

VILLAGE OF STIRLING

MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

BYLAW NO. 528-22



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VILLAGE OF
STIRLING
NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

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Prepared for the Village of Stirling

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PART 1: OUR PLAN

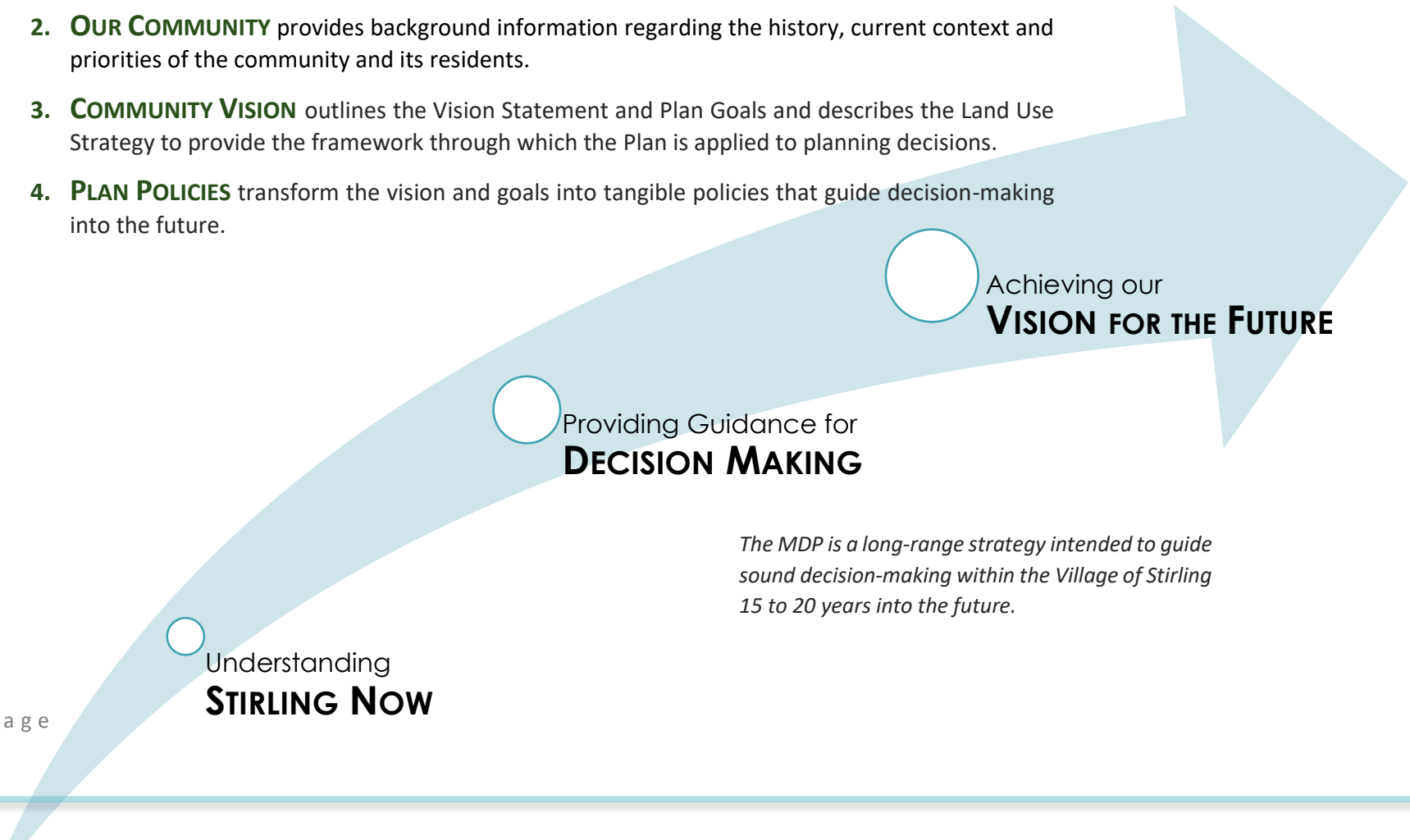
It can be said that Municipalities are in the business of creating communities. Creating successful communities does not happen on its own—it requires community planning. The Municipal Development Plan (MDP) is the most common community planning tool used to help a municipality achieve its desired future by addressing matters including future land use, provision of services, transportation, social and economic development and more.

This MDP will help the Village preserve and protect the distinct elements that contribute to the unique way of life in Stirling, while forging a path forward. This journey will support diverse opportunities and contribute to our sustainable future.

PURPOSE OF THE MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Stirling is a unique, historic community which provides residents a high quality of life. As the community grows, the Village must take advantage of potential opportunities and leverage its assets to be better prepared for the future. A ***Municipal Development Plan*** (MDP or Plan) serves as an effective long-range planning tool, designed to provide the community with a roadmap for rational development into the future. It is intended that the policies contained in the MDP be used as a guide, providing a strategic perspective to help inform development and management decisions of elected officials, municipal administration, landowners, and developers alike. The Plan contains 4 Parts:

1. **OUR PLAN** sets the stage for the MDP (or Plan) by identifying the provincial hierarchy of planning documents and outlining the mechanisms through which the Plan is implemented.
2. **OUR COMMUNITY** provides background information regarding the history, current context and priorities of the community and its residents.
3. **COMMUNITY VISION** outlines the Vision Statement and Plan Goals and describes the Land Use Strategy to provide the framework through which the Plan is applied to planning decisions.
4. **PLAN POLICIES** transform the vision and goals into tangible policies that guide decision-making into the future.



The MDP is a long-range strategy intended to guide sound decision-making within the Village of Stirling 15 to 20 years into the future.

The content of the Plan is designed to encourage the Village to integrate proposals into long-term plans for the financial and social well-being of the community, as well as the physical landscape. By ensuring that development takes place in a sustainable, orderly, and rational manner, a community can balance the economic, social, and environmental needs of its residents and provide a degree of stability and certainty to the community.

In accordance with the requirements of the *Municipal Government Act, Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000, Chapter M-26,* the MDP must address:

- **FUTURE LAND USE AND PROPOSALS FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT**
- **MUNICIPAL SERVICES & FACILITIES**
- **TRANSPORATION SYSTEMS**
- **MUNICIPAL & SCHOOL RESERVES**
- **LAND USES ADJACENT TO SOUR GAS FACILITIES**
- **PROTECTION OF AGRICULTURAL OPERATIONS**
- **COORDINATION WITH ADJACENT MUNICIPALITIES**

In addition to the required criteria listed, MDPs may address:

- **COORDINATION OF PHYSICAL, SOCIAL & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE MUNICIPALITY**
- **ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS**
- **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**
- **DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS**
- **ANY OTHER MATTER RELATING TO THE PHYSICAL, SOCIAL OR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE MUNICIPALITY**

PLANNING CONTEXT

The MDP is not a stand-alone document, but rather an integral component of a larger context of provincial, regional, and municipal documents and regulations. A hierarchy of statutory planning documents exists in Alberta, which is intended to work together to provide consistency in planning processes. The MDP is informed by the larger context of planning in Alberta and is required to be consistent with higher order plans and regulations.

Provincial Realm



The ***Municipal Government Act*** sets out the legislative framework for planning in Alberta, empowering municipal Council with the authority to create and adopt statutory plans, establish planning approval committees, enforce conditions of planning approvals, and to ensure the public is involved with planning at the local level.

The ***Subdivision & Development Regulation*** outlines basic procedures and approval criteria for subdivision and development decisions at the local level.

The ***Alberta Land Stewardship Act*** is the legal authority to implement the province's Land Use Framework and provide direction and leadership in identifying objectives of the Government regarding land use, economics, and the environment, and sets the stage for regional planning.

Regional Realm



The ***South Saskatchewan Regional Plan*** **(SSRP)** is a legislative instrument that employs a cumulative effect management approach to set policy direction for municipalities to acheive desired environmental, economic and social outcomes within the South Saskatchewan Region. This MDP has been prepared to comply with the intent of the SSRP.

Municipal Realm



The ***Intermunicipal Development Plan*** **(IDP)** is a document that is prepared and agreed-upon by two or more adjacent municipalities and is developed in order to align mutual interests and formalize plans for growth and cooperation on intermunicipal issues. The Village of Stirling and County of Warner have adopted an IDP.

The ***Municipal Development Plan*** **(MDP)** is the primary land use planning and community development guidance document for municipalities in Alberta, and generally contains background and research that help contextualize the past and present development patterns within a community and establishes policies that offer guidance to decision-makers concerning future development.

The ***Land Use Bylaw*** **(LUB)** is a statutory document which designates land-use zoning, prescribes permitted and discretionary uses, and regulates the development of land, buildings and uses within a municipality.

The Village of Stirling commissioned an ***Infrastructure Master Plan*** **(IMP)** in 2020 to evaluate existing infrastructure capacity. The IMP contains an analysis of the current carrying capacity, proposes upgrades, and identifies logical and efficient extensions of municipal water, wastewater, stormwater and road networks throughout the community.

Other statutory and/or non-statutory documents including but not limited to the Village's ***Strategic Business Plan, Noise Bylaw, Dangerous & Unsightly Properties, Management of Refuse & Waste*** and ***Utilities Bylaw***, provide additional support to the management and regulation of municipal lands and services.

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The success of the MDP depends on the degree to which it is integrated into ongoing decision making. The MDP provides the means whereby Council, Village administration and other decision-making bodies such as the Municipal Planning Commission can evaluate situations and proposals in the context of a long-range plan for Stirling. It is primarily a policy document that is to be utilized as a framework within which both public and private sector decision making can occur.

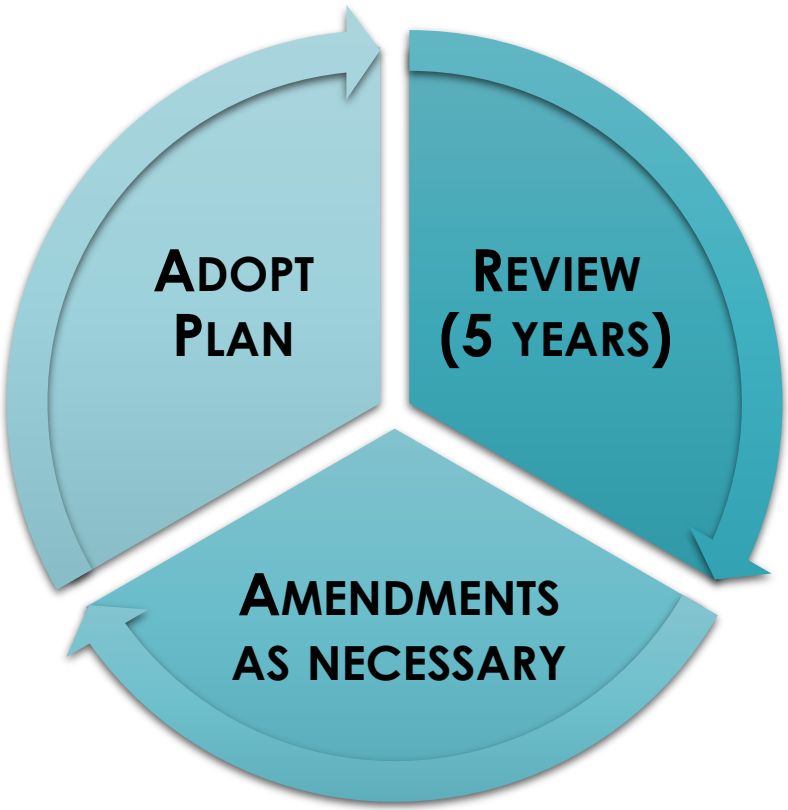
The MDP policies may be implemented throughout various planning and strategic documents and processes, such as: the Land Use Bylaw, Area Structure Plans, area redevelopment plans & conceptual schemes, subdivision & development decisions, development/servicing agreements, capital improvement plans, and/or formal & informal municipal policy directives.

It is important to note that while implementation of the MDP relies on commitment to the goals and policies of the Plan, recommendation for specific municipal projects and directives within the Plan are not intended to represent a commitment to spending or action. Council, as part of its function in providing good government, fostering well-being of the environment, providing services and facilities, and developing and maintaining safe and viable communities, will need to consider any projects and directives referred to in the MDP along with all other Village priorities through its regular processes.

MONITORING & AMENDMENT OF THE PLAN

Regular review of the MDP is necessary to ensure a plan that continues to reflect the priorities and needs of the Village and accounts for changes in development directions, budget realities, and market conditions. Therefore, to ensure the policies remain relevant and the community goals are achievable, the Plan should be reviewed at least every five years.

Minor variations from the policies of the MDP that do not constitute major shift in policy will typically not require an amendment to the MDP, subject to Council approval. Amendment of the Plan may be initiated at any time by Council or the public. Where an amendment is initiated by the public, the applicant will be required to submit background information as deemed necessary by the Village to support the amendment prior to commencement of the bylaw amendment process. Any amendment of the MDP will follow the applicable procedures outlined in the ***Municipal Government Act***.



PART 2: OUR COMMUNITY

Through the years, the Village of Stirling has grown and evolved. The increasing population, changing economy and demand for community services and amenities creates opportunities and challenges for the Village.

While the community grows, residents of Stirling want to maintain a small-town atmosphere and provide citizens and visitors with a broad range of services that support a comfortable community lifestyle. The community recognizes the links with its past as they are represented by the physical and cultural landscape that surrounds them, and that these characteristics are essential ingredients in maintaining the quality of community life people in Stirling desire - a safe, family-oriented community that is committed to well-organized and sustainable growth.

HISTORY & SETTLEMENT

Originally established through a partnership between the Alberta Railway and Irrigation Company and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS), hard work and innovation transformed the semi-arid terrain into the lush agricultural community of Stirling today. The LDS settlers built an irrigation canal that would divert water from the St. Mary River to the prospective Town of Magrath and terminate at the prospective Town of Stirling. In return for their efforts, the settlers would be compensated for their labour, half in cash and half in land.

In developing what was called the Galt Canal, settlers took advantage of the unique terrain, and the main portion of the canal was completed in 1900, with lateral canals carrying water to Stirling and Magrath. The portion of the canal that runs through the Village is known as Kipp Coulee. Kipp Coulee is a natural formation and meanders through the western and southern parts of the Village. The topography in Stirling and surrounding area is generally flat with some gentle variations in slope.



Throughout the 20th century, residents of Stirling grew accustomed, and adapted, to the dry climate and drought seasons. The strong prevailing Chinook winds would strip top-soil, resulting in many of Stirling's residents planting shelterbelts to prevent erosion. Over the years, the lush vegetation has matured into a green canopy around the Village and is a visible representation of the history and resilience of the community amidst the dry, undulating prairie landscape.

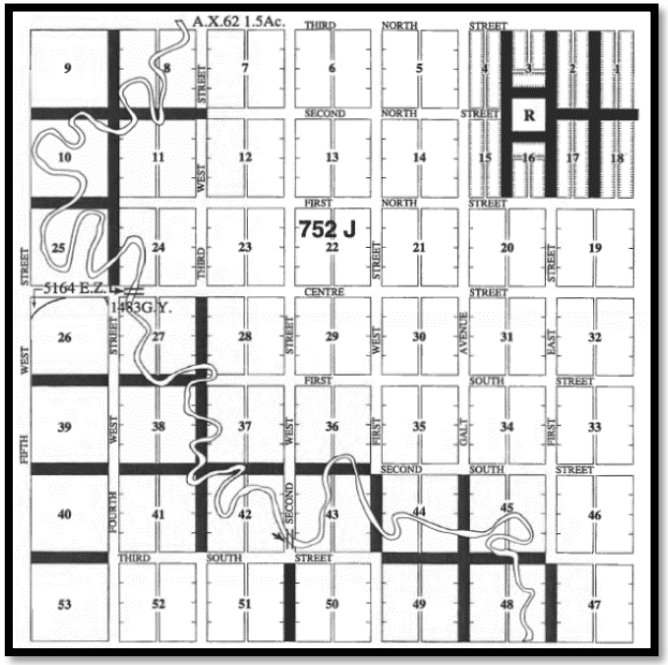


IMAGE 1. ORIGINAL TOWN PLAN BASED ON THE 'PLAT OF ZION'

The original plan for the Village, and many other LDS settlements in Southern Alberta, was loosely based on the "Plat of Zion" plan that was devised in 1833 (Image 1). Joseph Smith, prophet of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, created the plan based upon a biblical reference to a "Four Square" city with each of the sides oriented to compass points. The original plan for Stirling proposed farmstead-style residential lots with large, 25-foot setbacks from the road network and deep backyards able to accommodate barns, granaries, gardens, corrals and pastures.

Moving outwards, density would decrease, and the outermost parcels were predominantly used for pasture and agricultural production. Residents could live centrally and commute the short distance to their fields during the growing season. Since 1950, a considerable number of the original large lots in the northeastern area of the Village have been subdivided into smaller lots to accommodate more dense residential development. This more dense development pattern is concentrated around the Village core, in proximity to the existing commercial and institutional uses. In the western and southern parts of the Village, many of the 10-acre lots remain unsubdivided due to the challenges associated with subdivision as Kipp Coulee meanders through that section of the municipality.

This rich agricultural history gained national recognition in 1980 and the Village became a National Historic Site for the thoughtfully designed layout and agricultural roots. Through the years, the Village has leveraged the historic designation to promote tourism and foster community spirit through annual events including Settler Days and the Fall Festival.

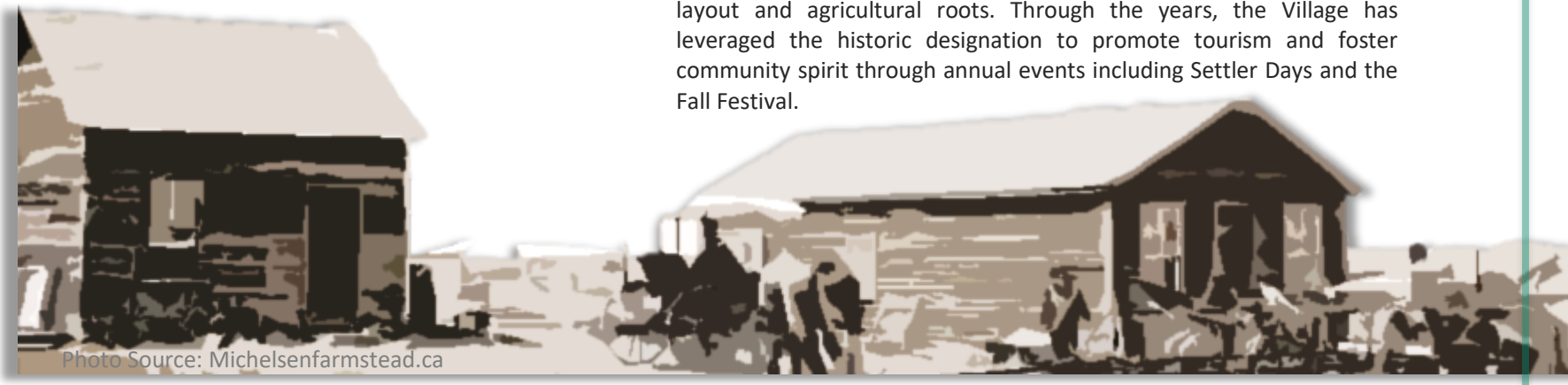
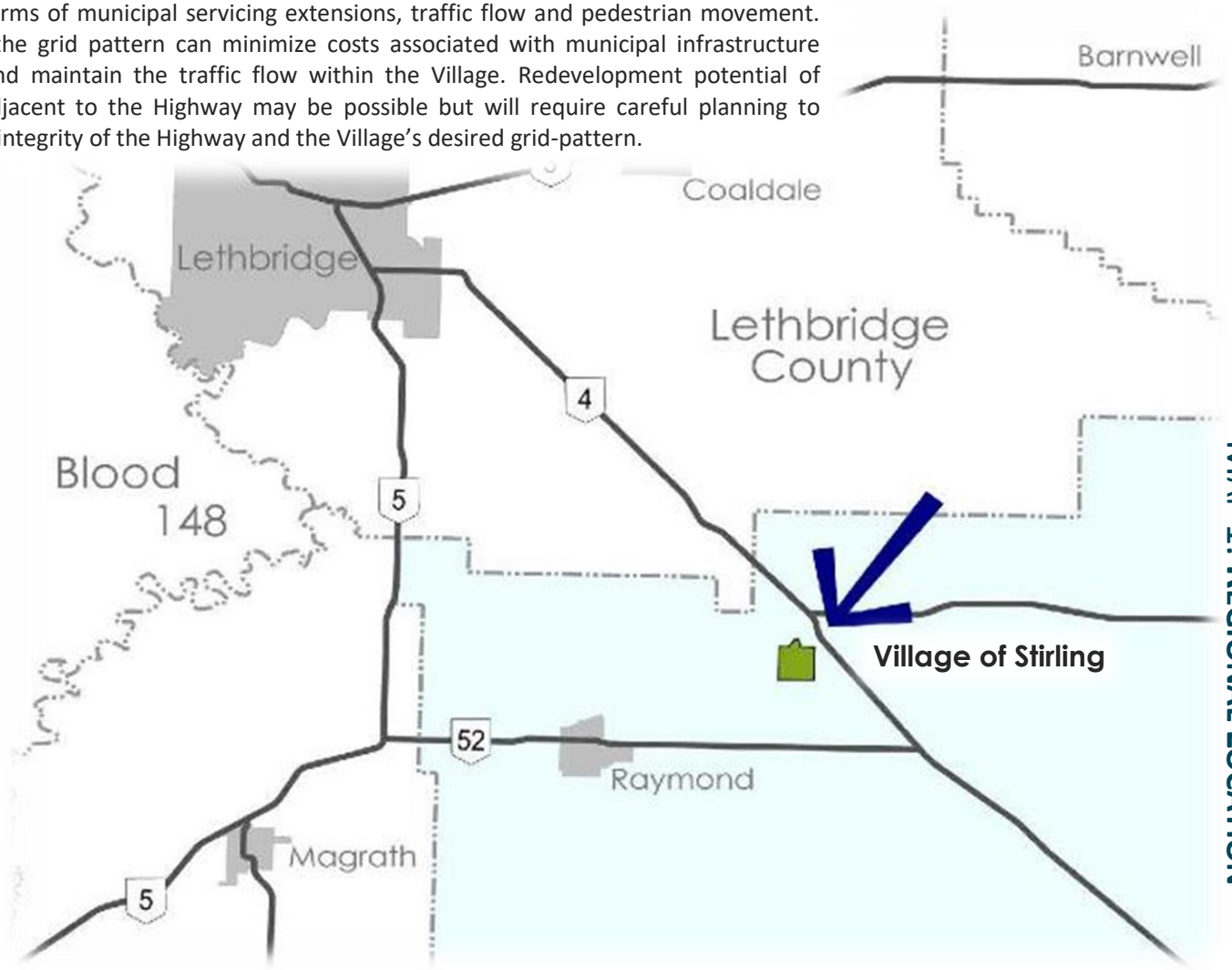


Photo Source: Michelsenfarmstead.ca

LOCATION & TRANSPORTATION

Located south of Lethbridge in the County of Warner, the Village has easy access to major transportation networks. Along the eastern boundary of the Village, Highway 846 transitions into 1st Street, providing a direct connection to Highway 4. With easy access to larger urban centres, the Village has maintained the tranquil, safe, historic community atmosphere that makes Stirling a great place to live and grow. Just 15 minutes from Raymond, 30 minutes from Lethbridge, and 45 minutes from the USA Border, residents can enjoy the luxury of small-Village life without the isolation.

Internally, the Village maintains the historic grid-pattern of road networks that were established over one hundred years ago. The wide, grid-style street layout continues to be efficient in terms of municipal servicing extensions, traffic flow and pedestrian movement. Maintaining the grid pattern can minimize costs associated with municipal infrastructure extensions and maintain the traffic flow within the Village. Redevelopment potential of properties adjacent to the Highway may be possible but will require careful planning to maintain the integrity of the Highway and the Village's desired grid-pattern.



MAP 1. REGIONAL LOCATION

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POPULATION ANALYSIS

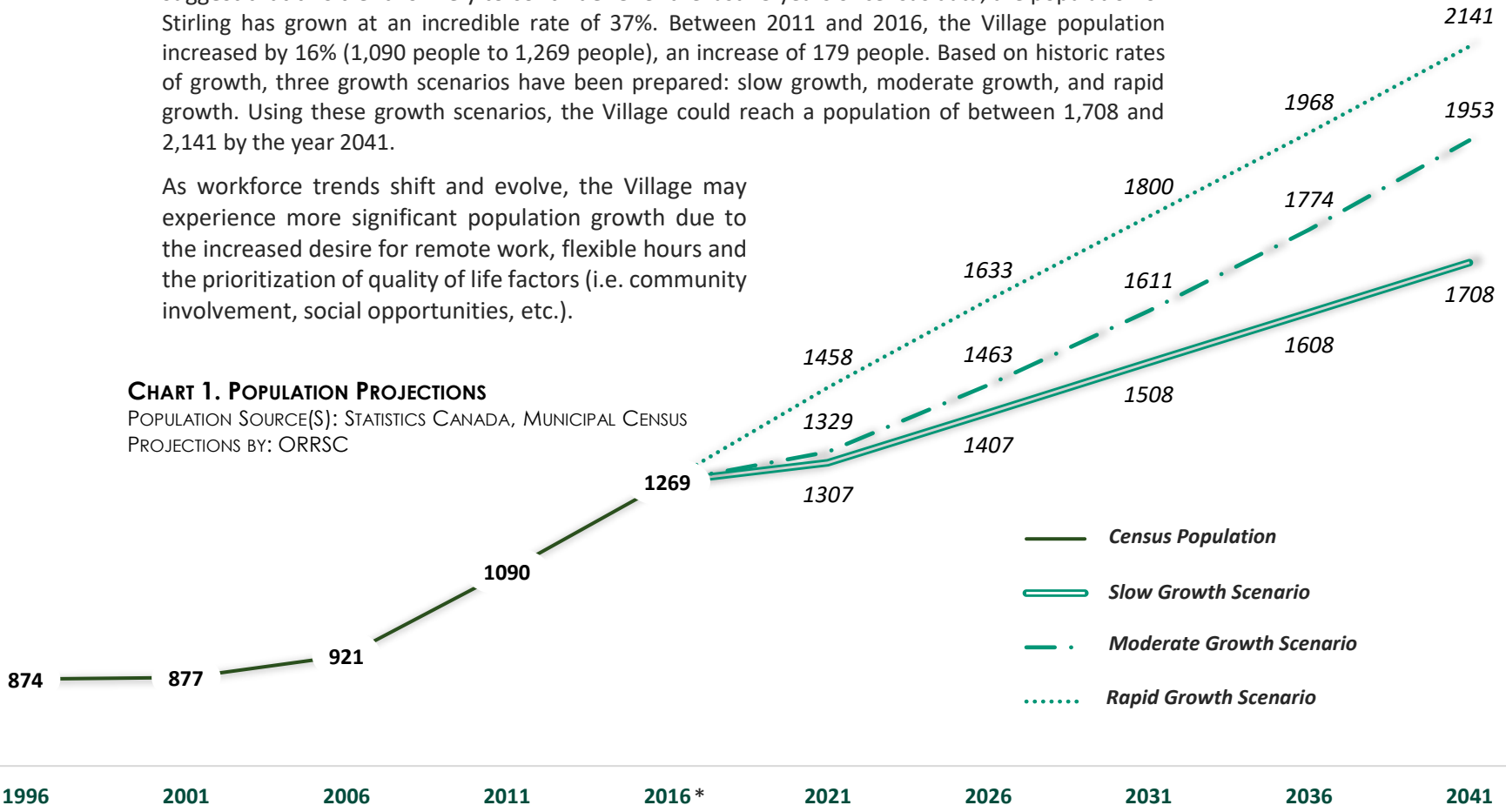
To plan for our future, we must first understand where we are. Studying historic growth and understanding the community reveals important trends and serves as a basis for population projections, which are necessary to help determine future community needs.

POPULATION & GROWTH

The population in Stirling has been rapidly increasing since 2006, and factors including the economic attractiveness of residential development and the high quality of life provided within the Village suggest that this trend is likely to continue. Over the last 15 years of census data, the population of Stirling has grown at an incredible rate of 37%. Between 2011 and 2016, the Village population increased by 16% (1,090 people to 1,269 people), an increase of 179 people. Based on historic rates of growth, three growth scenarios have been prepared: slow growth, moderate growth, and rapid growth. Using these growth scenarios, the Village could reach a population of between 1,708 and 2,141 by the year 2041.

As workforce trends shift and evolve, the Village may experience more significant population growth due to the increased desire for remote work, flexible hours and the prioritization of quality of life factors (i.e. community involvement, social opportunities, etc.).

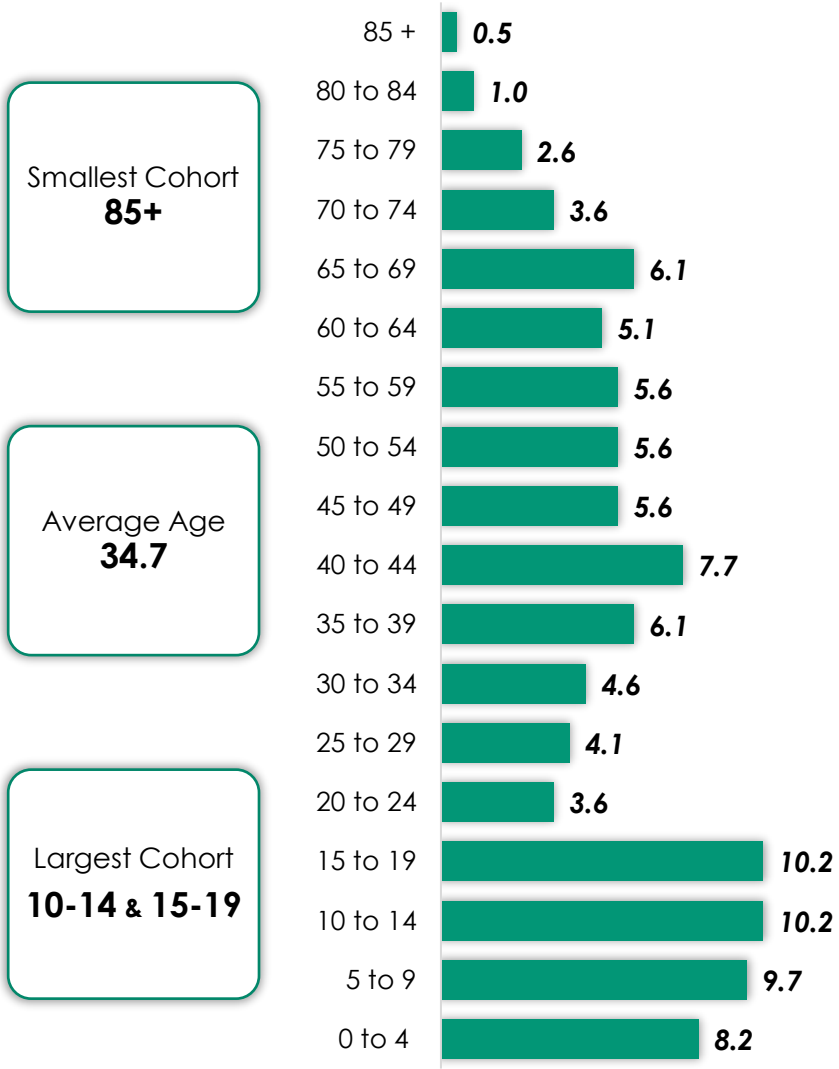
CHART 1. POPULATION PROJECTIONS
POPULATION SOURCE(S): STATISTICS CANADA, MUNICIPAL CENSUS
PROJECTIONS BY: ORRSC



*Population updated to reflect Municipal Census in 2019.

AGE GROUPS

CHART 2. POPULATION BY AGE GROUP (%)
SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA, 2016



The Village population is relatively young (**Chart 2**), with an average age of 34.7 which is below the average age for the County (36.2) and the province (37.8). Approximately 38% of Village residents are under 20 years of age, and the largest cohorts in the Village are the 10-14 and 15-19 age ranges, with approximately 100 individuals in each category. This, in combination with recent population growth, suggests that many families with children have decided to move into, or remain in, Stirling. This trend reflects a need to plan for the changing needs and goals of a younger population.

As is the case for most smaller communities, the population of young adults (20-29) remains relatively low at 7%. It is common for individuals within this cohort to migrate to urban centres in search of post-secondary education and employment opportunities. This trend towards urban migration was also identified in the Stirling Youth Survey, with a large portion of respondents indicating that they would be leaving for post-secondary education opportunities but would like to eventually return to Stirling to raise their families.

As evident in **Chart 2**, older adults maintain a relatively small share of the population within the Village. Individuals aged 65 and older make up approximately 14% of the population in the Village, which is slightly more than the County (13%) and the province (12%). Historically, Stirling's proportion of residents 65 and over category has been low. This could be due to the lack of senior citizen housing and related services. The relatively larger population of individuals over 65 in Lethbridge (approximately 17%) suggests that older adults choose to move to larger urban centres for better access to these services.

ECONOMY

Originally established as an agricultural settlement, the Village economy has seen significant changes in the local and regional economy as agricultural practices evolved and urban migration increased. While Stirling's population has grown significantly in recent years, commercial activity remains limited. In large part, this is due to the quick commute to larger urban service centres including Lethbridge.



Retail and commercial uses within the Village primarily provide for day-to-day community needs related to childcare, health and fitness, convenience retail and construction. Several home-based occupations also contribute to the local economy and provide a variety of services and opportunities ranging from crafting and textiles to accounting and cleaning services.



Enterprises related to agriculture, construction and general convenience are available within the community. Commercial ventures related to National Historic Site designation have remained central to the community and serve as tourist attractions and recreational opportunities for visitors and residents alike. While some of the commercial endeavours have physical store-fronts in or around the Village, the limited availability of commercial lands has constrained the establishment of an identifiable commercial core.

REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Village participates in the regional economic development initiative South Grow and has significant historic resources and attractions to contribute to, and partner with, the regional network of tourism and outdoor recreation. Stirling contains—and is in proximity to—well-known and highly visited tourism and ecological attractions including Michelsen Farmstead and Galt Historic Railway Park, Writing-on-Stone, Milk River, Devil's Coulee Museum and the Red Coat Trail. Additionally, the rich history of the land and the people in the area provide ample opportunities to bolster tourism and recreation throughout the region. Leveraging local history and natural environment within the Village and the surrounding area can promote economic development and bring secondary economic benefits associated with tourism.

WORKFORCE & LABOUR

Stirling's economy has changed significantly since the early years. Residents of the Village are employed in industries beyond the agriculture-based economy. At present, most residents in the Village are employed in tertiary industries – those related to providing services. According to Statistics Canada data (2016), residents work in sectors related to "trades, transport and equipment" and "management, business and finance" (21% each), "education, law and social, community and government" and "sales and services" (17% each).

While the workforce has diversified in Stirling, most residents must commute to other communities for work. Based on the responses from the Community Survey (2021), approximately 18% of the workforce is employed within the Village, 41% travel to the City of Lethbridge and 38% travel to surrounding communities for employment.

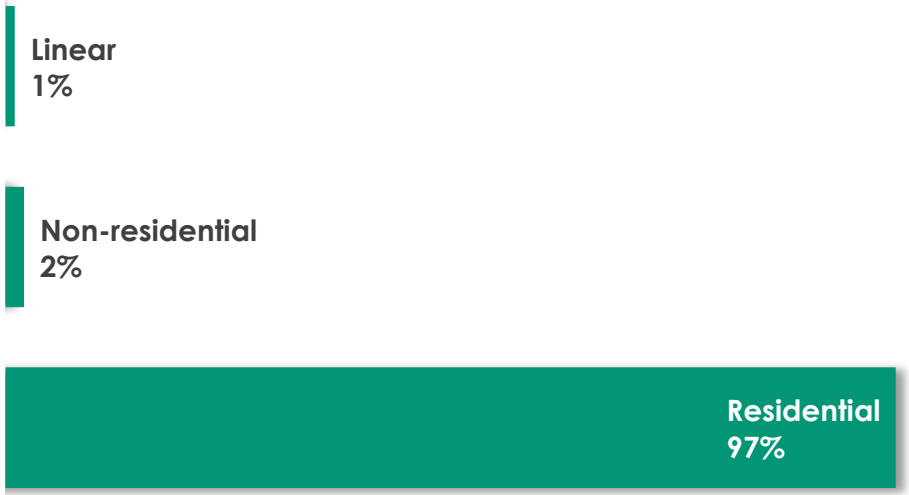
MUNICIPAL ASSESSMENT

Municipal assessment provides crucial information regarding the types of development and the amount of economic activity generated within a community. As illustrated in **Chart 3** Stirling's tax-base is almost entirely residential. Improving the imbalance in its assessment base with more commercial and industrial development should be prioritized.

Historically, the Village of Stirling tax assessment has remained largely residential. The 2022 Municipal Affairs Equalized Tax Assessment report shows that 97% of the municipal tax base is allocated to 'residential' development. The remainder belongs to 'non-residential' (2%) and 'linear' (1%).

More non-residential lands will help to diversify the economy and increase the tax base within the Village. Additional commercial lands will improve the local economy by providing additional services to accommodate a growing population and attracting employment opportunities locally. Defining a downtown core and acquiring additional non-residential lands within the Village will support the diversification of the tax base and promote economic development.

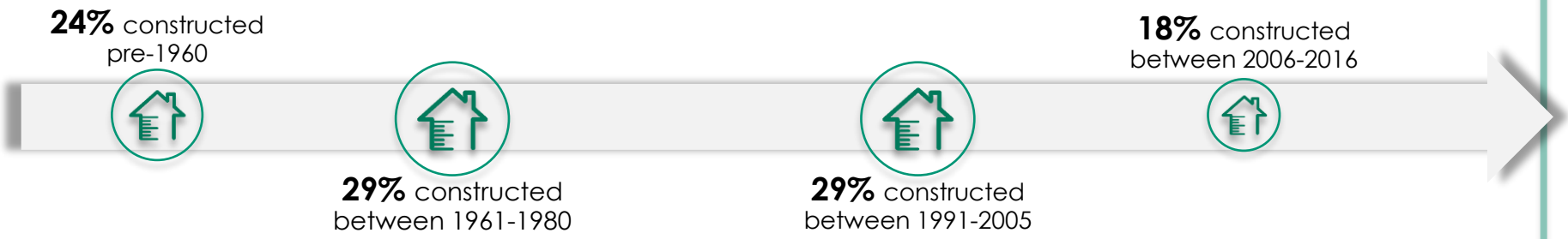
CHART 3. MUNICIPAL TAX ASSESSMENT
SOURCE: MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS, 2022



HOUSING & HOUSEHOLDS

Housing within the Village can be characterized as primarily single-detached (87%), although recent development has diversified the housing stock to include prefabricated (8%) and multi-unit dwellings (3%). Results from the Community Survey (2021) have indicated a community-wide preference for low-density, single-unit dwelling development, and large lots in order to maintain the family-friendly atmosphere that makes Stirling a desirable place to live. The majority of housing in Stirling was developed between 1961-1980 (29%) and 1991-2005 (29%), while recent development (2006-2016) makes up 18%. The remaining 24% of housing was constructed prior to 1960.

As Stirling's demographics continue to show a large proportion of children and youth, family-style residential development is favoured. Recognizing that today's families are not uniformly composed, duplex, semi-detached residences, accessory dwellings and other higher density residential housing types are also encouraged. Increased multi-unit residential development, including seniors accomodations and senior-care developments, may also contribute to the long-term retention of the seniors population.



QUICK FACTS:

HOMES ARE LARGE	*•56% contain 4 or more bedrooms.*
HOMES ARE AFFORDABLE	*•85% of residents spend less than 30% of their income on shelter costs.*
¼ OF FAMILIES HAVE 5 OR MORE MEMBERS	*•Preference for larger homes on large lots.*
RESIDENCES ARE IN GOOD CONDITION	*•90% only require general maintenance and repairs.*

LAND USE

The shape and character of a community is directly related to the quality, quantity and location of land use within its boundary. By evaluating historic land use patterns we can achieve an understanding of how residential and non-residential development functions, including their relationship to one another, and the amount of land a community may require in the future. Historically, the Village has been defined by low-density, residential development and small-scale agricultural uses, and a recent land use inventory review—conducted in 2021—illustrates a similar pattern of land use development.

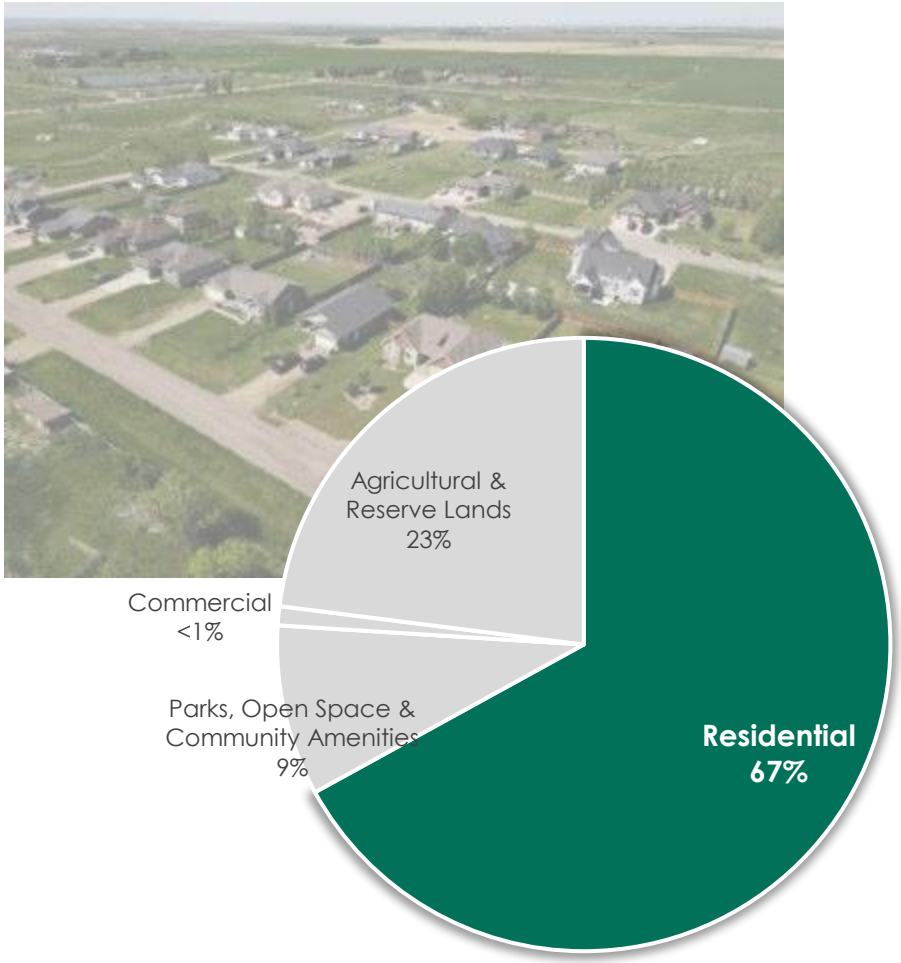
RESIDENTIAL LANDS

Residential land uses maintain the largest share (67%) of the total land area within the Village: Residential – R (43%), Residential Large Lot – R-L (24%), and Manufactured Home Residential – R-M (~1%):

Residential (R) lands are central within the Village, with small sections of Manufactured Home (R-M) development along 2nd Avenue. The limited availability of vacant Residential (R) lots within the Village will not be sufficient to accommodate the projected growth for Stirling. Residential Large-Lot (R-L) parcels are located along the outskirts of the Village within Kipp Coulee Overlay. Regular residential and infill potential is limited in these areas due to servicing and development constraints.

The historic Village layout, characterized by large lots and wide streets, remains as an ever-present link to intentions of the original settlers to provide for agricultural endeavors, proximity to nature, and adequate space for family life to prosper. Throughout its history, the Village has been able to maintain a low-density pattern of development while accommodating growth. According to the Community Survey (2021), one of the most appealing elements of Stirling is the low-density, rural community feel.

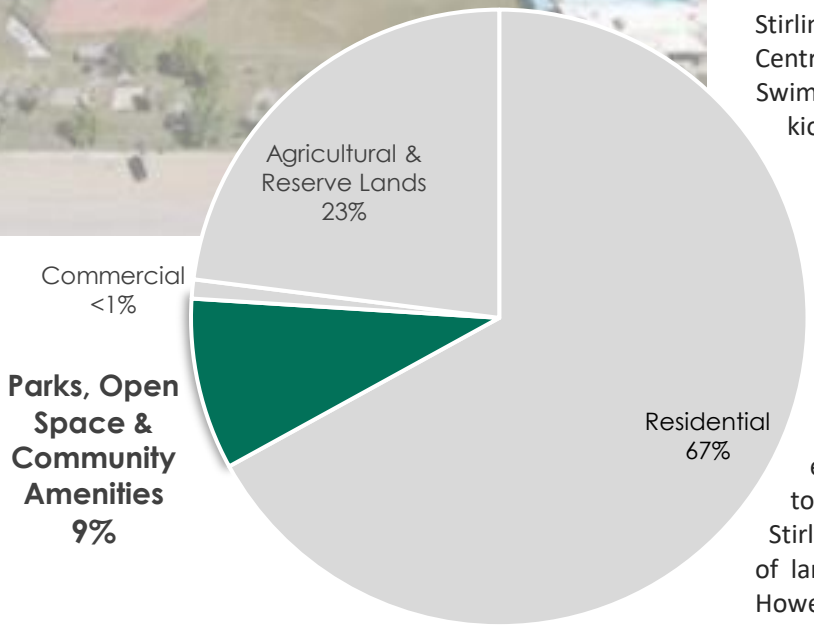
Given the historically large lot sizes within the Village, infill development through resubdivision has been undertaken. However, given the constraints of Kipp Coulee, historic patterns of development and decreasing availability of residential lands, Village expansion will be necessary to accommodate the projected population increase.



PARKS, OPEN SPACE & COMMUNITY AMENITIES

The Village's public lands include numerous parks, open space and public/municipal facilities, comprising almost 9% of the land area in the Village and are concentrated centrally within the municipality along 4th Avenue.





"From a distance, Stirling appears as an oasis of trees and farmsteads amid a flat, open landscape."

STIRLING AGRICULTURAL VILLAGE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE REPORT (1997)

Reminiscent of the original Village layout, community and recreation amenities are located internally, and are concentrated along 4th Avenue. Open space and park areas are dense with vegetation and lush grasslands in keeping with the historic town plan and symbolizing the irrigation technologies that rendered the dryland area fertile.

For the size of the Village, Stirling provides a variety of community amenities and services including the Michelsen Farmstead, Trout Pond, Rodeo Grounds, the LDS Church, the Stirling Lions Community Centre, Stirling Library, the Reunion Centre and adjoining campground, the Senior Centre, Stirling Swimming Pool and water park, Stirling School, historic tourism kiosk, and main street playground and ball diamonds.

The provision of emergency services is also affected by growth both in terms of additional calls for assistance and access to new development. Serving the community, and supporting the region, Stirling's local fire department and the regional RCMP detachment are critical assets to ensure a safe and secure future for the Village.

The location of community amenities, public and recreational uses within the centre of the Village encourages pedestrian access and promotes the 'small-town' relaxed atmosphere residents desire. Growth within Stirling will continue to occur within the established patterns of land use, and in keeping with the historic Village layout. However, by determining goals, growth directions and community priorities, the Village of Stirling can maintain the balance between preserving our history and developing our future.

COMMERCIAL LANDS

Commercial development makes up the smallest share of land in the Village (<1%) and is located along 4th Avenue.

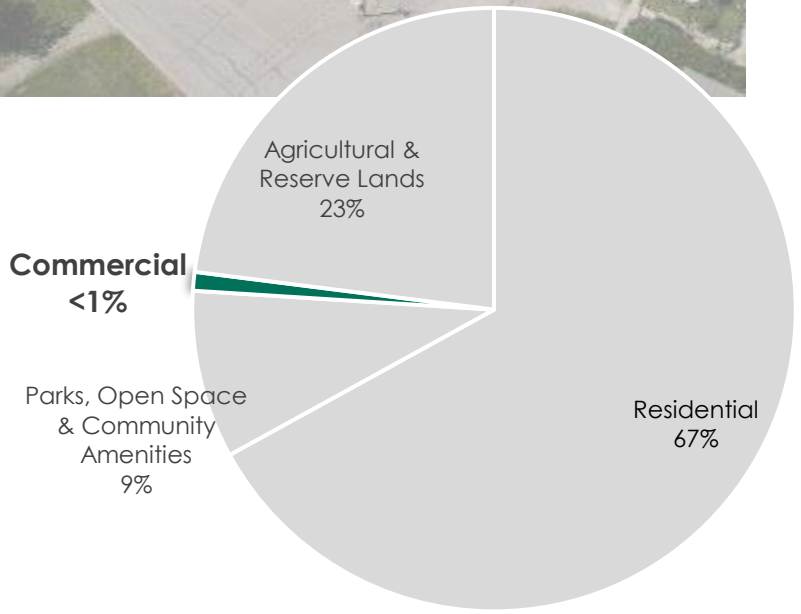
Primarily located along 4th Avenue, commercial activity within the Village is characterized as community-based services and amenities. As indicated in the municipal assessment, commercial land contributes a small share of the tax assessment (contributing to the non-residential land base).

In comparison with similarly sized municipalities in the region, Stirling has relatively minimal commercial development. Increasing the availability of commercial lands will support development in Stirling by diversifying the municipal tax assessment and providing the community with the services and amenities required to meet the needs of a growing population.

Since the existing commercially designated lands within the Village are developed, and the availability of undeveloped lands are limited, expansion of the Village through annexation will likely be necessary to accommodate increased commercial development. In order to bolster commercial development within the existing Village boundary, additional commercial development is envisioned along the 4th Avenue corridor and the block east of the commercial centre.

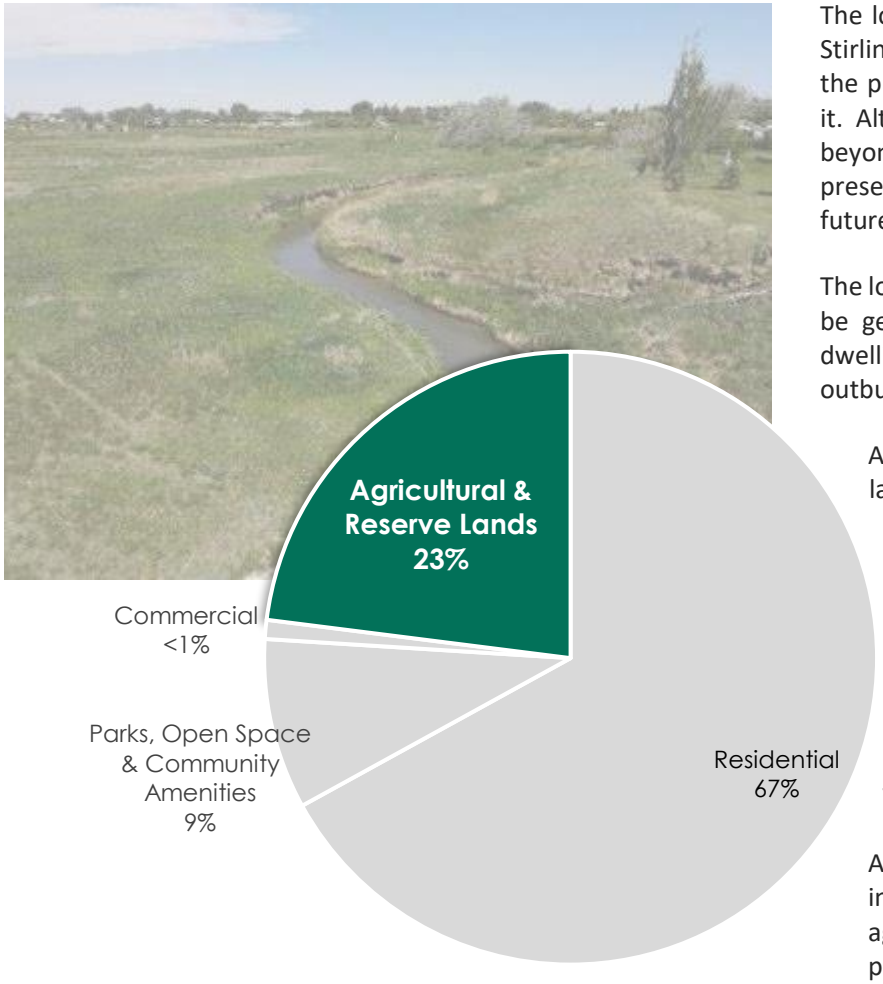
Building upon the presence of Highway 4 (a major, international transportation route), the existing patterns of development and logical extensions of infrastructure, the ***Intermunicipal Development Plan*** has identified commercial expansion areas east of the existing Village boundary, contiguous to 4th Avenue, and at the Village entrance at the intersection of Township Road 64A and Highway 4 (**Map 2**).





AGRICULTURAL LANDS

Agricultural land accounts for approximately 23% of the Village area and is characterized primarily by low-intensity farmland parcels along the southern and western periphery of Stirling.



The location of current agricultural lands within the Village of Stirling has been influenced by the location of Kipp Coulee and the physical constraints to providing municipal services across it. Although most of the agricultural land in the Village lies beyond the Kipp Coulee area, the undulating topography presents significant challenges and expenses for servicing any future development of these areas.

The low laying agricultural lands are sparsely developed and can be generally described as low density farmstead residential dwellings, and grazing grasslands with agricultural storage and outbuildings.

Although the agricultural lands account for the second largest share of land, resubdivision is not very feasible due to the topographical constraints and the cost of servicing extensions in the area. The agricultural lands contain minimal residential development and agricultural out-buildings and are not well-suited to support additional subdivision, development or increased density. These lands serve as a vestige of the historical agricultural community and provide opportunities for low-impact agricultural uses and passive recreation within the Village.

As the population of Stirling grows, the Village may investigate potential for the integration of some of these agricultural lands into a municipal-wide trail network and passive recreation system.

MUNICIPAL INFRASTRUCTURE & SERVICING

Future infrastructure and servicing extensions within Stirling will continue to be defined by the existing grid street system, historic patterns of development, and the constraints associated with Kipp Coulee.

In 2020, an Infrastructure Master Plan (IMP) was completed for the Village of Stirling. The IMP includes an analysis of existing water, wastewater and transportation infrastructure, and proposes sequential upgrades in order to service future lands and accommodate future growth projections for the Village. The IMP identifies Kipp Coulee as a major obstacle and prioritizes servicing upgrades in the northeast of the community for future residential development.



A high-level analysis of the existing infrastructure systems provides the following insights into current capacity, future upgrades and recommended patterns of development based on the expected growth of the Village:

POTABLE WATER

- ➔ Sufficient to accommodate population growth for 25 years.

WASTEWATER

- ➔ Upgrades will be required to accommodate the anticipated population growth for the next 25 years.

STORMWATER

- ➔ The overall stormwater management system performs suitably, and overland flooding can be addressed through minor road rehabilitation projects.

ROAD NETWORKS

- ➔ Roads are of average quality, but the Village should consider transitioning from gravel to pavement for the long-term sustainability of the road network and accommodate future extension.

The summary results of the IMP indicate that the most feasible growth direction for the Village of Stirling is to the east and north. Generally, potable water, wastewater, stormwater and roads are sufficient to accommodate growth, but should be regularly evaluated. The IMP will need to be monitored as growth occurs within the Village.

PART 3: COMMUNITY VISION

In order to manage change and adapt to future challenges, the Village has developed a Vision Statement and a set of overarching goals. Informed by the vision statement and goals, the community Land Use Strategy prioritizes growth within the Village, providing for sequential and rational development patterns.

The Community's vision statement represents a general shared understanding of the desired future for the Village and serves as the foundation upon which the goals and policies of this Plan have been crafted.

COMMUNITY VISION



STIRLING IS WHERE YOU WANT TO BE!

BUILDING ON ITS RICH HISTORIC ROOTS, STIRLING IS A WELCOMING, SAFE, FAMILY-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY THAT PROVIDES RESIDENTS OF ALL AGES AND INTERESTS WITH A HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE, SUSTAINABLE GROWTH AND A DIVERSITY OF OPPORTUNITIES.



Photo Credits: Valerie Christakos

HOW WAS THE VISION STATEMENT CREATED?

The Vision Statement is derived from the goals and feelings of residents, obtained though the Community Survey (2021), where respondents were asked to comment on the following questions:

What are your top 3 reasons for living in Stirling?

What do you like most about Stirling, or do not want to see changed?

What do you like least about Stirling, or would like to see changed?

Generally, the responses indicate a preference for preserving the 'small-town atmosphere', 'large lots', and the 'family-friendly lifestyle'. Additionally, the promotion and investment in commercial development was desired to provide a level of convenience and local options for shopping, dining, and personal services. Respondents indicated that increased access to recreation opportunities for youth and seniors should be prioritized within the Village.

In response to, and alignment with, the responses obtained through public consultation initiatives, the MDP proposes an approach to growth and a series of goals that will guide future development within the community to align with, and promote, the community vision.

HOW TO ACHIEVE THE VISION FOR STIRLING?

VISION
- Define the Vision based on community feedback and existing circumstances

GOALS
- Identify outcomes that will contribute to obtaining the **VISION**

OBJECTIVES
- Describe growth directions that work to meet these **GOALS**

POLICIES
- Provide direction to Council and administration to acheive these **OBJECTIVES**

APPROACH TO GROWTH

In recent years, the Village of Stirling has experienced unprecedented population growth. Looking to the future, new development will be required to accommodate the residential, commercial and community spaces needs of the Village's changing population. Therefore, it is critical to create a growth strategy at this time to set the framework for sound decision-making, consistency and certainty for residents, developers and businesses within Stirling.

An effective growth strategy involves the establishment of community goals to help achieve the vision of the kind of community Stirling hopes to become. The following community goals are embodied in the policies of the Village of Stirling ***Municipal Development Plan***.

COMMUNITY GOALS

Drawing from the Five-Year Strategic Plan (2021) and the priorities identified through community engagement initiatives, the Village has developed the following set of goals:



MAINTAIN THE SAFE, FRIENDLY, SMALL-TOWN ATMOSPHERE



ACCOMODATE GROWTH & ACHIEVE A BALANCED PATTERN OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



BUILD UPON THE HISTORIC CHARACTER OF THE VILLAGE



PROMOTE & ENCOURAGE COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE VILLAGE



BUILD COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITHIN THE REGION TO DRIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & SUPPORT GROWTH

LAND USE STRATEGY

Moving into the future, the Village of Stirling must adapt to and accommodate growth and change. The Future Land Use Strategy (**Map 2**) 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 strategy serves as a broad guide for decision-making regarding future growth and development with the intention that specifics regarding district designations, land uses, and growth directions be further refined through additional study, Area Structure Plans or conceptual design schemes.

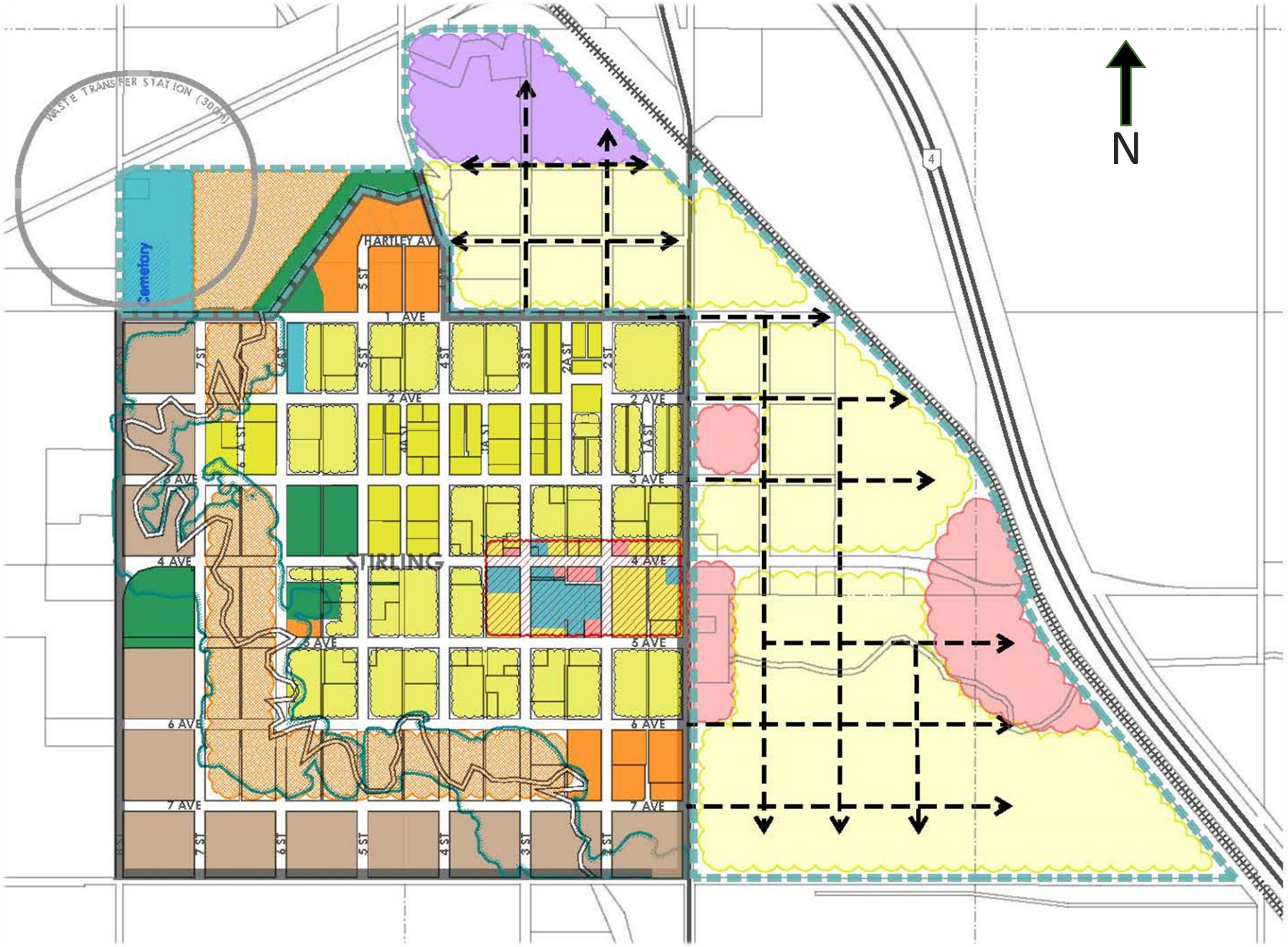
More dense residential development will continue to be encouraged through infill within mature neighbourhoods with access to infrastructure connections and community amenities. The retention of commercial lots within the Village Core remains a priority, and the Village will encourage non-residential development to concentrate within the "**Village Core/Flexible Development Area**". Due to the considerable development constraints of Kipp Coulee, parcels identified as "**Land Use Study Area**" in **Map 2** should be evaluated as to their potential for redesignation to a more appropriate use. While infill development is preferred, the challenges associated with coordinating a strategy among multiple landowners within blocks and providing servicing to the south and west makes infill development difficult. Therefore, expansion will likely be required to accommodate increased demands for housing, commercial development and recreational amenities. Given the existing pattern of development and the servicing potential identified in the Infrastructure Master Plan, the most feasible areas for Village expansion are east and northeast. Annexation of these lands will provide sufficient land to accommodate future population growth and associated community amenities.

The Land Use Strategy, and associated growth directions, provide general guidance for the preferred sequence of residential, commercial and community space growth for the Village of Stirling. Recognizing that the timing for development of existing vacant lots and infill/redevelopment is reliant on individual landowners' desires to develop, flexibility in sequencing will be necessary. As the role of the MDP is to guide the evolution of a community 15 to 20 years into the future, the land use strategy integrates consideration of existing circumstances and logical patterns of development to provide decision-makers with a framework that supports—and aligns with—the Vision for Stirling.

MAP 2 LEGEND



BYLAW NO. 528-22



MAP 2. LAND USE STRATEGY

OBJECTIVES

GENERAL GROWTH OBJECTIVES

Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
Vacant lots and infill where feasible.	Create new lots where feasible.	Annexation within the Urban Expansion Area.

RESIDENTIAL GROWTH OBJECTIVES

Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
Capitalize on infill opportunities where feasible.	Pursue annexation of lands to the east and north.	Encourage new residential development to integrate a variety of dwelling types and parcel sizes.

COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL GROWTH OBJECTIVES

Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
Encourage commercial development within Village Core/Flexible Development Area.	Encourage opportunities to develop home-based businesses to help stimulate economic activity.	Annexation and development of commercial and industrial land within Urban Expansion Area.

COMMUNITY SPACES & AMENITIES OBJECTIVES

Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
Maintain and enhance existing community spaces and amenities.	Incorporate new community spaces within future residential expansion areas and potential study areas.	Explore additional community amenities to meet the needs and goals of the community.

BYLAW NO. 528-22

PART 4: PLAN POLICIES

The Plan policies ready the Village to accommodate future growth while maintaining the qualities that make Stirling a desirable place to live. The policies of the Municipal Development Plan apply to all land within the Village.

The Municipal Development Plan policies are long-range and serve to establish a framework for decision-making, promoting consistency in outcomes, and ultimately guiding development and growth toward the community's desired future.

ADMINISTRATIVE

The MDP is an aspirational document for the Village and is intended to provide guidance to the community and decision-makers in order to achieve the goals and future vision for Stirling.

As the community grows into the future, the goals and objectives within this document may change. With that in mind, it is important to establish flexibility within the document so that the MDP may adapt and respond to change.

GOALS ACHIEVED



1.0 ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES

1.1 The MDP is general in nature and long-range in its outlook. The MDP provides a means whereby Council and administration can evaluate proposals in the context of a long-range plan for the Village of Stirling. The policies of the MDP, however, are not intended to be so rigid in interpretation that they preclude consideration of refinement or amendment.

1.2 Subject to Council's approval, minor variation from the policies of the MDP may not require an amendment to the Plan. More substantive changes that reflect a shift in strategic direction of the community will require an amendment to the MDP and any other affected plan.

1.3 The goals and policies of the MDP are intended to be further refined and implemented through the development, adoption and day-to-day application of statutory plans and the Land Use Bylaw, as well as various other municipal bylaws, agreements, and strategic planning documents.

1.4 Any amendment of the MDP must follow the appropriate procedures outlined in the *Municipal Government Act*.

1.5 This MDP should be reviewed at least every five years and amended as necessary to ensure it remains relevant and reflective of the priorities and needs of the community.

1.6 The Land Use Bylaw is a key implementation tool and should be regularly reviewed and amended as necessary to ensure that policy directions within the Plan can be realized.

1.7 The Village is committed to a proactive planning approach and will continue to initiate and update municipal plans, studies, strategies, and standards, as deemed necessary.

1.8 On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of land use planning tools and municipal initiatives should be undertaken to ensure MDP policies and other municipal policy remains current and reflective of the community's desired future.

1.9 Federal, provincial, and regional legislation, regulations and other relevant documents should continue to be monitored and municipal policy, regulation and other applicable documents updated as appropriate.



GENERAL LAND USE & FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Residents value the low-density, small-town atmosphere provided by the historically large lots in Stirling. However, as the Village grows, so too will the demand for available residential and non-residential development. Existing development, topographical constraints and logical extensions of community infrastructure and servicing will influence the type, location and scale of development moving into the future. Encouraging efficient patterns of growth and logical extensions of existing infrastructure, future development within the Village is encouraged to generally align with the Land Use Strategy (**Map 2**).

GOALS ACHIEVED



2.0 GENERAL LAND USE & FUTURE DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

2.1 Implementation of the future land use concepts and growth directions identified in the **Future Land Use Strategy** plays an important role in realizing the community's desired future. Decisions regarding future land use and growth directions should be consistent with the **Future Land Use Strategy** illustrated in **Map 2**.

2.2 Village growth will primarily be directed to areas east and north of the Kipp Coulee overlay where development potential is demonstrated, and infrastructure is available or can be made readily available as illustrated in the **Future Land Use Strategy.**

2.3 Infill development involving resubdivision of existing blocks and vacant lots is vital to expanding the supply of available residential land and is encouraged where feasible within the areas identified as having **Residential Infill Potential (Map 2)**.

2.4 Development constraints within the Kipp Coulee overlay including drainage, topography and lack of infrastructure connectivity pose challenges to the future subdivision and development of vicinity Residential Large Lot lands. The development potential of these lands within the **Land-use Study Area (Map 2)** should be reviewed prior to any subdivision to determine appropriate land use and zoning.

BYLAW NO. 528-22

2.5 Subdivision of **Agricultural (Map 2)** parcels south and west of Kipp Coulee should be discouraged due to servicing constraints, flooding potential and linkages with the historic nature of the Village.

2.6 Development of land within the Village boundary is a priority; however, urban expansion will be necessary to support the needs of the community. Expansion of the Village boundary should follow an orderly and logical pattern and encompass lands identified within the **Urban Expansion Area (Map 2)**.

2.7 Prior to initiating annexation, the Village will discuss its expansion needs with the County of Warner in accordance with the ***County of Warner No. 5 & Village of Stirling Intermunicipal Development Plan***.

2.8 Efficient use of land, including higher density development and logical extension of infrastructure, on annexed lands is a priority. Future subdivision and development of annexed lands will therefore require an Area Structure Plan or conceptual design scheme that demonstrates such unless otherwise approved by the Village.

2.9 New growth should occur in a stable, balanced and fiscally sound manner with development generally expected to pay its own way. The obligation for supplying, expanding, and upgrading infrastructure, roads, services, and amenities to new development should be at the developer's cost. Opportunities for cost-sharing may be explored at the Village's discretion where community benefit and economic feasibility are demonstrated.

2.10 Development should be focused in areas with existing infrastructure capacity and locations where infrastructure extensions can be made most logically and economically consistent with the recommendations of the ***Infrastructure Master Plan***.

2.11 Enhancing efficient use of land and infrastructure which is compatible with the historic character of the community is a priority. Mechanisms and strategies to enhance efficient use of land and infrastructure in the design of future subdivision, as deemed appropriate by the Village, may be considered, and implemented through applicable municipal standards and bylaws.

2.12 The use of Direct Control land use districts may be considered to accommodate unique subdivision and development proposals where regulation through a standard land use district within the Land Use Bylaw is inadequate.

PROVINCIAL REGULATIONS

2.13 Developers will be responsible for ensuring proposals comply with provincial regulations for drainage and stormwater management and obtaining necessary approvals from Alberta Environment and Parks, as applicable.

2.14 Any development permit, subdivision application or land use redesignation in the proximity of any sour gas facilities and oil and gas wells and pipelines must be evaluated and be compatible with provincial standards and requirements.

PLAN REQUIREMENTS

2.15 An Area Structure Plan or conceptual design scheme may be required prior to any proposal for redesignation, subdivision or development of lands.

2.16 An Area Structure Plan will follow the requirements of the ***Municipal Government Act*** and must address, as applicable:

a. sequence of development;
b. land uses and design;
c. density;
d. access and connectivity to road networks;
e. municipal servicing and utilities, including logical expansion of infrastructure;
f. municipal, school, and community reserves, open space, and linkages to open space and community amenities;
g. drainage and stormwater management;
h. environmental reserves and easements, consideration of natural drainage features and sensitive lands;
i. impact to historic resources;
j. compatibility with adjacent uses;
k. consistency with the ***Municipal Development Plan*** and other applicable municipal and provincial plans, policies and regulations; and,
l. any other matters deemed necessary by the Village.

2.17 A conceptual design scheme will typically be required to address the same criteria as an Area Structure Plan and may permit less detail.

2.18 Developers are encouraged to undertake public consultation with area residents when preparing an Area Structure Plan or conceptual design scheme.

MUNICIPAL, SCHOOL, ENVIRONMENTAL & CONSERVATION RESERVES

2.19 Municipal, school, and environmental reserves will be provided for at the time of subdivision in accordance with the ***Municipal Government Act*** and addressed in the preparation of Area Structure Plans, conceptual design schemes, redevelopment plan, and infill development plans, as applicable.

2.20 Municipal reserve requirements will generally be required to be satisfied as money in lieu of land dedication to the maximum amounts provided for in the ***Municipal Government Act***, unless the Village determines a need for land dedication, or land dedication is required in accordance with an Area Structure Plan, conceptual design scheme, infill development plan, redevelopment plan, or other municipal policy.

2.21 Where the Village is of the opinion that lands may be resubdivided in the future, or as required in accordance with an Area Structure Plan, conceptual design scheme, infill development plan, redevelopment plan, or other municipal policy, municipal and school reserves may be deferred by caveat pursuant to the ***Municipal Government Act***.

2.22 Land dedicated for municipal reserve should be suitable for either active or passive recreation opportunities as determined by the Village.

2.23 Where possible, existing mature trees and vegetation should be preserved and incorporated into the design and landscaping of land dedicated for municipal reserve.

2.24 Developers will typically be required to landscape parcels dedicated as municipal reserve to the Village's satisfaction and construct and/or pay for the construction of playgrounds, pathways, and other improvements on municipal reserve lands as required by the Village.

2.25 The Village will collect all municipal reserve funds paid and, should the school district require land for a school in the future, an agreement for municipal assistance will be discussed at that time.

2.26 The Village will periodically consult with the school district regarding planning matters and future school needs and is committed to collaborating on a Joint Use and Planning Agreement to establish processes relating to such.

2.27 Environmental reserve or environmental easements may be required on land adjacent to Kipp Coulee or in proximity to other environmentally sensitive lands or as required in an Area Structure Plan, conceptual design scheme, redevelopment plan, or infill development plan.

2.28 Conservation reserves in accordance with the ***Municipal Government Act*** may be required at the time of subdivision at the discretion of the Village or as required in an Area Structure Plan, conceptual design scheme, redevelopment plan, or infill development plan.

AGRICULTURAL USES

2.29 Compatible, low intensity agricultural uses will continue to be allowed on Agricultural zoned land in accordance with the Land Use Bylaw.

2.30 In keeping with the policies set out in the ***County of Warner No. 5 and the Village of Stirling Intermunicipal Development Plan***, the Village will promote compatibility between the urban land uses within Stirling and the agricultural operations in the County of Warner within the vicinity of the municipal boundaries.

2.31 Confined feeding operations regulated under the **Natural Resources Conservation Board** are not permitted within the Village.

2.32 Agricultural operations, including confined feeding operations, located in the vicinity of the Village within the County of Warner will be regulated in accordance with the **Agricultural Practices** polices adopted in the ***County of Warner No. 5 and the Village of Stirling Intermunicipal Development Plan***.



COMMUNITY CHARACTER & HISTORIC RESOURCES

The Village of Stirling takes pride in its historic roots, and has gained national recognition as the best remaining example of a LDS agricultural village in Canada. The National Historic Designation is a valuable asset for the Village, and the long-term preservation and integration of the historic features has been identified as a priority for Stirling. Features including the large blocks, wide streets, vegetation, internal irrigation culverts, and agricultural lots should be maintained throughout the Village where feasible. New development should complement and enhance the historic value of these important historic characteristics.

GOALS ACHIEVED



3.0 COMMUNITY CHARACTER & HISTORIC RESOURCE POLICIES

3.1 Development and design standards that allow the historic elements of the community to be retained wherever practical should be incorporated into the provisions of the Land Use Bylaw.

3.2 A listing of trees, shrubs and plants historic and traditional to the Village should be compiled.

3.3 Developments are encouraged to implement architectural controls that promote building styles and materials complimentary and compatible with the historic elements of the community, including landscaping choices that feature trees, shrubs and plants that are traditional to the Village.

3.4 Retention of historic orchards and gardens should be promoted through educational literature on the preservation of existing landscape and the use of traditional tree and shrub varieties for new developments.

3.5 Landowners are encouraged to rehabilitate, redevelop and/or renovate buildings in poor condition and preserve historic buildings when possible.

3.6 Bylaw enforcement may be considered an effective measure in helping create and maintain a positive community aesthetic.

3.7 Resources for the construction and maintenance of public buildings and facilities should be allocated in a manner that enhances the appearance of the community and balances the welfare and interests of the community.

3.8 Subdivision designs should consider compatibility with mature neighbourhoods and the historic grid pattern central to the Village's National Historic Designation.

3.9 Investigate opportunities to build upon historical resources to develop a heritage resources management plan including an inventory of buildings, structures, landscapes, and archaeological resources, and policies to promote the conservation and reuse of heritage resources.

3.10 For areas within the Village that have been identified by the province as having an **Historic Resource Value**, it will be the responsibility of the developer to obtain any applicable Historic Resources approvals and clearances prior to commencement of development or the registration of a subdivision.



RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Adherence to the original Village design and issues with topography have influenced residential development within the Village, with more compact residential development primarily located within the northeastern area of the Village, decreasing in density towards the west and south approaching Kipp Coulee. Continuing to offer large lot development is important to the Village but must be balanced with other more compact forms of residential development that cater to the evolving needs of the Villages' growing population.

Infill development potential within existing large, 10-acre blocks will be encouraged where feasible. However, because of the physical constraints presented by Kipp Coulee, the limited land availability, and growing population, the Village must balance infill and concentrated expansion to the north and northeast.

GOALS ACHIEVED



4.0 RESIDENTIAL AREAS POLICIES

4.1 Residential growth should be directed north and east of Kipp Coulee on lands designated for such within the parameters and standards of the Land Use Bylaw.

4.2 Vacancy rates, development and subdivision activity, land supply, economic activity, and population and income profiles should be regularly monitored so the demand for serviced residential land can be reasonably anticipated.

4.3 Opportunities for variety in housing types catering to the varying needs and income levels of the community will continue to be provided through the Land Use Bylaw.

4.4 Multi-unit dwellings should be dispersed throughout residential neighbourhoods instead of concentrated in a single area and subject to enhanced design standards to ensure complimentary and compatible development.

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4.5 Accessory dwellings, such as garden suites, are recognized as a means to diversifying the housing stock and increasing density without significantly impacting the historic development pattern of the Village. Opportunities for such development will continue to be provided through the Land Use Bylaw.

4.6 Recognizing seniors' housing and services are critical to ensuring long-term residency, the Village supports and will continue to work cooperatively with government departments and agencies involved with provision of seniors housing.

4.7 Future residential accommodation for seniors should be centrally located, when possible, to capitalize on proximity to existing public, recreation and commercial uses.

4.8 Consideration of allowances for new or innovative housing style trends, such as tiny homes and micro-housing, should involve an impact analysis and be based upon a defined housing strategy for the community.

4.9 Commercial activity in residential neighbourhoods should generally be limited to home occupations that minimize potential impacts within the neighbourhood and are compatible with the residential environment.

4.10 Residential subdivision designs should be in keeping with the historical grid pattern, where possible, and include provisions for open space, parks, and walkways when deemed appropriate and feasible by the Village.

4.11 Quality, visually attractive residential development compatible with the historic, natural, and cultural quality of existing residential neighbourhoods is encouraged and promoted through the design standards and provisions of the Land Use Bylaw.

RESIDENTIAL INFILL

4.12 Ensure infill development is supported, encouraged, and facilitated by educating landowners about opportunities for infill, investigating infill development standards, and ensuring a coordinated approach to the provision of necessary infrastructure.

4.13 Appropriate setbacks for development from lanes and road right-of-way dedication requirements will be prescribed in the Land Use Bylaw to ensure infill opportunities remain viable.

4.14 The preferred road design within an infill block is a through-street. Acknowledging the challenges of infill development, opportunities for alternative road designs may be considered.

4.15 An approved **infill development plan** illustrating the proposed road network, services, utilities, and lot configurations may be required prior to undertaking subdivision within a block identified as having **Residential Infill Potential (Map 2)**.

4.16 For any subdivision within a block identified as having **Residential Infill Potential**, the following shall apply:

a. All new lots must have frontage on a street. Access by laneway alone will not be permitted.
b. Dedication of additional right-of-way will be required adjacent to existing laneways to allow widening of the lane to a street standard unless determined otherwise by the Village.
c. Dedication of utility rights-of-ways will be required unless determined otherwise by the Village.
d. Subdivision of the rear portion of a lot within an infill block will typically only be permitted provided adequate right-of-way for a street has been obtained within the entire block or as approved in an infill development plan.

COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Commercial development can provide numerous benefits to a community including broadening the tax base, increasing access to services and providing employment opportunities to residents. Currently, commercial and industrial development in the Village is limited due to a lack of commercially designated land and the influence of the City of Lethbridge and its role as a regional service centre.

As the Village grows, so too will the demand for non-residential development and services. By retaining the existing commercially designated lands and encouraging non-residential development within the **Village Core/Flexible Development Area** (**Map 2**), Stirling can achieve a more balanced and sustainable pattern of growth. Encouraging concentrated commercial development within the **Village Core/Flexible Development Area** will help to solidify 4th Avenue as compatible and central congregation area for retail establishments, offices and personal services.

GOALS ACHIEVED



5.0 COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

5.1 Develop a more distinct, expansive, and identifiable Commercial Core, providing opportunity for variety in business and commerce within the Village. Maximum densities are encouraged for development and redevelopment in this area.

5.2 The **Village Core/Flexible Development Area** along 4th Avenue and 1st Street (see **Map 2**) should serve as the centre for business and civic activities.

5.3 Expansion of commercial areas outside of the **Village Core/Flexible Development Area** should include consideration of impacts to the existing development and potential for growth within the core and existing land use patterns in the area.

5.4 Commercial development within Stirling within the **Village Core/Flexible Development Area** should provide a mix of uses, including but not limited to local commercial, community nodes, mixed use development, public space, and institutional uses.

5.5 Existing commercially zoned lands should remain zoned as such to ensure a ready supply of developable commercial property.

5.6 A range of local commercial services for residents that contribute to an attractive pedestrian environment and meeting places for residents in the Village Core should be pursued.

5.7 Efforts of business owners to provide quality, aesthetically pleasing development and properties is encouraged.

5.8 As the Village grows, small-scale neighbourhood commercial development may be feasible where there is an identifiable need and compatibility with the surrounding uses.

5.9 Future commercial nodes within the **Urban Expansion Area** should be accessible by both vehicular and pedestrian traffic to the greatest extent possible.

5.10 Commercial development that requires steady and higher amounts of vehicular access or parking should be located outside of the Commercial Core. This commercial development is ideally suited to sites along the highway and/or Village entrances.

5.11 The emerging industrial node located north of the Village along the rail lines and Highway 4 should be promoted given the potential secondary benefits to the Village in terms of employment and services for residents.



PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACES

The lush vegetation and dynamic terrain of the Village, nestled within the vast prairie landscape of Southern Alberta not only serve to highlight the hard-work and dedication of the original settlers, but also provide opportunities for passive recreation (i.e. scenic walking trails and natural parks) that bring community members and visitors closer to nature.

What will continue in the future to make the Village of Stirling a safe and friendly community with a "small-town feeling" will be built upon the assets of yesterday and today. Those assets take the form of parks, playgrounds, the Stirling swimming pool, reunion centre and historically lush vegetation, can be seen and experienced. Continued development of parks, recreation and open spaces will require innovative approaches to funding, maintenance, and prioritization of service. It is expected that the system of parks and open space will continue to develop through the dedication of municipal reserve and the evaluation of the lands identified within the ***Land Use Study Area*** (**Map 2**), with an emphasis on creating links to existing amenities.

GOALS ACHIEVED



6.0 PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACES POLICIES

6.1 Parks, recreation and open spaces should be enjoyable, safe and inclusive to all members of the community to the greatest extent possible.

6.2 Significant natural and historic features to preserve and protect should be identified and integrated into the community's open space system.

6.3 Stormwater management facilities should be designed to function as part of the parks and open space system, where feasible.

6.4 The recreation potential of Kipp Coulee as a linkage and corridor should be investigated by the Village, Raymond Irrigation District and the County of Warner.

6.5 Playgrounds and parks should be sited, wherever possible, to provide linkages between open spaces, community facilities, schools, the central commercial core, and housing areas.

6.6 New infrastructure and retrofits that address the safety, usability, and accessibility of parks, open space and recreation facilities for all residents, regardless of age, income or ability, should be considered when feasible.

6.7 Various funding alternatives and partnerships to offset the increasing costs of park and recreation maintenance and provision of community services and facilities should be explored.

6.8 Municipal delivery of recreational facilities should be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure the facilities adequately meet the needs of the community and are operated in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

6.9 The Village will continue to work with the Westwind School Division to support the shared use of open space and playground areas.

6.10 The use of open space and recreational facilities to accommodate as broad a range of activities and user groups as possible without creating unsafe conditions or the potential for conflict among users is sought.

6.11 Existing natural areas should be retained, and disturbed natural areas restored to replace traditional landscaping.

6.12 The Village should continue to pursue its wayfinding initiative.



COMMUNITY SERVICES

A well-rounded, sustainable municipality is one which provides residents with a breadth of community services and resources. Community services such as police enforcement, health care, education and public and institutional uses are central to the quality of life experienced by residents and visitors of the community and are recognized as valuable resources.

Bolstering existing services and providing access to community resources will be critical for the well-being of the growing population of Stirling. Partnerships with regional and provincial organizations are key to the continued provision of services and activities within the Village of Stirling. Proactive engagement with service-based community organizations, and collaborative efforts with regional partners will bolster the quality of life for local and surrounding rural residents.

GOALS ACHIEVED



7.0 COMMUNITY SERVICES POLICIES

7.1 Regional and shared approaches for provision of services to Village residents will continue to be investigated.

7.2 Maintenance of existing community services and facilities should be a priority when allocating budget funding.

7.3 Varied approaches to funding and provision of services and facilities, including the involvement of the public, private and not-for profit sectors and the formation of partnerships, should be explored and pursued when feasible.

7.4 The Village will strive to ensure the delivery of police, fire, ambulance and response services that are appropriate and meet the needs of the community.

7.5 Programs and initiatives should be developed that encourage volunteerism as a means to bolster delivery of community services.

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7.6 Opportunities to collaborate with regional partners, businesses and local school authorities should continue to be investigated for the provision of educational, social and cultural programs within the Village.

7.7 The Village should continue to provide support to the local regional library and work to expand opportunities when feasible.

7.8 Promote civic programming of public spaces to celebrate the past and cultivate the future where possible.

7.9 The integration of compatible land uses such as childcare services, religious assemblies, cultural facilities, community groups, youth-oriented facilities, seniors' services and other such facilities in appropriate locations within the Village is encouraged.

7.10 Civic involvement by seniors and youth is encouraged to ensure their needs are adequately considered.

7.11 Council may create a youth strategy to provide recreation, leisure and skills training opportunities for the Village's youth.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The sustainable long-term growth of the community requires the diversification of the local economy. The provision of additional, readily serviceable commercial properties offers future investors the opportunity to invest in a growing community with growing demand for services. Leveraging local resources and regional partnerships, the Village of Stirling can explore opportunities to bolster the local economy. The retention and diversification of businesses and industry in Stirling is sought to create more local employment opportunities, more service opportunities, and a more balanced assessment base.

GOALS ACHIEVED



8.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICES

8.1 The Village will continue to actively promote opportunities for economic development and investigate funding programs and sources that provide benefits for residents and businesses.

8.2 Plans, strategies, partnerships, and support for ideas and initiatives that may attract new economic development within the Village and the region will continue to be investigated and pursued.

8.3 Measures to create a more diversified tax base will continue to be investigated. Regular assessment of community needs and development mechanisms to attract and retain new business and industry providing a variety of employment opportunities for residents should be explored.

8.4 The Village should continue to work with the County of Warner and other municipalities and organizations within the region on an economic development strategy and initiatives to attract business and promote tourism.

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8.5 The practices and strategies for promoting economic development and tourism within the Village and the region should be reviewed regularly to ensure they remain relevant and effective.

8.6 Continue to build upon and enhance access to existing modern infrastructure and utilities to foster technology-based industries within the Village and the region.

8.7 Continue to explore opportunities for new sources of non-tax supported revenues to bolster the local and regional economy, such as municipally controlled corporations and leasing of Village facilities.



TRANSPORTATION

Even though Stirling's east-west, north-south grid street pattern was developed a hundred years ago, it continues to be extremely efficient in terms of municipal servicing and traffic flows as well as being pedestrian friendly. As part of the original plan for the Village, the wide streets and large boulevards promote safe pedestrian and cycling transportation throughout the Village. The existing street pattern has proven extremely effective as it offers drivers with several routes to arrive at their destinations and is cost effective in terms of municipal servicing. Village expansion will ensure efficient extension and interconnectedness of the existing grid roadway system into the County. Future development will be carefully planned to minimize impacts on vicinity highway networks and maintain a coordinated transportation system.

GOALS ACHIEVED



9.0 TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

9.1 Maintaining the Village's north-south, east-west grid pattern is an important element serving to preserve the cultural history of the Village.

9.2 New street networks should be a logical extension of the existing road network providing and prioritizing connectivity. Cul-de-sacs should be minimized to locations where it is impractical to provide a through street or necessary to accomplish access management efforts.

9.3 To facilitate infill development and the creation of an efficient road network, subdivision road designs will typically be required to include provisions for extension of roadways to adjacent parcels and connections to existing road alignments.

9.4 Pedestrian and cyclist access is encouraged within the Village. Opportunities to incorporate appropriate infrastructure in planning for new and existing neighbourhoods should be investigated.

9.5 The Village should consider establishing design standards and requirements for new municipal streets, walkways, pathways and associated infrastructure.

9.6 The Village may explore opportunities to replace gravel roads with paved roads throughout the municipality.

9.7 Subdivision of property adjacent to Highway 846 (1st Street) should not negatively impact the function and capacity of the Highway. An access management strategy will be required to accompany any subdivision or development proposing direct access or new streets onto the Highway.

9.8 To ensure the Village of Stirling continues to benefit from the safe and efficient use of provincial highways, Area Structure Plans, area redevelopment plans, conceptual design schemes, infill development plans and rezoning proposals that may have an impact on Highways 4 and 846 should be circulated to Alberta Transportation for comment prior to municipal approval.

9.9 The Village will benefit in the future from its location adjacent to established transportation corridors and should continue to maintain an open dialogue with Alberta Transportation regarding any transportation matters that may have an impact on the Village.

9.10 The Village will continue to work with the County of Warner to address any regional transportation issues that may affect the community, including the establishment of a coordinated road network within the **Urban Expansion Area** and the areas surrounding the Village.

9.11 Closure and disposal of road right-of-way should include consideration of the potential long-term impacts to the community and a determination that disposal of the right-of-way will not negatively affect future development potential and the functionality of the existing and future road network.



INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGEMENT

One of the most significant issues affecting a municipality's development potential is its infrastructure capacity. Understanding this, the Village of Stirling commissioned an ***Infrastructure Master Plan*** (IMP) to assess the current capacity and determine priorities and schedule of upgrades. The IMP will serve as a reference guide to identify logical growth directions and future infrastructure upgrades. As such, efficient use of existing utilities and infrastructure within the Village is a priority, as is ensuring logical, cost-effective extension of existing services when expansion becomes necessary.

GOALS ACHIEVED



10.0 INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGEMENT POLICIES

10.1 The ***Infrastructure Master Plan*** should be used as an essential tool during the Village's yearly priority setting and budget allocation.

10.2 New development should be sited with respect to the existing elevation contours and topography and consideration of any recommendations in the ***Infrastructure Master Plan*** to ensure a sustainable municipal infrastructure system.

10.3 The ***Infrastructure Master Plan*** should be reviewed regularly to identify existing capacities, desired levels of service, maintenance needs, short-term upgrading requirements, long-term servicing and sustainability concepts.

10.4 Development will maximize use of existing infrastructure where possible and ensure logical extension of utilities and other services in proposed subdivision designs.

10.5 Concurrency of services and facilities commensurate to impacts is expected. Development will not be permitted to outpace infrastructure capacity and developers may be required to prepare engineering assessments regarding water and sewer use and proposals for upgrades to support development.

10.6 Should water supply become an issue in the future, water conservation initiatives such as xeriscaping with drought resistant vegetation that is native to the Prairies and consistent with historic examples in Stirling, as well as methods for capturing water, should be pursued.

10.7 The Village encourages residents, businesses and institutions of Stirling to reduce their overall consumption of treated municipal water and control stormwater runoff on individual properties wherever possible.

10.8 The Village may require the provision of easements and/or public utility lots to accommodate municipal services and utilities through the subdivision and development process and encourages the establishment of multi-use service and utility corridors.

10.9 The Village will continue to maintain an on-going dialogue with utility companies providing service within the municipality to ensure capacity and service levels are adequately maintained to support future growth.

10.10 Developers may be required to pay off-site levies pursuant to the ***Municipal Government Act***, to help offset the capital costs for providing municipal services.

10.11 New developments and subdivisions should be encouraged in areas recommended by the IMP as suitable and that are located on non-hazard lands.



RESPONSIBLE GOVERNANCE

The Village is home to an active and involved community, and will strive to encourage engagement opportunities between residents, Council, and administration whenever possible. Ensuring provisions for consultation, collaboration and communication provides citizens the opportunity to engage with the municipal government in meaningful ways and a means for Council and administration to hear the needs and interests of the community. The Village will continue to build its relationships with the County of Warner and other regional partners to explore collaborative opportunities and initiatives to the benefit of the Village and the region as a whole.

GOALS ACHIEVED



11.0 RESPONSIBLE GOVERNANCE POLICIES

11.1 Public involvement and civic engagement are supported and will continue to be maintained through processes that facilitate and encourage the public to provide input on municipal matters and express concerns and interests to Village Council and administration.

11.2 The Village will continue to foster open and transparent governance and provide a positive environment for listening, evaluating and responding to residents' and community concerns.

11.3 Formats such as the municipal website and social media, open houses, notices and community newsletters will continue to be used to inform the public about important municipal issues.

11.4 Information regarding subdivision and development processes will continue to be made readily available to the public and applicants and the public are encouraged to provide input on matters of specific and general planning interest to the Village wherever possible.

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11.5 Council should continue to communicate its priorities to community groups to ensure available resources are coordinated to attain maximum benefits.

INTERMUNICIPAL PLANNING & PARTNERSHIPS

11.6 Collaborative relationship with the County of Warner and other regional partners should continue to be pursued, including the support of mutually beneficial service agreements and strategic economic partnerships to strengthen the regional economy.

11.7 The coordination of intermunicipal programs with the County of Warner relating to the physical, social and economic development of the area will be addressed through the Intermunicipal Collaborative Framework provisions of the ***Municipal Government Act*** and separate agreements as deemed necessary by the Village and the County.

11.8 The policy directions of the ***County of Warner No. 5 and Village of Stirling Intermunicipal Development Plan*** should be reviewed regularly to ensure they adequately address the needs of the community.

11.9 New partnerships with businesses, government, school boards, post-secondary institutions, and non-profit sectors, which provide benefit to the community and may result in enhanced service delivery and cost-savings, should be pursued.





VILLAGE OF STIRLING
IN THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA

BYLAW NO. 528-22
VILLAGE OF STIRLING MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

BEING a bylaw of the Village of Stirling in the Province of Alberta, to adopt a Municipal Development Plan for the municipality.

WHEREAS, the Municipal Government Act, Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000, Chapter M-26, as amended, requires every municipality to adopt a municipal development plan by bylaw;

AND WHEREAS, the purpose of Bylaw No. 528-22 is to provide a comprehensive, long-range land use plan for the Village pursuant to the provisions of the Municipal Government Act, Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000, Chapter M-26, as amended;

AND WHEREAS the Council of the Village of Stirling has prepared a long-range plan to fulfill the requirements of the Municipal Government Act and provided for its consideration at a public hearing.

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 duly assembled does hereby enact the following:

1. Bylaw No.528-22, being the Village of Stirling Municipal Development Plan, is hereby adopted.

2. Bylaw No. 416-08, being the former Village of Stirling Municipal Development Plan and any amendments thereto, is hereby rescinded.

3. This bylaw shall come into effect upon third and final reading thereof.

READ a **first** time this 13th day of July 2022.

READ a **second** time this 7th day of September 2022.

READ a **third** time and passed this 7th day of September 2022.

Mayor – Trevor Lewington

CAO – Scott Donselaar