

**LETHBRIDGE COUNTY**

**Hamlet of Kipp STUDY**



**June 2020**

**Approved by Resolution of Council**



*OLDMAN RIVER REGIONAL SERVICES COMMISSION*

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Prepared for Lethbridge County**

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# Part A

## STUDY OVERVIEW



# LETHBRIDGE COUNTY HAMLET OF KIPP STUDY

## Part A

### STUDY OVERVIEW

Lethbridge County is undertaking hamlet growth studies for each of its hamlets. The purpose is to encourage and support the residential and economic viability of the hamlets within Lethbridge County. The studies are to analyze present and future servicing needs along with identifying logical areas to support growth. The municipality has authorized the Oldman River Regional Services Commission, as municipal planners for the municipality, to review and prepare the studies/reports on behalf of the County.

The Lethbridge County Municipal Development Plan (MDP) identified that planning for future hamlet growth areas is desirable within its land use management strategy. The MDP is a long-range statutory document providing a framework of policies for decision makers regarding future growth and development opportunities. As part of the growth policies in the MDP, one of the County's objectives is to sustain the hamlets within the County and continue to protect agricultural land uses by encouraging residential development in and around the hamlets. In particular, the MDP outlines the following policies:

- The County shall support hamlet growth provided appropriate servicing provisions exist to facilitate expansions.
- The County shall, where required, undertake servicing master plans and the development of infrastructure required to facilitate growth.

The hamlet growth and assessment studies are to guide and facilitate the comprehensive planning and development of servicing that will be needed to support healthy, probable growth projections.

### Intent

This report presents a summary of existing conditions and considerations to determine the potential status and long-term viability of the smallest County hamlet, the Hamlet of Kipp.

This report is different in format in comparison to the other Lethbridge County hamlet studies prepared, as it is less of a growth analysis and more of an assessment and historical report. As is explained and highlighted in the document, the reason for this arrangement is that Kipp observably has no opportunity for growth. The hamlet has challenges primarily due to its location, resulting in physical land base limitations as well as it being severely impacted by future Highway 3 improvement needs, which makes it unfeasible to plan for any future opportunities for growth. These aspects are described in more detail in Part C of the report.

The study evaluates the hamlet in a similar (but less detailed) analytical manner as the other County hamlets for comparison purposes. However, the main intent is to highlight the current conditions and issues, along with providing a historical record for future posterity. The Part D section provides some general recommendations on how the County should manage the Hamlet of Kipp situation going forward.

## Objectives

- To provide an overview of the general hamlet conditions and assess the overall vitality (well-being) of the small community.
- To identify the land use situation and conform the availability or limitations present within and outside the hamlet boundary.
- To provide an assessment/summary for Lethbridge County decision makers to help guide future management, and determine if the County needs to consider any future long-term infrastructure planning.
- To provide a historical record of the establishment and history of Kipp for the County and future generations.
- To provide recommendations based on the overall assessment, and determine if the Hamlet of Kipp has any opportunity to grow, or if should it be declassified as a designated County hamlet.



## **Part B**

## **LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND**



# Part B

## LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

Hamlets are small unincorporated communities within a larger rural municipality in Alberta. They are governed, taxed, and managed by the rural municipality within the boundaries of which they are located.

The *Municipal Government Act (MGA)*, section 59(1) states,

*“59(1) The council of a municipal district or specialized municipality may designate an unincorporated community described in subsection (2) that is within its boundaries to be a hamlet.”*

Subsections (2) and (3) state,

*“(2) An unincorporated community may be designated a hamlet if the community:*

- (a) consists of 5 or more buildings used as dwellings, a majority of which are on parcels of land smaller than 1850 square metres,*
- (b) has a generally accepted boundary and name, and*
- (c) contains parcels of land that are used for non-residential purposes.*

*(3) The designation of a hamlet must specify the hamlet’s name and boundaries.”*

The Hamlet of Kipp does not conform to the provincially stipulated MGA criteria, and has not for many decades. This will be described in more detail in the accompanying report.

This study is not a statutory plan as defined by the MGA, but is a tool to help guide and shape direction and policy for Lethbridge County regarding planning for the hamlets. The suggested strategies and recommendations may be incorporated into the County’s Municipal Development Plan.



# Part C

## HAMLET OF KIPP ANALYSIS



# Part C

## HAMLET OF KIPP ANALYSIS

### 1. HAMLET OVERVIEW

The Hamlet of Kipp is located approximately 12 km (7 miles) northwest of the City of Lethbridge and just over 1.35 km northwest of the Town of Coalhurst (see Map 1). Kipp is the smallest in both size and population of all the hamlets within Lethbridge County. The hamlet is situated at the intersection of Highways 3 and 509, between the Canadian Pacific Railway and Highway 3 to the west. With the larger urban centres in such close proximity, Kipp never really flourished as a community. The hamlet is comprised of 2.835 acres (1.147 ha) of land within its designated boundaries.

#### 1.1 Population

Kipp contains only 2 residents and is not officially a designated place according to the federal 2016 Canada Census, but rather considered to be a place name.

Due to the fact that Kipp is not officially a designated place, consistent past population information over the last 30 years is difficult to find. However, previous historical records indicate that in 1976 there was a population of 19 persons.

#### 1.2 Hamlet History

The establishment of Kipp was largely the result of a combination of past historical events. The origins of Kipp are initially associated with a trading post in the area called Fort Kipp. As identified by archaeologists, the fort was located at the confluence of the Belly and the Oldman rivers, just a couple miles to the northwest of the current hamlet location. “Fort Kipp” was established around 1870 and was one of the infamous whiskey trading posts. The place took its name from an individual named Joe Kipp, a second generation whiskey trader who built and operated the whiskey fort.<sup>1</sup> Joe Kipp operated his whiskey fort until 1874, when he left the territory. Fort Kipp also has the distinction of being the location of the first ever treaty payment to the Kainai in 1878.

The Hamlet of Kipp is clearly not located in the original location of where the fort was situated. The hamlet officially got its start when H. Grant Hannon or James Hannon Watson (there is confusion as to his true name) and his wife, Isabella, outbid the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) on 30 acres of land for \$430 an acre. The couple built a store and tried to promote a town by the name of “Prairie View” at this site.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Where the Rivers Meet: A History of the Upper Oldman River Basin to 1939*, Barry Potyondi (Lethbridge, 1992)

<sup>2</sup> *Our Treasured Heritage*, Marge Williams

However, in 1910 the CPR established its station approximately 100 yards north of Prairie View and named the site “Kipp,” after the nearby Fort Kipp.<sup>3</sup>

The original Kipp plan was surveyed and registered as the ‘Kipp Townsite’ in 1910, and Kipp comprised over 30 acres of a land area lying west of the CPR rail-line. This 1910 plan consisted of a layout of 9 grid style blocks with each block comprised of a various number of multiple lots, generally 25 x 120 feet in size (see Diagram D-1). Presently in 2019, only a portion of Block 5 exists from the original 1910 plan.

In 1918, the Kipp Main Street was graded and called “the Red Route” and was later graveled in 1928. The Red Route eventually became Highway 3 and was paved and widened to a four-lane divided highway in the 1960s, which pretty much eliminated what was left of the hamlet. Alberta Transportation also later purchased the majority of Kipp land as it was needed to accommodate upgrades for Highway 3 and the intersection to Kipp Road in the early 1970s and early 1980s. As such, a large portion of the original ‘Kipp Townsite’ plan was overwritten with the registration of new surveyed road and surplus land plans for the highway and access road network.

Kipp is no longer considered to be a designated place according to Census Canada, but rather a place name. Kipp has a population of approximately two residents and has been this way for the past several decades. Despite, or perhaps a result of, its close proximity to the Town of Coalhurst and the City of Lethbridge, Kipp never developed as a viable community. As Highway 3 developed adjacent to Kipp as part of the provincial transportation network, a small store and service station operated for many years during the mid-1900s up to the late 1970s to serve the motoring public (known as the Thompson Store and British American Dealer Service Station). The service station also contained a post office, grocery store and snack bar.

Today, Kipp is most associated or known for the general location of the large CPR marshalling rail yards which are nearby to the north. Archival municipal documents indicate that since the mid-1970s, the County has been pondering the basic issue of whether or not any growth should be directed to Kipp.



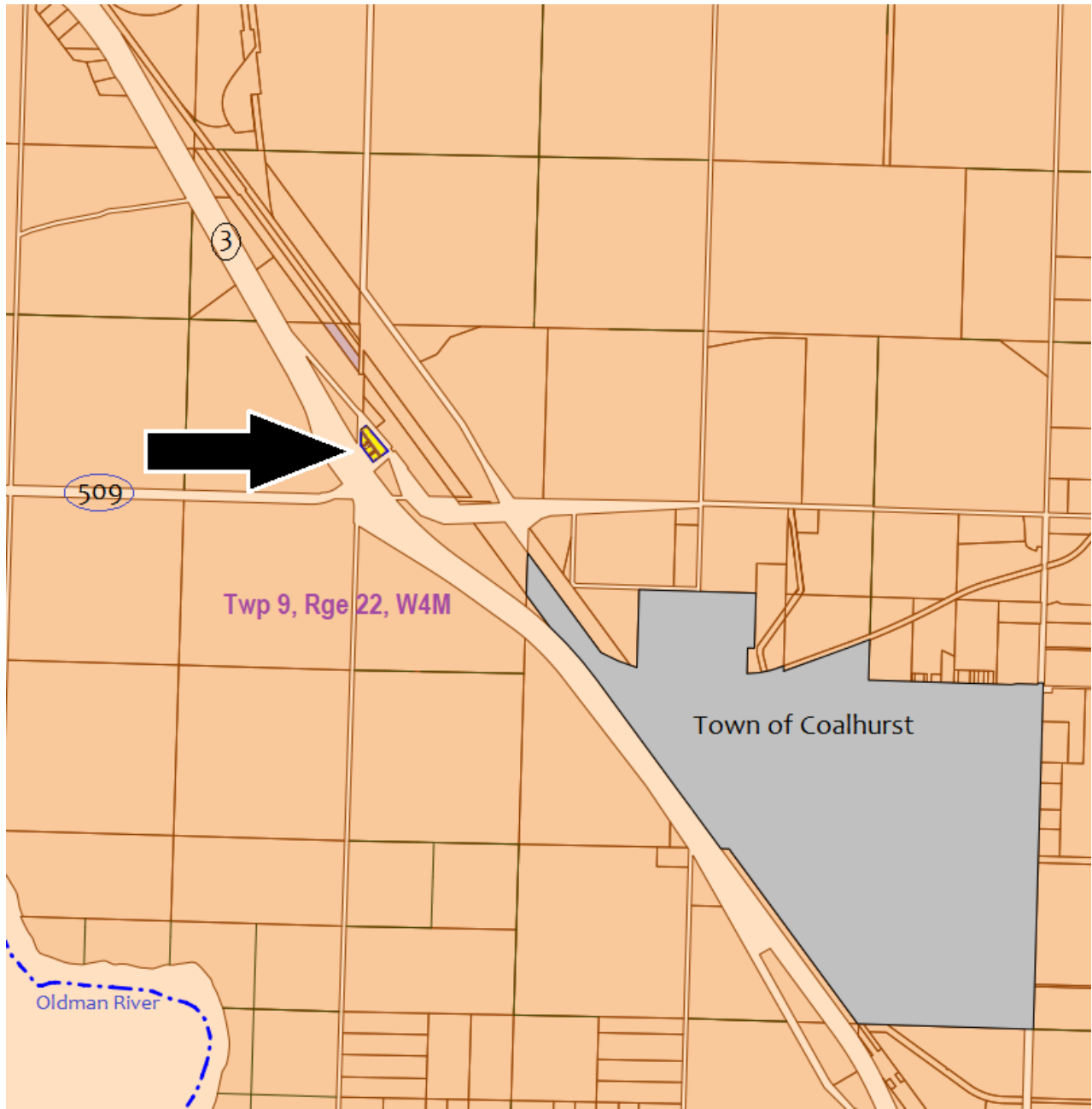
Abandoned rest stop  
Kipp 1966  
Courtesy Gal Museum & Archives: P19752207254



Thompson Store & British American Service Station  
Kipp 1957  
Courtesy Gal Museum & Archives: P19754090074

<sup>3</sup> *Sons of the Wind and Soil*, “Paddy” Bowman, Geoffrey Lester, Alex Johnston, A.A. den Otter, B.R. Peat, and Barry Potyondi.





## Hamlet of Kipp Study

Map 1 - Location


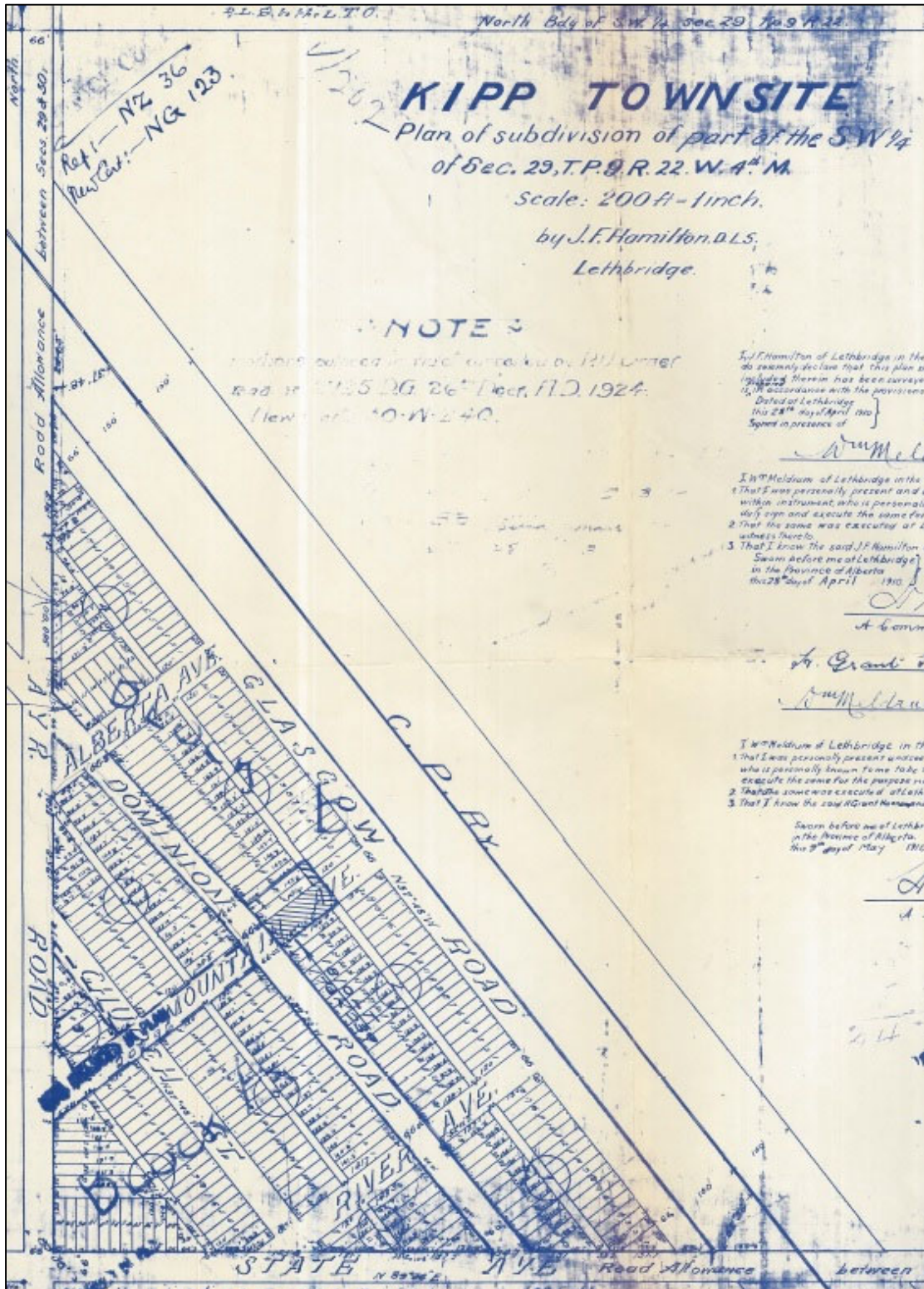
 Hamlet of Kipp





DIAGRAM 1

ORIGINAL KIPP TOWNSITE PLAN



## 2. EXISTING CONDITIONS AND OVERALL ASSESSMENT

The other series of hamlet studies conducted for Lethbridge County included a review of the existing hamlet conditions that involved a study of both land use and a general analysis of the character of the community. These reviews included assessing the following:

- Analysis of Population and Growth
- Determination of Land Use patterns
- Community Services - churches, schools, community halls, commercial (e.g. groceries)
- Parks and Recreation (i.e. playgrounds, ball diamonds, green space, etc.)
- General State Synopsis - personal property conditions, weeds, unsightly premises
- Confined Feeding Operations (CFOs) - proximity / effects
- Identification of Vacant Land Parcels
- Servicing - municipal and private utilities

Based on a review of the existing conditions, a general assessment statement was subsequently provided on the current state of the community (i.e. hamlet). Some conclusions were then provided on the identified constraints present or potential need for the provision of various municipal or community services. However, for the Hamlet of Kipp in respect to the limited development, this complete analysis was not undertaken. Rather, a more historical examination along with an overview of current conditions was conducted.

### 2.1 Population Projections and Growth

The Hamlet of Kipp has remained at approximately 2-3 residents associated with one existing dwelling for quite some time, due to no private land being available for development. In 1976 there was a recorded population of 19 which had dwindled to 14 persons by 1978, and then which steadily declined after that. (Note: the 1976 and 1978 population counts included two dwellings adjacent to the CPR tracks that are situated technically outside the current designated hamlet boundary, but the lands (Block B of Plan 605AE) were once part of the original hamlet area established in 1910.)

There is no projected population growth anticipated or logically expected to occur for the Hamlet of Kipp. This is due to the fact that Alberta Transportation owns all the land and the province will likely need the land area for future highway improvements. There is currently only one existing habitable dwelling, and there are no opportunities to expand the hamlet boundary. This will be described in more detail in the following sections.

### 2.2 Hamlet Assessment

There was once a commercial gas service station located in Kipp, situated at the north along Dominion Road (Lots 12-20, Block 5, Plan 605AE in the SW 29-9-22-W4), although the actual physical site of the service station appeared to be located in the approximate area of lots 17 through 20. The service station

also contained a post office, grocery store and snack bar. The gas station associated facilities included a service station building with garage, one pump island, and four underground storage tanks. In 1994, Alberta Transportation contacted engineers experienced in the field to perform an analysis, remove the underground storage tanks, and perform soils remediation. This remediation process and report was completed in 1995 and filed with Alberta Environment.

The following describes the current hamlet conditions:

- There is only one habitable residential dwelling in the hamlet. The residence appears to be older and in moderate to fair condition. There are a couple of accessory buildings (garages) in very poor, depleted condition. The property and buildings are all owned by Alberta Transportation. (It is noted there are three residential dwellings located immediately north of the hamlet, northeast of the service road, but they are technically outside the official hamlet boundary.)
- There are no existing commercial or industrial buildings within the hamlet. There are also no lots currently designated or available for such use in Kipp.
- There are no uses or land designated or available for public/institutional type uses, such as parks, playgrounds, community halls or schools.
- There are no privately titled land holdings. All the land and titles within the hamlet are owned by Alberta Transportation.
- All of the land within the hamlet boundary is designated (zoned) to the Hamlet Direct Control (HDC) land use designation under the Lethbridge County Land Use Bylaw (see Map 2).

## 2.3 Municipal Services and Infrastructure

### EXISTING

**WATER:** The Hamlet of Kipp does not have full domestic potable water service, but the existing individual residence does have access to the North County Rural Water Coop line via the County regional pipeline from the City of Lethbridge. The water is allocated under the County's own water license.

**SEWER:** The Hamlet of Kipp does not have municipal sewer service and the existing dwelling is serviced by an individual private on-site septic system.

**DRAINAGE:** Storm water drainage is not managed for Kipp as no municipal system is in place. Due to the small area and lack of development, storm water drainage issues have historically not been a concern.

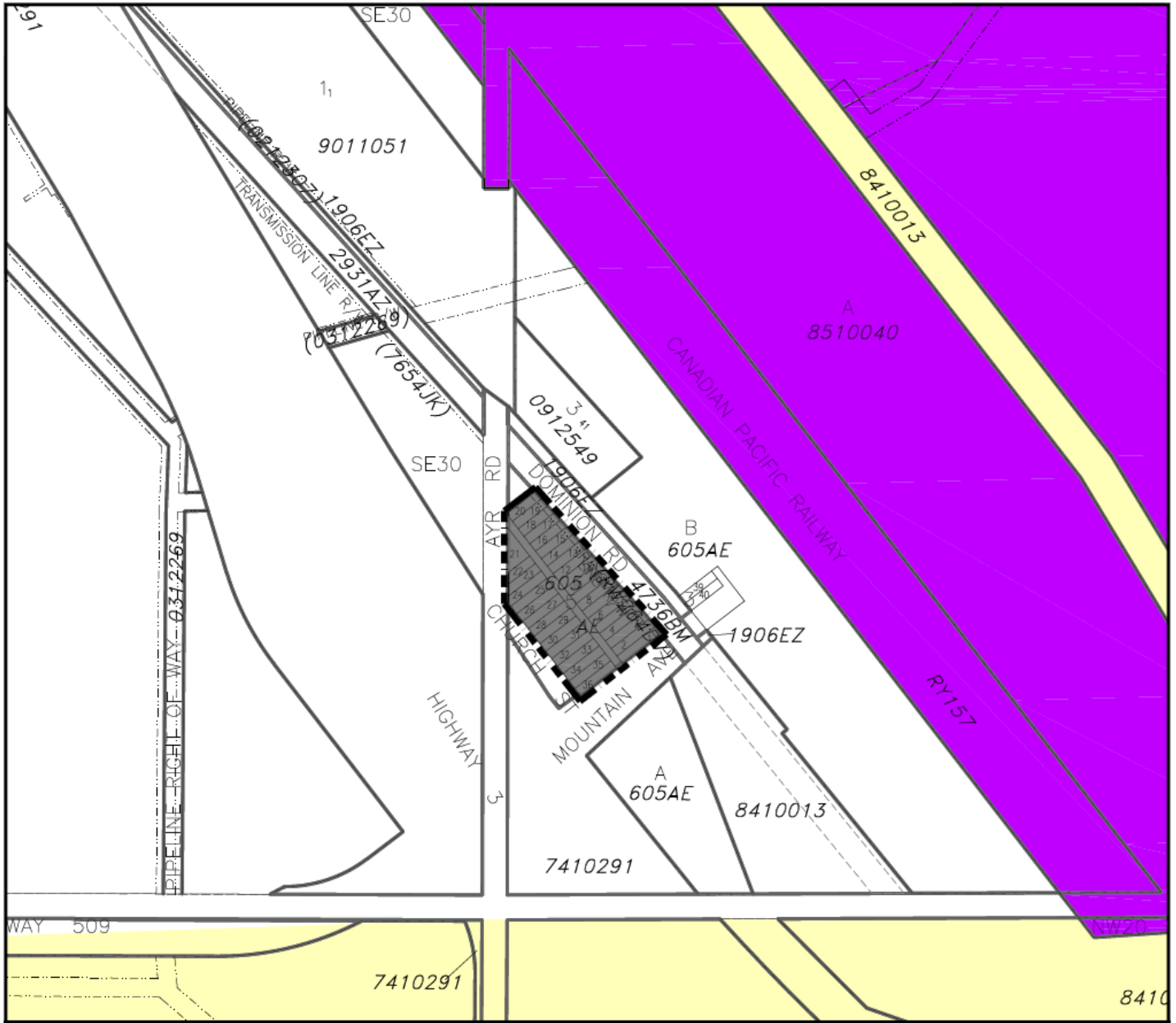
**ROADS:** There are two local exterior municipal roads, Mountain Ave and Dominion Rd, which are paved. Mountain Ave receives significant traffic as it provides the linkage between Highway 3 and Kipp Road to the east.

### 3. LAND USE STUDY

All the other similar hamlet studies undertaken for Lethbridge County included an analysis of the existing and projected land use needs to establish potential future growth and servicing needs in the hamlet community. However, in respect of the described conditions, a projection of future land use needs has not been completed for the Hamlet of Kipp. This is in consideration of the following issues and circumstances identified in the study:






- The Hamlet of Kipp is bounded between Highway 3 to the west and the CPR right-of-way to the east which restricts the opportunity for expansion.
- There are only 2.835 acres of land within the present hamlet boundary, and the County's Land Use Bylaw standards require a minimum 2.0 acres for individual lots to be serviced by private on-site sewage systems. This will not enable any in-fill opportunity within the present hamlet boundary.
- Alberta Transportation owns all of the titles to parcels of land within the designated hamlet boundary and some adjacent parcels of land.
- Alberta Transportation will require some of their land holdings to accommodate Highways 3, 509 and the Kipp Road future intersection improvements.





### Hamlet of Kipp Study

Map 2 - Land Use Districts  
 LAND USE BYLAW No. 1404

-  Hamlet Boundary
-  Rural Urban Fringe – RUF
-  Rural General Industrial – RGI
-  Rural Agriculture – RA
-  Hamlet Direct Control – HDC







## Part D

## STUDY FINDINGS



# Part D

## STUDY FINDINGS

### KIPP VISION / STRATEGY

In respect of the hamlet planning analysis completed and identified land use constraints, the strategy for the hamlet has been formulated based on the following:

- The Hamlet of Kipp does not have municipal sewer service and with its small population and single residence, is not warranted. There is no internal land available to accommodate new development and there is no opportunity for any new growth to be directed to adjacent lands outside the hamlet boundary. The hamlet will also be impacted by future highway improvement plans.
- This study would confirm the long-held assumption that County growth should not be directed to the Hamlet of Kipp.

### SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations on municipal considerations in respect of the circumstances, include the following:

1. This Hamlet of Kipp growth study and planning strategy should be considered by Lethbridge County and acted upon as warranted.
2. The County should continue to consult with Alberta Transportation regarding the provincial department's future plans for commencing intersection improvements for Highways 3 and 509.
3. With no growth opportunity available, the County does not need to undertake any future planning or engineering for municipal service delivery to the hamlet as it is not warranted.
4. The Hamlet of Kipp does not meet the legislative criteria of the MGA, section 59(1) regarding hamlets, as Kipp only meets one of the required provincial criteria for hamlet status: It has a generally accepted boundary and name. In regards to the other criteria, it does not consist of 5 or more buildings used as dwellings, a majority of which are to be on parcels of land smaller than 1,850 m<sup>2</sup> (20,000 sq. ft.), and it does not contain parcels of land that are used for non-residential purposes. The hamlet would not be able to ever realistically achieve those criteria.
5. County Council may consider approving a resolution to formally undesignate Kipp as a hamlet within Lethbridge County. The County may formalize this action and send written correspondence to the provincial department of Municipal Affairs advising them of such and for the reasons described above.
6. The County should amend its Land Use Bylaw and remove the hamlet boundary and land use designation of Hamlet Direct Control (HDC), and redesignate the hamlet lands to the general Rural Agriculture (RA) land use district.

7. The County should consult with Alberta Transportation and advise them of the removal of the hamlet designation, and the proposal to redesignate (rezone) the department of transportation owned lands to the general Rural Agriculture (RA) land use district.
8. Lethbridge County should continue to promote and refer to the Kipp area as a local 'place', due to its history and the known reference to the adjacent Kipp CPR marshalling yards. This would also align with the federal governments (Census Canada) classification for Kipp as a 'place name'.