals to assist in the identification and protection of historic resources within the scope of their jurisdiction. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.36)

Relevant MDP Policy: The Town has determined that this would most appropriately be addressed through the Land Use Bylaw referral process.

Section 7: Transportation

Identify the location, nature and purpose of key provincial transportation corridors and related facilities. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.37)

Relevant MDP Policy: 6.3.2; 6.10.1

Work with the Ministry to minimized negative interactions between the transportation corridors and related facilities identified in accordance with strategy 8.37 above and the surrounding areas and land uses through the establishment of compatible land-use patterns. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.38)

Relevant MDP Policy: 6.3.2; 6.6.17

Enter into highway vicinity agreements with the Ministry and employ appropriate setback distances and other mitigating measures relating to noise, air pollution and safety to limit access if subdivision and development is to be approved in the vicinity of the areas identified in accordance with 8.37 above. (SSRP Implementation Plan Section 8.39)

Relevant MDP Policy: 6.10.1

Town Of
Milk River

Municipal Development Plan

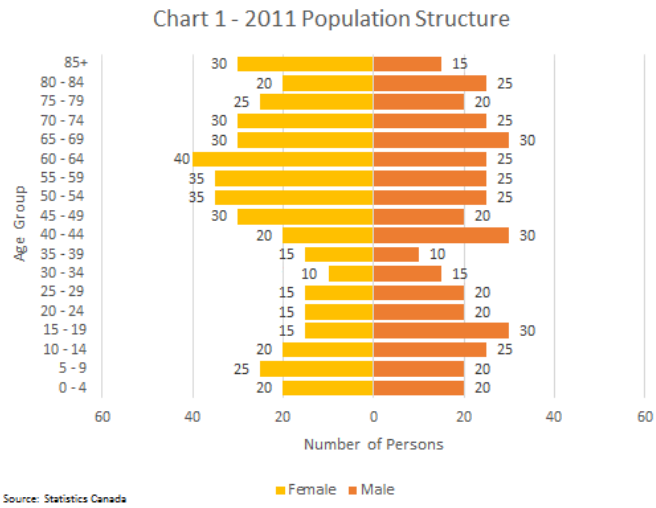
Appendix B

CHARTS AND TABLES

Appendix B: CHARTS AND TABLES

CHART 1

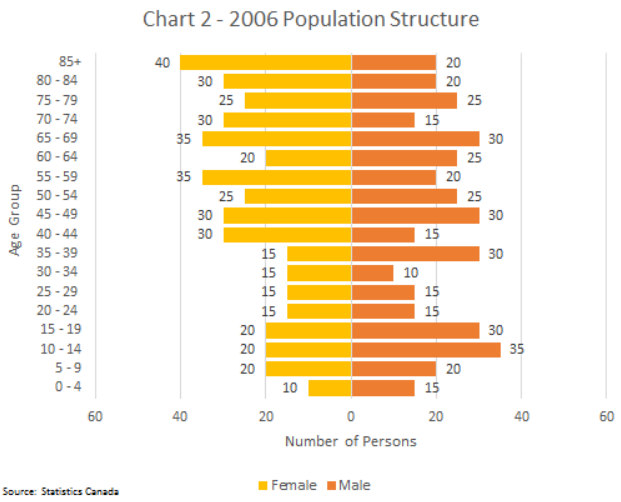
Town of Milk River



Source: Statistics Canada

CHART 2

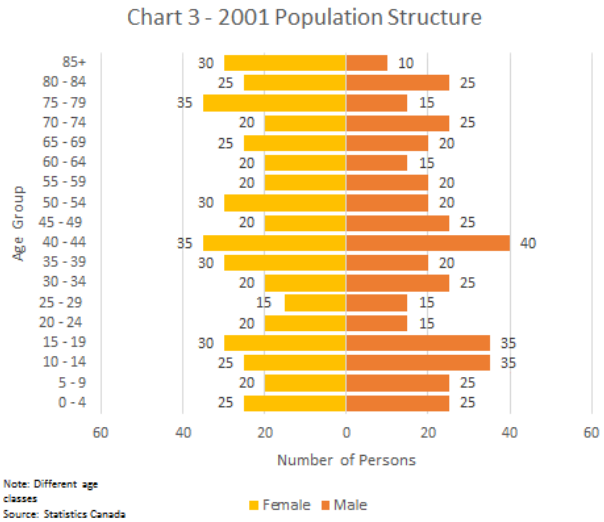
Town of Milk River



Source: Statistics Canada

CHART 3

Town of Milk River

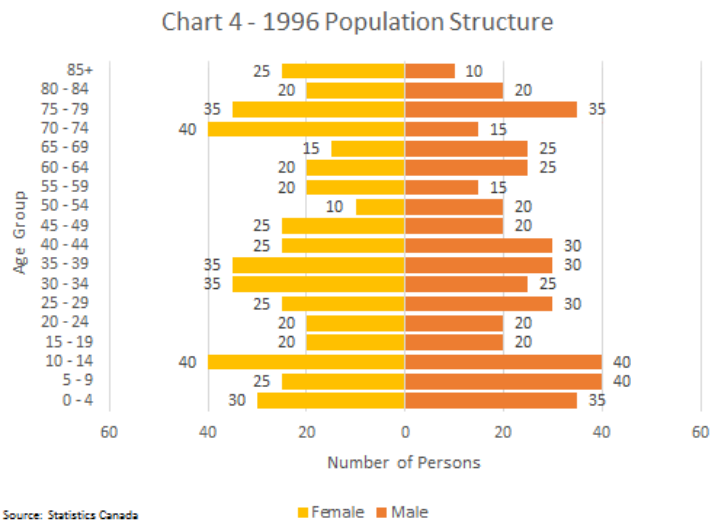


Note: Different age classes

Source: Statistics Canada

CHART 4

Town of Milk River

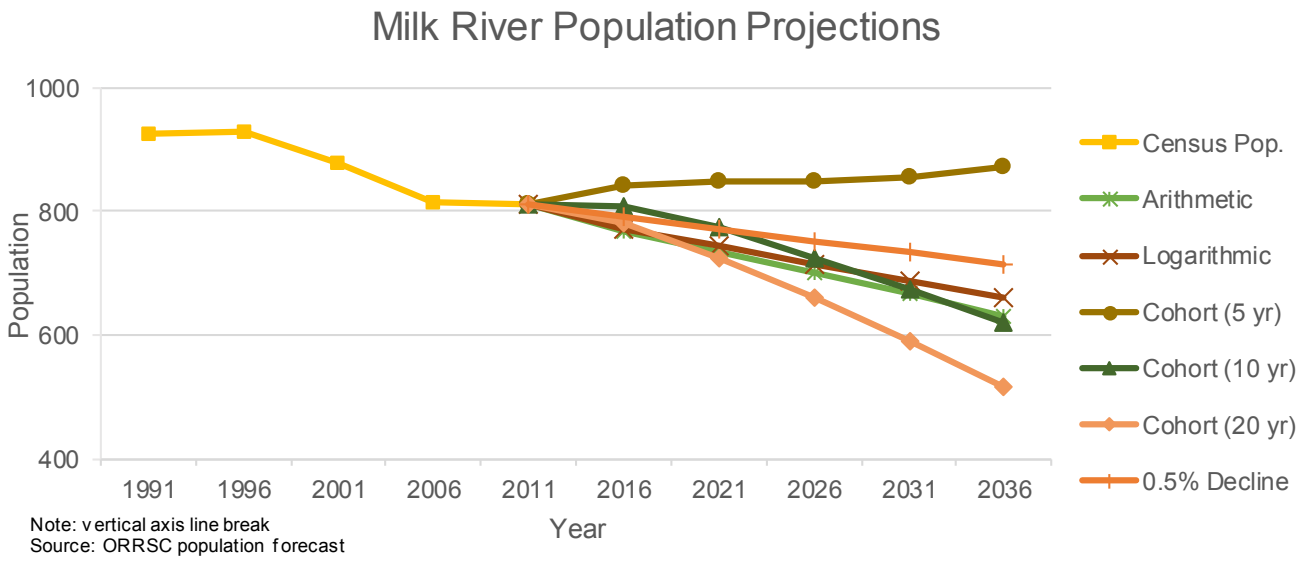


Source: Statistics Canada

CHART 5

Town of Milk River
Population Projections 2016 - 2036

Year	Census Pop.	Arithmetic	Logarithmic	Cohort (5 yr)	Cohort (10 yr)	Cohort (20 yr)	0.5% Decline	0.5% Growth	1.0% Growth
1991	926								
1996	929								
2001	879								
2006	816								
2011	811	811	811	811	811	811	811	811	811
2016		769	773	842	810	783	791	831	852
2021		735	743	848	774	726	771	852	896
2026		701	715	849	726	660	752	874	942
2031		666	687	855	675	590	734	896	990
2036		632	660	873	622	517	715	919	1040



Note: vertical axis line break
Source: ORRSC population forecast

POPULATION STATISTICS

TABLE 1

Town of Milk River
Comparison of Population Structure for Milk River – 1991 to 2011

Age Category	2011	2006	2001	1996	1991
under 15	15.5%	15.4%	18.2%	22.6%	20.5%
15 - 24	8.1%	9.3%	10.8%	8.6%	11.3%
25 - 39	10.6%	11.7%	14.8%	19.4%	19.4%
40 - 64	35.4%	30.9%	28.9%	22.5%	22.5%
65 and over	30.4%	32.7%	27.3%	25.8%	25.8%

Source: Compiled from data acquired from Statistics Canada, 1991-2011 Censuses

TABLE 2

Town of Milk River
Population Projections Showing Percentage Population of Varying Age Groups
(20-Year Cohort Survival)

Age Group	2011 Base Population	2016 Projection	2021 Projection	2026 Projection	2031 Projection	2036 Projection
0 - 4	4.9	3.6	3.0	2.4	2.7	3.1
5 - 19	16.6	16.6	14.9	12.4	10.0	8.9
20 - 29	8.6	3.4	7.2	8.3	7.6	5.0
30 - 49	18.5	16.6	12.1	11.1	11.2	9.5
50 - 64	22.8	21.5	21.5	17.3	14.4	11.6
65+	30.8	41.5	41.5	48.5	54.1	61.9
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Compiled from data acquired from the Oldman River Regional Services Commission Population Projections 2011-2036

TABLE 3

Town of Milk River
Subdivision Activity – 2004-2015

		PROPOSED USE OF LOTS						
Year	No. of Applications	Residential	Country Residential	Institutional	Commercial	Industrial	Misc.	Total Lots
2015								
2014	1	2						2
2013	1				1			1
2012	1	6						6
2011	3	15				2		17
2010								
2009								
2008	2	2						2
2007	1	1						1
2006								
2005								
2004								
TOTAL	9	26			1	2		29

Source: Oldman River Regional Services Commission

TABLE 4

Town of Milk River
Total Number of Private Households by Household Size

Household Size	Number	Percentage
1 person	110	30.6
2 person	160	44.4
3 person	35	9.7
4 person	30	8.3
5 person	15	4.2
6 or more	10	2.8
TOTAL	360	100.0

Source: Statistics Canada 2011 Census

TABLE 5

Town of Milk River
Private Dwellings – Period of Construction

Period of Construction	Number	Percentage
Before 1946	65	18.5
1946 – 1960	90	25.7
1961 – 1970	30	8.5
1971 – 1980	80	22.9
1981 – 1990	60	17.1
1991 – 1995	15	4.3
1996 – 2001	10	2.9

Source: Statistics Canada 2001 Census

TABLE 6

Town of Milk River
Occupied Dwellings by Ownership Status

Dwellings	2001 Number	2006 Number
Owned	295	295
Rented	60	90

Source: Statistics Canada 2006 Census

Town Of
Milk River

Municipal Development Plan

Appendix C

MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN QUESTIONNAIRE SUMMARY

Appendix C:

MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN QUESTIONNAIRE SUMMARY

One of the legislative requirements of the *Municipal Government Act* regarding the preparation of a Municipal Development Plan is the stipulation that the community at large has an opportunity to participate in the process. Section 636(1) of the *Municipal Government Act* specifies that a municipality must provide a means for any person who may be affected by the preparation of the plan to participate in the process and to make suggestions and representations.

As a method of determining citizens' concerns and opinions, the Town of Milk River chose to mail out questionnaires to their citizens. The Municipal Development Plan Questionnaire was mailed out in June of 2001 and was to be returned by July 5, 2001. This was a detailed questionnaire designed to provide information about the direction Milk River should pursue in the future.

A total of 346 questionnaires were circulated to residents by direct mailing in the Town of Milk River with 131 responses. The response rate of 38 percent was very high for a mail-out questionnaire. According to the literature on statistic methodology and from previous experience, response rates are usually between 10 and 20 percent. The response rate of 38 percent is also comparable to questionnaires in the past where the average return rate for 15 southern Alberta communities was 41.5 percent. In 1989, a similar questionnaire was conducted for the 1990 General Municipal Plan in Milk River and received a response rate of 41.9 percent.

The questionnaire was divided into nine sections covering the following topics: Respondent Background, Town Appearance, Recreational and Cultural Facilities, Protection Services, Health Services, Education, Town Administration/Roads and Streets, Town Funding, Conclusion.

The following is a brief overview of some of the main trends found in the summary; for more detailed results please see the Town of Milk River Municipal Development Plan Questionnaire Response Booklet where the tables will give a more complete illustration of the responses to the survey questions.

RESPONDENT PROFILE

- Approximately 53.3 percent of the respondents were female, 39.9 percent male and 6.8 percent of the respondents did not indicate either.
- Approximately 31.3 percent of the questionnaires were completed by people in the 60 and over age group. Another 30.9 percent are under the age of 20 years.
- The 1996 Federal census indicates the 60 and over age group comprises approximately 30.7 percent of Milk River's population and the under 20 age group comprises 27 percent of Milk River's population.

MAJOR SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

- 73 percent of respondents rated Milk River as a good to excellent place to live.
- Average length of time respondents have lived in Milk River is 25.8 years.
- The most important reason why the household chooses to live in Milk River:
    - Employment
    - Close to family and friends
    - Small town atmosphere
- 76 percent of respondents would like to see the Town of Milk River grow at a moderate to rapid rate (10 to 14 or more new people a year).
- Major likes about living in Milk River (64.5 percent of the respondents):
    - Friendly people
    - Low crime rate (safety and security)
    - Small size of town
- Major dislikes (21.5 percent of the respondents):
    - Town Council
    - People (difficult to fit in, cliques)
    - Cost of living (high taxes)
- Facilities most needed in the town:
    - Activities/programs for youth
    - Physical fitness center/gym
    - Skating rink/arena
- Respondents in favour of the following proposals for Milk River:
    - 77.8 percent of the respondents (a ratio of 25:1) agreed the town should take an aggressive approach to economic development with incentives to attract businesses.
    - Between 60 and 74 percent of the respondents were in favour of owning and developing land for residential, commercial and industrial purposes and to upgrade downtown.
    - Approximately 46 percent were in favour of promoting discussion and cooperation with the County of Warner regarding the future development within the town's fringe.
    - 38.2 percent were in favour of promoting pedestrian traffic by employing streetscaping and unique street furniture.

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF HOW RESPONDENTS FELT ABOUT:

1. **Town Appearance**

   The general appearance of the town, the new residential areas and new residential development were rated as good, with the downtown, main entrance and older residential rated as average.

2. **Recreational and Cultural Facilities**

   Most categories were rated as good with parks and playgrounds rated as average by 41.9 percent and 37.5 percent respectively. The walking paths were rated as average to poor by 43.6 percent of the respondents.

3. **Protection Services**

   The fire and ambulance services were rated as excellent and the RCMP services were rated as good. The remaining categories received negative ratings. The weed and pest control and bylaw enforcement received average to poor and very poor ratings, while animal control received a very poor rating of 25.2 percent and poor of 23.6 percent.

4. **Health Services**

   Most categories were rated as good with the Hospital and Nursing Home receiving an excellent rating. Mental Health received a high no opinion rating of 38.2 percent this may be attributed to many respondents being unfamiliar with the services.

5. **Education**

   Most categories received a rating of good, except Preschool received a high 'no opinion' rating of 36.7 percent, however preschool was also rated as good by 30.5 percent of the respondents. All categories received a high 'no opinion' rating which can be attributed to respondents being unfamiliar with the system because they may not have children in the system.

6. **Town Administration/Roads and Streets**

   Most categories received good to average responses. Respondents generally rated the infrastructure and general administration as good, while the maintenance categories and the community planning, access to local government and downtown parking were rated as average.

Town Of
Milk River

Municipal Development Plan

AMENDMENTS

TOWN OF MILK RIVER
IN THE PROVICE OF ALBERTA

BYLAW NO. 1000

BEING a bylaw of the Town of Milk River, in the Province of Alberta, to amend Bylaw No. 903, being the Town of Milk River Municipal Development Plan.

WHEREAS changes to provincial legislation warrant amendments to the Town of Milk River Municipal Development Plan;

AND WHEREAS the Council of the Town of Milk River wishes to amend the Municipal Development Plan for the purposes of updating the data and including policy to provide compliance with the provisions of the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan and Municipal Government Act, Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000, Chapter M-26, as amended.

AND WHEREAS the bylaw is adopted in accordance with section 692 of the Municipal Government Act, Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000, Chapter M-26, as amended;

NOW THEREFORE, under the authority and subject to the provisions of the Municipal Government Act, Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000, Chapter M-26, as amended, the Council of the Town of Milk River duly assembled does hereby enact the following:

1. That the amendments to the Town of Milk River Municipal Development Plan Bylaw No. 903 in the attached Schedule A are adopted:
    - text shown in *underlined* italics in Schedule A is added to Bylaw No. 903;
    - text shown in ~~strikethrough~~ in Schedule A is deleted from Bylaw No. 903;
    - maps 1 through 5 in Bylaw No. 903 are deleted and replaced with maps 1-3 as shown in Schedule A;
    - charts and tables in Bylaw No. 903 are deleted and replaced with the updated charts and tables as shown in Schedule A; and
    - the title page, dividers, page design, and logo are updated as shown in Schedule A;
2. That the page numbering and formatting are updated accordingly upon preparation of the consolidated version of Bylaw No. 903.
3. That Bylaw No. 903, being the Town of Milk River Municipal Development Plan, is hereby amended.
4. This bylaw comes into effect upon third and final reading hereof.
5. That a consolidated version of Bylaw No. 903 be prepared.

READ a **first** time this 13th day of March, 2017.

D. M. Hawco

Mayor – David Hawco

Chief Administrative Officer – Ryan Leuzinger

READ a **second** time this 10th day of April, 2017, as amended.

D. M. Hawco

Mayor – David Hawco

Chief Administrative Officer – Ryan Leuzinger

READ a **third** time and finally PASSED this 10th day of April, 2017, as amended.

Mayor – David Hawco

Chief Administrative Officer – Ryan Leuzinger