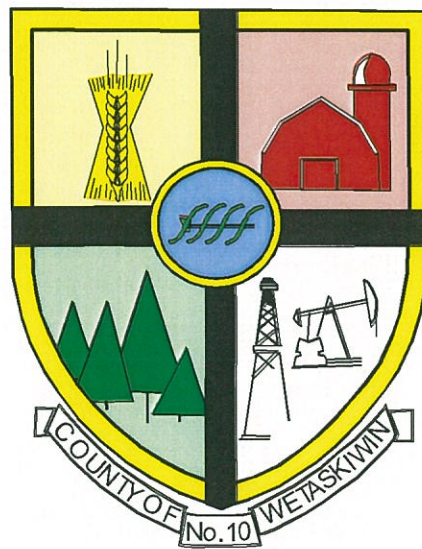


# County of Wetaskiwin No. 10

## Municipal Development Plan



**2010**

Amended by Bylaw 2016/55

Prepared by:  
Scheffer Andrew Ltd.

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## **Introduction**

This Municipal Development Plan (MDP) provides a general guidance for land use in the County of Wetaskiwin No.10. A Municipal Development Plan is a long-range statutory plan document adopted as a bylaw which directs decision making for everyday development matters.

A Municipal Development Plan needs constant monitoring and revisiting in order to maintain its consistency with present policies and regulations, economic climate and social environment. The County's previous MDP was developed in 1995 and revised in 1998. In response to changes in the Provincial planning structure and the increasing pressure of non-agricultural development that were not anticipated by the 1998 plan, County Council has chosen to revise the MDP and its Land Use Bylaw.

The County formed a Planning Review Committee that consists of three councillors, West Central Planning Agency and County planning staff to oversee the MDP revision process. The Committee retained Scheffer Andrew Ltd., a planning and engineering firm, to undertake the MDP review and revision and the Land Use Bylaw update.

This MDP complies with the Municipal Government Act Section 632, which outlines the requirements of the Municipal Development Plan.

In this document, unless otherwise stated:

- "The Act" refers to the Municipal Government Act 2000, and all consequent operative amendments to it.
- "The MDP" refers to the County of Wetaskiwin No.10 Municipal Development Plan.
- "The County" refers to the County of Wetaskiwin No.10, the County of Wetaskiwin No.10 Council or the administration of the County of Wetaskiwin No.10, depending on the context.

## **Plan Structure**

The Plan is organised into eight policy areas: Agriculture, Residential, Environmental Protection, Lakes, Industrial, Commercial, Intermunicipal, and County Services. Each policy area has Objectives and Policies within it.

The County's #6600 series policy documents which have provided guidance to certain planning matters, are referred to in the MDP and kept in a Policy Manual.

## Process

This Plan is developed following process outlined below.

| Municipal Development Plan Process     |   |
|--|---|
| November 2008                          | Start-up and issues identification                            |
| Fall 2008                              | Background information research                               |
| December 2008 / January 2009           | Public Meetings – Input on strengths and issues               |
| February 2009                          | Establishing vision   |
| Spring 2009                            | Draft document preparation                                    |
| Spring / Summer 2009                   | Review of the draft document by the County                    |
| Winter 2009/2010                       | Public Meetings – Feedback on draft                           |
| Spring 2010                            | Final review by the County. Circulation to external agencies. |
| Summer 2010                            | Public Hearing, Council approval                              |
| On-going Implementation and monitoring |   |

## **Statement of Purpose**

"The County of Wetaskiwin will strive to maintain a balanced approach to diverse development while protecting our agricultural heritage and rural environment."

The statement above was developed by the Strategic Planning Committee based on public input and issues raised by County staff.

Development and land use decisions will be guided by the Statement of Purpose. Land use planning requires a balancing between the rights of an individual landowner and the long term greater public interest. The County will try to avoid negative impact to environment and inefficient use of natural resources when making decisions.

The Plan's Statement of Purpose reflects on the County's overall Vision:

- Strong Proactive Leadership
- Safe Progressive Communities

In addition, the County encourages all development initiatives, including new area structure plans, in all areas of the County to take into account regional and Intermunicipal plans, including regional plan for North Saskatchewan Plan Region, as identified in the Province of Alberta's Land-use Framework.

The County believes its planning direction, as summarized in the previous Municipal Development Plan's goals below, is still supported by the residents.

1. To maintain a clean environment - to support development so long as there is no negative impact on air, natural resources, water or soil quality;
2. To support and encourage economic growth and development- to support growth and development in appropriate locations while avoiding inefficient use of natural resources such as coal, oil, natural gas and gravel; and
3. To support a high quality life - to weigh the needs of individuals in relation to the greater public interest.

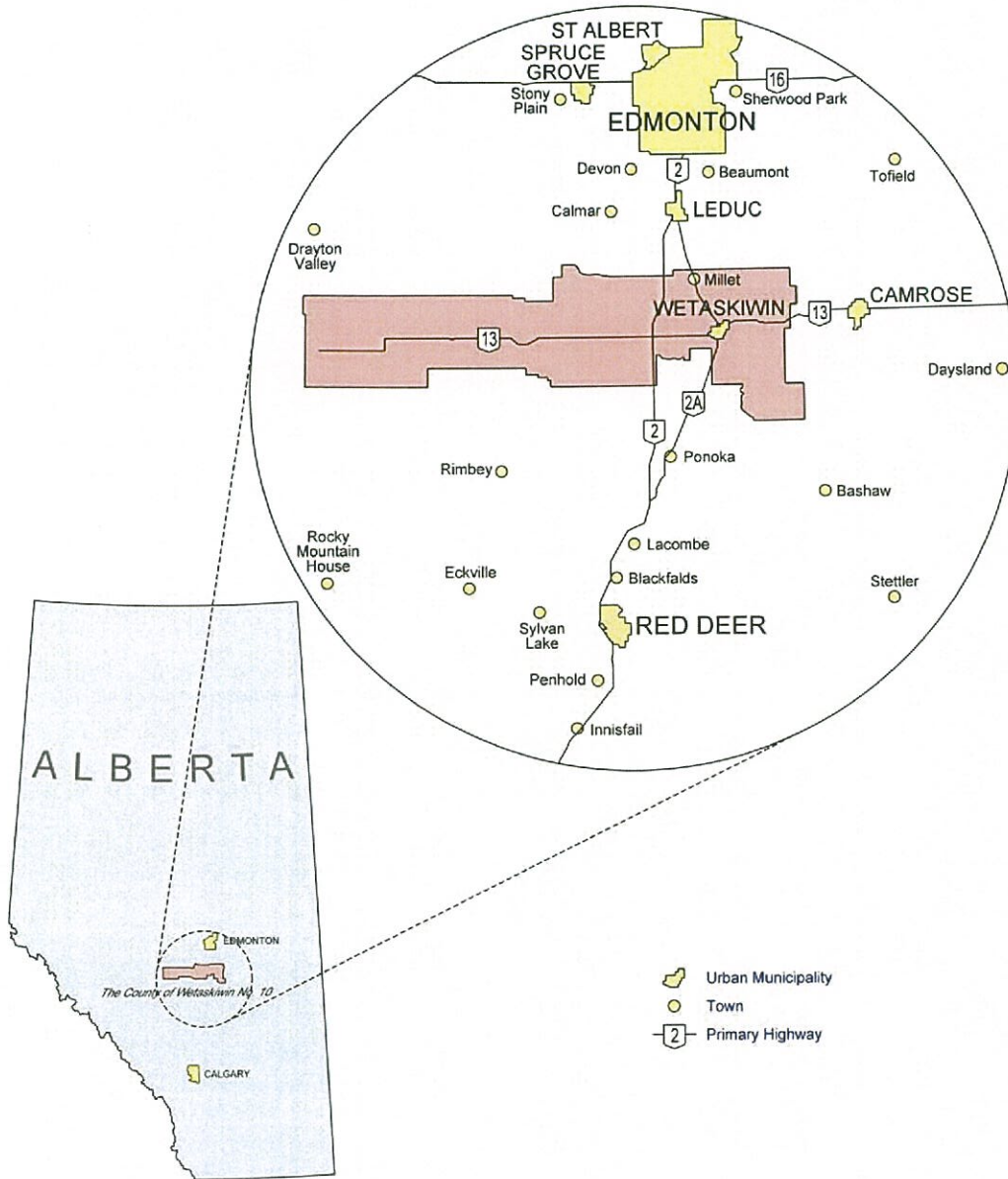
## **Background**

County of Wetaskiwin is a rural municipality located in the north-central Alberta, within the North Saskatchewan planning region as defined by the Province of Alberta Land-use Framework. The County is adjacent to the Capital Region, which encompasses a fast-growing area around Edmonton and determines the priority growth areas within the region.

Highway 2 and 2A run north-south through of the County, providing easy access to urban centres and to the Edmonton International Airport. The Canadian Pacific Rail line, which runs along Highway 2A and Highway 13 east of the City of Wetaskiwin also serve the County.

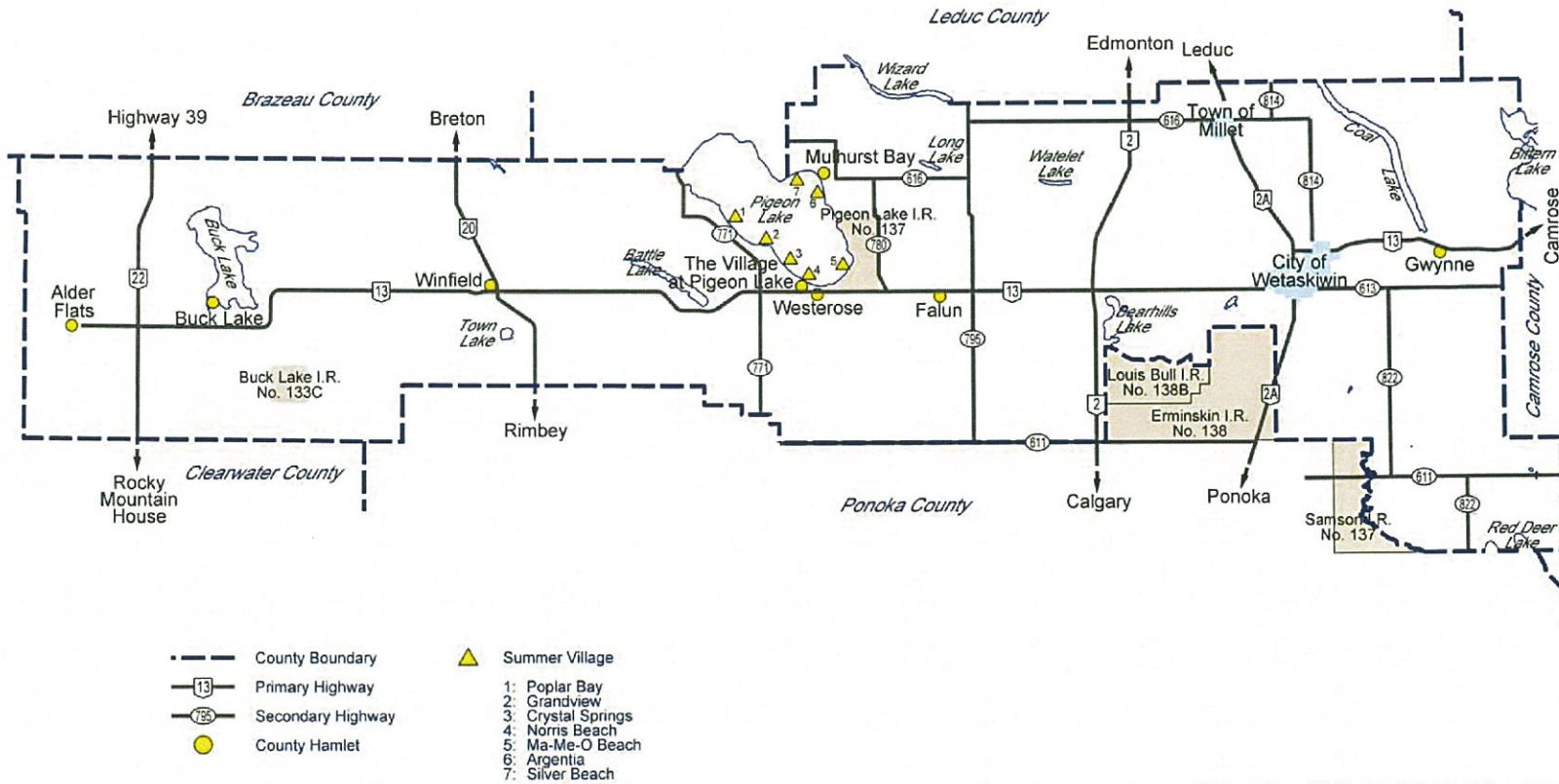
The lakes in the County, including Pigeon Lake, Wizard Lake and Buck Lake, provide recreational opportunities to the County residents and the visitors from outside. There are two Provincial grazing reserves located on the west part of the County.

The total population of the County in 2006 was approximately 10,500. Of the total population, the proportion of age groups 10 to 19 and 40 to 59 are the largest. The land area is approximately 3,130 km<sup>2</sup>, the majority of which is in agricultural production.



County of Wetaskiwin No. 10  
Municipal Development Plan  
Figure 1: Location Plan





County of Wetaskiwin No. 10  
Municipal Development Plan  
Figure 2: County Map

Scale 1:500 000



# Objectives and Policies

## 1 Agriculture

Agriculture is the predominant use of land in the County of Wetaskiwin. The 2006 Census shows that 30% of the labour force in the County was involved in agriculture and other resource-based industries, the largest proportion in the industry breakdown.<sup>1</sup> At the public meetings, the residents expressed the importance of farming and the challenge of keeping it economically viable.

The Province's Land-use Framework<sup>2</sup>, a recently prepared overall Provincial planning policy document, recognizes the protection of agricultural land from the fragmentation and the conversion to non-agricultural uses as an important part of successful planning in Alberta. As a rural municipality with an agricultural base, the County will take responsibility to maintain the farmland for viable agricultural production. The farmland also fosters clean air, water and wildlife corridors, as well as the open landscape that is an important cultural identity of the Province.

Protecting farmland from uncontrolled development; promoting the County's agricultural heritage, and maintaining the agriculture industry's viability are important goals for the County.

At the same time, land of lesser agricultural value near services may be suitable for conversion to industrial, commercial, residential or intensive agricultural business uses where such conversions are compatible with surrounding land uses. This ensures an opportunity to diversify the County's economy.

### Objective 1.1 Prevent fragmentation of farmland in the County

The County's farming industry should be protected so that current and future generations of farmers can operate their farms without being compromised by non-agricultural uses within the agricultural area.

Uncontrolled subdivision and converting farmland to non-agricultural uses negatively impact the agricultural society by 1) reducing the productivity of traditional farming by fragmenting the agricultural land into smaller parcels; and 2) creating potential land use conflicts. The best way to protect the farmland is to keep farming profitable.<sup>3</sup>

1.1.1 Subdivision of an unsubdivided quarter section for non-agricultural purposes is discouraged.

1.1.2 An unsubdivided quarter section in agricultural land may be subdivided to create:

- a) a farm site with existing improvements;
- b) a parcel for future development; or

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1 Community Profile, Census 2006, Statistics Canada

2 Land-use Framework, Alberta, Sustainable Resources Development, 2008

3 Fact Sheet - Farmland Protection Toolbox, American Farmland Trust, 2002

- c) two 32 ha (80 ac.), more or less, parcels of equal size.
- 1.1.3 There should be no more than one subdivided lot plus a remainder on a previously unsubdivided quarter section in agricultural land unless rezoning or an area structure plan is approved.
- 1.1.4 In addition to Section 1.1.3, another subdivision is allowed subject to redistricting when:
- a) creating a parcel to separate one additional existing residential farmsite, as defined in the current land use bylaw, and in accordance with Policy 6607 Second Yard Subdivisions, as amended; which requires improvements to be more than ten years old; or
  - b) there are natural or man-made barriers creating a natural severed split such as a river or stream, lake, road, or railway and pose difficulties to farm as one parcel.
- 1.1.5 The parcel size and the configuration of a new subdivision on an unsubdivided quarter section should be such that the least amount of land is taken out from agricultural production. The recommended parcel size is 2.0 ha (5 ac.).
- 1.1.6 In order to minimize the impact on the adjacent farming operation, a new parcel on a quarter section is encouraged to locate:
- a) where the land is not suitable for agricultural production; and
  - b) where there is/are existing farmsite(s) on a corner of the adjacent quarter sections; or
  - c) near where existing improved roads (paved or gravel) intersect.

## **Objective 1.2 Protect agricultural land to remain in production**

Traditional extensive crop farming is the strong backbone of the County's farming industry, which relies on high capability agricultural soil. Once the land is converted to non-agricultural use, it is very difficult to convert it back to productive farmland due to the change in soil characteristics, fragmentation, and possible contamination. At the same time, lower rated land in the western part of the County has traditionally been used for grazing. A typical ranching operation requires a large tract of land to be viable.

Non-agricultural land uses and the more intensive agricultural practices, such as greenhouses, or intensive livestock operations, do not require a large tract of land or highly productive soil but still can be profitable. These land uses have a lesser reliance on the soil capability, and may be directed away from high capability, unsubdivided agricultural land.

At the same time Farmland value should be established for fair evaluation of the ranching or non-traditional agricultural operations.

1.2.1 Productive agricultural land includes:

- a) land in production with a farmland assessment value of 30 % or more;
- b) grey-wooded soil producing hay, forage or other crops; and

- c) land currently used for grazing.
- 1.2.2 Area structure plan or rezoning will not be considered if the land is classified as productive agricultural land as defined above except as allowed elsewhere in the Municipal Development Plan.
- 1.2.3 Agricultural uses that do not depend on good soil quality or a large tract of land are encouraged to locate:
- a) where the Canada Land Inventory (CLI) soil class for agricultural capability or farmland assessment rate (FAR) value is low (CLI class 4 and lower, FAR below 30%); or
  - b) on a previously subdivided quarter section.

### **Objective 1.3 Raise public awareness and share the responsibility of protecting farmland in the County**

Farmland is not only used for food production but also fosters various public goods such as open landscape; clean air and water; and wildlife habitat and riparian areas. Although it is difficult to quantify these benefits, it is recognized by most Canadian provinces, including the Province of Alberta, through "right to farm" legislation. The County will continue to foster a positive stature of farming with other land uses.

The general public benefits from the environmental value and also enjoy the beautiful landscape of farmland, but the responsibility of maintaining healthy farmland is primarily carried by the farmers and ranchers. Seasonal variation of earnings or its susceptibility to the weather and other external factors make it hard to maintain a steady income for farmers. Subdividing the farmland is one of the few ways to create lump-sum cash when needed, such as for retirement.

- 1.3.1 The County may provide regular public notices through various media to inform the public that the farming operation in the County may cause slow moving traffic, noise, dust, odour, aerial spraying, extended working hours, and manure production and application.
- 1.3.2 The County may require a caveat to be registered on title for a new lot to advise of the impacts of farming operations such as slow moving traffic, noise, dust, odour, etc. in the County.
- 1.3.3 The County may consider introducing programs to protect farmland from subdivision or conversion to non-agricultural uses. Such programs may include the transfer of development credit, tax rate freezes for agricultural land in high-demand areas, conservation easement incentives, and cluster zoning provision.
- 1.3.4 The County will continue to recognize the importance of agriculture in its planning documents.

## **Objective 1.4 Minimize the land use conflict with Confined Feeding Operations and surrounding land uses**

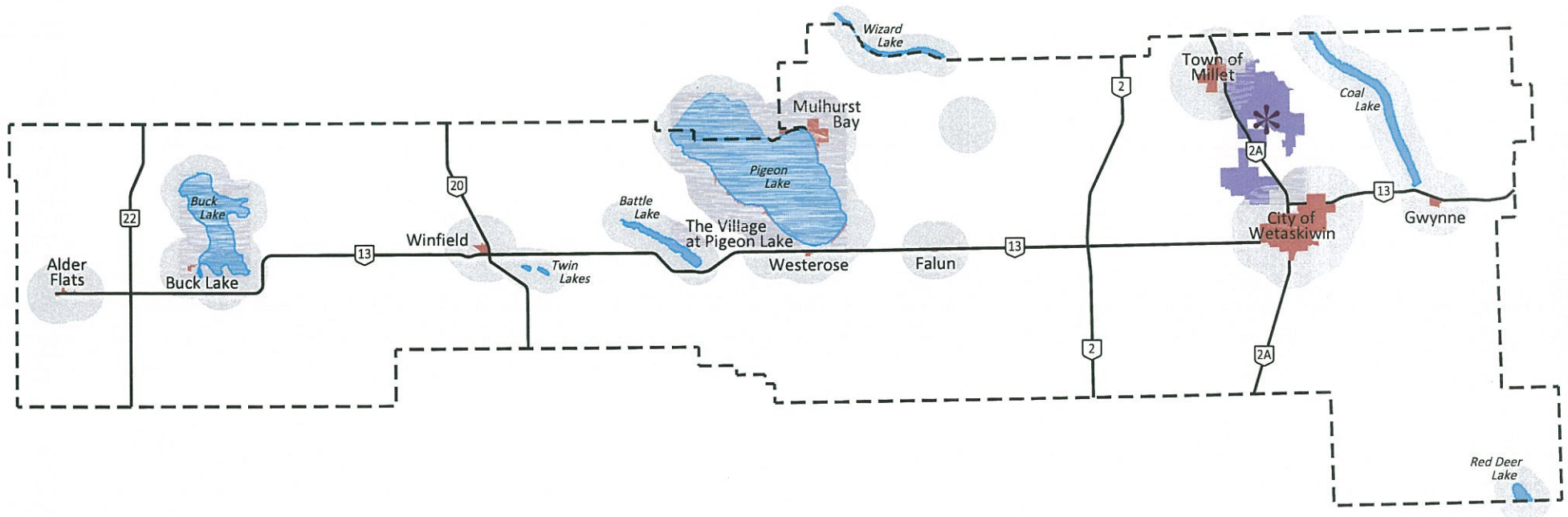
While the Confined Feeding Operations are under Provincial jurisdiction<sup>4</sup>, it is the County's intent that any negative effect from the Confined Feeding Operation should be minimized. The Municipal Government Act requires the municipality to identify where new Confined Feeding Operations should locate.

An Intensive Livestock Operation is a Confined Feeding Operation that is smaller than the threshold size that falls under Provincial jurisdiction, as determined by the Provincial guideline.

- 1.4.1 The minimum distance setback of Alberta Agriculture Code of Practice, as amended, should be maintained.
- 1.4.2 For an Intensive Livestock Operation, the Minimum Distance Separation is determined by using the threshold level of the animal or the combined effects of the different kind of animals that are kept on one premise.
- 1.4.3 Any size of new Confined Feeding Operation (including Intensive Livestock Operation) must not locate within the following setback distances as illustrated in Figure 3.
  - a) 2.4km (1.5 miles) from the boundary of any city, town, village, hamlet, and school and hospital.
  - b) Under no circumstances can a new CFO be located within 1.6km (1 mile) of the following named lakes: Battle Lake, Buck Lake, Coal Lake, Pigeon Lake, Red Deer Lake, Wizard Lake and Twin Lakes.
  - c) All other unspecified environmental features, including but not limited to lakes not specified in (b), wetlands, and watercourses shall have setbacks in accordance with Alberta Operation Practices Act and Regulations (AOPA) as amended.
- 1.4.4 A new residence is not permitted within the Minimum Distance Separation of an existing Confined Feeding Operation/Intensive Livestock Operation, unless the residence is associated with the operation.
- 1.4.5 Within the Millet-Wetaskiwin Acreage Study Area, the setback distance outlined in 1.4.4 may be relaxed by up to 25% of the minimum distance separation required by Alberta Agricultural Code of Practice.

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4 Agricultural Operation Practices Act, Agricultural Operations, Part 2. Matters Regulation, Schedule 2 Threshold Levels



-  Confined Feeding and Intensive Livestock Operation Setback  
(Area is for Illustration Purposes Only)
- Setbacks**
- 2.4km City, Town, Village, Hamlet, School and Hospital
- 1.6km Specified Named Lakes
-  Relaxed Setback Applies in Millet / Wetaskiwin Acreage Study Area

County of Wetaskiwin No. 10  
Municipal Development Plan

Figure 3: Confined Feeding and Intensive Livestock Operation Setback

## **2 Residential**

The County is experiencing a growing demand for residential development in non-urban areas. When carefully located, residential development within agricultural land can be a positive addition to the County. At the same time, the cost of providing Municipal and community services in remote locations is much higher than focusing service delivery to one area<sup>5</sup>. Uncontrolled residential subdivisions scattered across the community can become a financial burden to the municipality.

The County is immediately outside of Capital Region, where the Capital Region Plan does not allow typical country residential development within its plan area. Some urban centres with strong growth boundary policies unintentionally triggered leapfrog development outside the growth boundary. The County may see increased pressure for residential subdivision due to its proximity and accessibility to the Capital Region, particularly along Highway 2 and Highway 2A due to the Capital Region Plan's strict approach to country residential development. Nevertheless, it is understood that the land along Highway 2 is difficult to accommodate multi-lot residential development because of the lack of water supply and access limitation requirements by Alberta Transportation.

It is the County's intention that future residential development be clustered and located where services already exist or can be logically and economically extended.

### **Objective 2.1 Cluster residential development to hamlets and close to services**

Hamlets in the County are: Alder Flats, Buck Lake, Falun, Gwynne, Mulhurst Bay, Village at Pigeon Lake, Westeros, and Winfield.

Currently, Municipal sewer services exist in Alder Flats, Falun, Gwynne, Mulhurst Bay and Winfield. A proposed regional sewer system is planned to serve the Summer Villages and the surrounding area by Pigeon Lake. Municipal water services exist in Gwynne and Winfield and limited infrastructure capacity of water services exists in Mulhurst Bay.

- 2.1.1 Multi-lot residential development should locate in or near hamlets where Municipal water and sewer services and paved road already exist or can easily be extended.
- 2.1.2 Multi-lot residential development should locate close to existing services including paved roads, water and sewer services.
- 2.1.3 New development should connect to existing water and/or sewer systems where capacity exists.
- 2.1.4 Residential development in hamlets should be of the density to allow efficient Municipal and community service delivery.

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<sup>5</sup> The Fiscal Implications of Land Use: A Cost of Community Services study for Red Deer County, Miistakis Institute, EVDS University of Calgary, April 2006

- 2.1.5 Multi-lot development that that does not meet the Section 2.1.1 through 2.1.3 may be considered at the discretion of the County and comprehensive plan has been prepared for the area.

**Objective 2.2 New multi-lot residential development is located to minimize the negative effects on adjacent land uses**

The collective effect of small scale development can and will impact a large area in the long-term. Non-farming residential development created within farming communities has caused conflicts between the new and existing residents due to different expectations and lifestyles.

At the same time, there are cases where multi-lot residential development may be a better use of less productive agricultural land that has desirable features for residential development. The County will examine the location of proposed multi-lot residential development to minimize the negative impact while weighing the positive aspects of the proposal.

- 2.2.1 Multi-lot residential development in agricultural land should not be allowed on productive agricultural land, as defined in Section 1 of the MDP.

- 2.2.2 The poor soil assessment for a portion of a quarter section does not apply to the entire quarter section thereby making the entire quarter section developable. Only those portions with poor soil can be considered for land uses other than agriculture.

- 2.2.3 Multi-lot residential development in agricultural land should have the following characteristics:

- a) a scenic view, tree stands, ravines, water course or water body;
- b) be easily serviced by emergency and school bus services;
- c) paved road access to the land, or the developer will provide one; and
- d) it is not on productive agricultural land.

- 2.2.4 Multi-lot residential development in agricultural land should not adversely affect existing and future land uses of the area.

- 2.2.5 Multi-lot residential development in agricultural land should not locate within:

- a) the setback distance of the Confined Feeding Operation or Intensive Livestock Operation unless otherwise stated in the Municipal Development Plan;
- b) the setback distance of environmentally sensitive areas, as determined by an environmental study;
- c) the setback distance from an existing resource extraction operation;
- d) the urban fringe area where future urban expansion is considered unless the proposed development is built in accordance with the urban standards;
- e) a reasonable distance from the land designated for future commercial or industrial uses, as determined by the County; and.



- f) the setback distance of existing/closed landfill or waste transfer station.

### **Objective 2.3 Multi-lot residential development conforms to the County's policies**

The County has developed several policies to guide the applications for a new multi-lot residential development. New development is required to follow these existing policies and any other new policies that the County may prepare in the future. The conformity to the Plan or other policies does not relieve a person of the duty or obligation to obtain any other permits, licenses or other authorization required by other regulations.

2.3.1 The maximum density of the multi-lot subdivision is decided subject to the following:

- a) an increase in density will not negatively impact surrounding areas and infrastructure;
- b) a sufficient water supply exists within the subdivided portion;
- c) public access acceptable to the County; and
- d) other tests which may be required as the County deems necessary.

2.3.2 Residential development that results in there being more than three (3) lots out of a quarter section requires an area structure plan and redistricting in accordance with the Requirements for Area Structure Plans Policy #6606.

2.3.3 An area structure plan may be required to include adjacent quarter sections and/or road network.

2.3.4 Multi-lot subdivisions shall be comprehensively designed to ensure the following matters are satisfactorily addressed including appropriate roadway systems, lot density and servicing compatible with the characteristics and servicing available in the area and unless otherwise stated by the County, a provision for reserve dedication and pedestrian trail system.

2.3.5 Multi-lot residential development should be serviced by paved roads or contributions shall be made towards the improvement of roads providing access to that development in accordance with the Pavement and Per Lot Road Contribution Fee Policy #6615.

2.3.6 Re-subdivision of existing residential lots should comply with the Re-subdivision in Multiple-Lot Subdivisions Policy #6605.

2.3.7 A new multi-lot residential development on agricultural land is not allowed unless otherwise identified by comprehensive area specific planning studies such as:

- a) Millet Wetaskiwin Acreage Study Area Structure Plan as illustrated in Figure 4; or
- b) Future statutory or non-statutory plans, including area structure plans, or area concept plans.

**Objective 2.4 Municipal reserve is provided to benefit the current and future generations of the County**

As provided in the Municipal Government Act, Section 666, the County may require up to 10% of net developable area as municipal reserve dedication from the land owner at the time of subdivision. The municipal reserve land and/or the fund dedicated in lieu of the land (cash-in-lieu) are used to create and enhance Municipal park and trail systems to ensure a public land base for future open space needs.

2.4.1 Municipal reserve dedications are to be made by dedications of land rather than cash-in-lieu payment unless stated otherwise by Council.

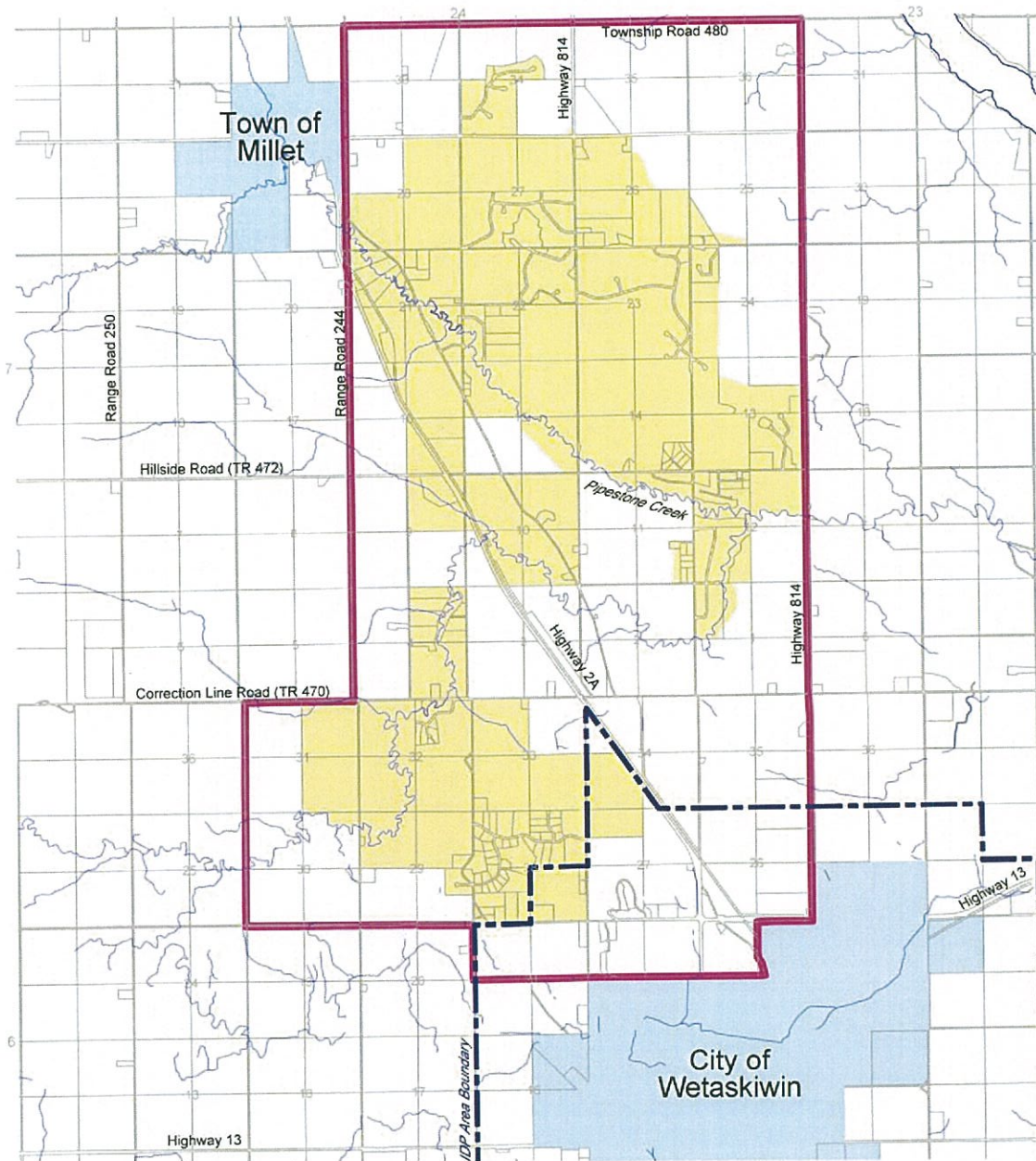
2.4.2 An area structure plan or non-statutory plan (outline plan, area concept plan) must identify the location of the future reserve land within the plan area.

2.4.3 The reserve land shall be located to provide maximum benefit for future generations. Considerations should include recreational and school uses, wildlife habitat, and watershed protection.

2.4.4 In the absence of a plan, the County will choose the location, configuration, quality and characteristics of the land for reserve to maximize the benefit to future generations.

2.4.5 The value of the land for the purpose of cash-in-lieu of municipal reserve calculation is determined by the County based on the present use of the land in accordance with Typical Farmland Values for Subdivision Reserve Allocation Policy #6602.

2.4.6 The developer has the option of obtaining a market value appraisal of the land at his expense or agreeing with County on another method for determining the value of the land.



Possible Area for Acreage Development  
 Set by Bylaw 2004/28, amendment up to June 2010  
 Millet - Wetaskiwin  
 Acreage Study Area

County of Wetaskiwin No. 10  
 Municipal Development Plan

Figure 4: Millet - Wetaskiwin  
 Acreage Study Area

### **3 Environmental Protection**

Protecting the natural environment from over-development is another focus of this Plan. Concerns regarding lake water contamination, fish population decrease and ground water decline were expressed by the public during the Plan preparation.

Although there are concerns over the negative impact of resource industries, the oil and gas activities are regulated by the Province and outside of the County's jurisdiction.

#### **Objective 3.1 Protect environmentally sensitive areas of the County**

Maintaining proper distance from environmentally sensitive areas will protect the County residents from potential damage as well as ecological integrity of the area. A professionally prepared report determines the environmental value or the geotechnical integrity of the land and identifies appropriate impact mitigation measures. While it would initially add to the cost of development, this is an important component that would ultimately benefit the County and future residents of the development.

3.1.1 Prior to the approval of a rezoning, subdivision and/or development application, the developer may be required to prepare environmental reports such as biophysical report, slope stability report, or environmental site assessment, prepared by a qualified professional:

- a) near environmentally sensitive areas such as lakes, water courses, steep slopes, flood plains, or protected species habitat; or
- b) on land with potential contamination from the previous or adjacent uses.

3.1.2 The environmental report for the purpose of the above policies should address:

- a) the suitability of the site for proposed development;
- b) the impact on wildlife and plant species habitats; and
- c) conservation or mitigation measure recommendations.

3.1.3 Natural areas, including creeks, natural drainage channels, ponds, ravines, springs, and wetlands should be dedicated as environmental reserves, in accordance with the Act, Provincial Guidelines, or as recommended by a professional report.

3.1.4 The owner of the land adjacent to an environmental reserve must act responsibly to ensure these reserves remain natural.

3.1.5 When a significant area of environmental reserve is dedicated, Council will consider reducing the municipal reserve contribution.

3.1.6 Council may consider proposals from ratepayers or public groups for the maintenance and protection of reserve land.

3.1.7 The County may use other conservation tools such as environmental reserve easements, conservation easements and restricted covenants to achieve the purpose stated in 3.1.3.

- 3.1.8 Where County jurisdiction applies, the restoration of environmentally sensitive areas shall occur by natural means or be restored by a third party where a third party has caused an unauthorised change.

### **Objective 3.2 Prevent water contamination of lakes in the County**

Water quality of lakes in the County is a concern for the residents, as well as for visitors who use the lakes for recreation. Of particular concern is the development around Pigeon Lake and Buck Lake where residential development pressure is high. Domestic waste water can be a significant risk to water contamination, especially when the private sewage systems are not properly operated. Sewage near major lakes should be collected in a piped system or held in cisterns and transported and treated at Municipally and Provincially approved lagoons.

- 3.2.1 Development near lakes must comply with the Requirement for Sewer Service Policy #6611 to prevent the contamination of lake water from domestic waste water.
- 3.2.2 New development is required to prepare and construct sewer collection systems compatible with a regional sewer treatment system (existing or planned) and in accordance with Sewer Policy #6611.
- 3.2.3 Existing development may also be required to have sewer collection systems compatible with a regional sewer treatment system if access to a transmission line exists or is planned to be near the existing development.

### **Objective 3.3 Protect ground water supplies for current and future residents**

The County requires proof of sufficient potable water supply prior to approving new development. Recently completed Regional Groundwater Assessment recommends a well water level monitoring program in order to properly assess the perceived water level decline<sup>6</sup>.

- 3.3.1 For a new multi-lot residential development without Municipal water service, a ground water analysis and pump test is required at the developer's expense to prove the sufficient water supply is available, in accordance with Policy #6606.
- 3.3.2 Each new multi-lot residential development without municipal water service must provide its own water supply on-site. Trucking water into the site is not a viable option and development applications with such concept may not be accepted.
- 3.3.3 Both surface and ground water supplies must not be over-committed to accommodate one proposed development over another. The approval of individual development must carefully consider the cumulative effect.
- 3.3.4 A well water monitoring program may be initiated in consultation with Alberta Environment.

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6 Regional Groundwater Assessment; Parts of Tp044 to 048, R22 to 28, W4M & Tp045 to 047, R01 to 07, W5M; Groundwater Consulting Environmental Sciences, Hydrogeological Consultants Ltd; 2008

- 3.3.5 Where there is potential for a municipal water service, new development must plan for future water pipelines (i.e. reserving the pipeline right of way)

#### **Objective 3.4 Storm water is maintained to protect natural drainage pattern**

Where possible, and subject to Provincial and Federal policies and regulations, the County will require all new development which may affect or to be affected by existing surface and storm water resources to enhance and protect the quality of water courses.

- 3.4.1 All watercourses must be protected from negative impact of development and should the damage occur, they must be restored.
- 3.4.2 Appropriate storm water management design is required to prevent flooding and contamination of the nearby water bodies by conserving and/or regulating the run-off and snow melt.
- 3.4.3 Where appropriate, development shall incorporate natural drainage course or natural water features, such as bio swales or ditches, for storm water management as opposed to installing piped systems.
- 3.4.4 Both surface and ground water supplies should not be over-committed to one proposed development over another.

#### **Objective 3.5 Retain existing tree-cover**

Tree-covered land near the major lakes, rivers and streams has an important role to protect and filter the water. The County has been encouraging land owners near water courses and water bodies to maintain the existing tree cover through several conservation districts.

- 3.5.1 The land within 1.6 km (1 mile) from a river, stream, watercourse or lake is protected for watershed protection and may be re-districted to appropriate land use districts.
- 3.5.2 Clearing of the existing tree or natural vegetation for residential development is limited only to establish minimum building sites in the area established in 3.5.1.
- 3.5.3 The County encourages the land owners near the watercourse to re-vegetate the land along the water body.
- 3.5.4 Natural vegetation and treed areas adjacent to water bodies, watercourses and on steep slopes shall not be cleared.
- 3.5.5 Environmental Reserves must remain their natural state.

## **4 Lakes**

Lakes in the County are recognized as a great asset by residents and attract many visitors. Activities around the lakes and development of the lakeshore land have increased.

There are Provincial and Municipal regulations to prevent water contamination from sewage discharge entering the lake while Provincial and Federal regulations control the recreational

use of the lakes. The County will continue to work with Provincial and Federal governments to bring regional solutions for sewage collection and treatment systems.

Buck Lake Management Plan (2002), Pigeon Lake Watershed Management Plan (2000) and Wizard Lake Management Plan (2000) were prepared for the County. These plans provide general guidelines for development around the lakes.

#### **Objective 4.1 Lakes in the County are categorized according to their respective primary roles**

The lakes in the County are categorized according to the intensity of the intended use of each lake.

4.1.1 The types of lakes are established as follows:

- Type 1: Development – These lakes accommodate various lake shore recreational and residential development.
- Type 2: Low-impact Development – These lakes accommodate low impact and small scale development on the lakeshore. These lakes are suitable for wildlife habitat and wilderness conservation.
- Type 3: Protection – Lakeshore development is not allowed due to various constraints such as access, size, depth, surrounding land uses.

4.1.2 County's named lakes are categorized as follows:

- Type 1: Development – Buck Lake, and Pigeon Lake
- Type 2: Low-impact Development – Battle Lake, Bearhills Lake, Town Lake, and Wizard Lake
- Type 3: Protection – Bittern Lake, Bloomfield Lake, Coal Lake, Eyot Lake, Labyrinth Lake, Long Lake, Red Deer Lake, Samson Lake, Twin Lakes, and Watelet Lakes

#### **Objective 4.2 Lakes in the County are well managed according to their respective primary roles as established**

While activities on the lake are controlled through Provincial regulations, land use regulations could still effectively control the activities on the lake. For example, prohibiting the development of a boat-launch can limit the excessive motor boat use.

For the purpose of this objective, lake shore land is defined as 0.8 km (1/2 mile) from the bed and shore of the lake.

4.2.1 The County may consider updating existing lake management plans for Pigeon Lake and Wizard Lake, in consultation with Leduc County and the Summer Villages.

4.2.2 Maintain communication and cooperation with surrounding municipalities for any statutory or non-statutory plan preparation concerning the lakes in the County that borders on other municipalities.

- 4.2.3 Development around all lakes including Buck Lake and Pigeon Lake should follow Policy #6611 for sewer systems.
- 4.2.4 At Long Lake, Watelet Lakes and Wizard Lake where coal or gravel deposits are known to exist beneath these lakes, the developer has to prove that extraction is uneconomical prior to land development.
- 4.2.5 Lake shore residential subdivision may be considered for Battle Lake, Town Lake, Coal Lake and on the sand ridges inland from Bearhills Lake only if an area structure plan and rezoning are prepared compatible with other County policies including this plan.
- 4.2.6 Small scale, non-intensive recreational use may be allowed for Battle Lake.
- 4.2.7 At Red Deer Lake, when considering raising the lake level, land lying below the 774.2 m (2,540 ft) contour will be protected.

#### **Objective 4.3 Ensure the lakes are publicly accessible**

Lakes in the County are a public resource and the public has a right of access. Public access to lakes, for both the local residents and the visitors, should be maintained and enhanced through the planning process.

- 4.3.1 County will strive to maintain public access to the lake through municipal and environmental reserve dedication from subdivisions adjacent to lakes.
- 4.3.2 An area structure plan for the proposed development near the lake should address lake access.
- 4.3.3 Developers should contribute to provide lake access for back lot cottages.
- 4.3.4 Environmental reserve abutting lakes or other environmentally sensitive areas should be a minimum of 30 m or greater unless the site specific study is provided to support the relaxation of the setback and such relaxation is supported by the Province.

## **5 Industrial**

Oil and gas and other industrial activities are also present in the County. While agriculture is the primary industry of the County, there are areas where rural-oriented industrial uses that benefit from the exposure to highway traffic may be developed in the County.

Protecting the County residents from environmental pollution or contamination, or any other negative effects from industrial activities is a fundamental role of the municipality.

#### **Objective 5.1 Follow the existing County policy direction for industrial development**

The County is a partner of the Joint Economic Development Initiative (JEDI) with the Town of Millet and the City of Wetaskiwin.



- 5.1.1 The industrial and commercial development in the County should compliment the JEDI agreement with partner municipalities.
- 5.1.2 Industrial and highway commercial development may be developed in accordance with Commercial and Industrial Development in the Highway 2 Corridor Policy #6612. The area is shown in Figure 2.

**Objective 5.2 The negative impact from industrial development and resource extraction activity is minimized**

Appropriate locations for industrial use vary by the type of the industry, surrounding land use, and the impact from the proposed development. The County will review each development application to avoid adverse effects from the proposed industrial use.

- 5.2.1 The County will continue to rely on the referral process with respect to sour gas facilities.
- 5.2.2 Industrial development is encouraged to locate in or adjacent to hamlets where such land use is compatible with an urban area.
- 5.2.3 Some industrial development may be allowed away from hamlets when it is essential to locate in a rural area.
- 5.2.4 Industrial development and resource extraction facilities should be located on poor agricultural lands.
- 5.2.5 Industrial and resource extraction development are discouraged to locate within 1.6 km (1 mile) from water bodies or environmentally sensitive areas.
- 5.2.6 Where sour gas facilities exist, development must comply with the setback recommendations set out by Energy and Resources Conservation Board or its successor body.
- 5.2.7 Development of a resource extraction operation is reviewed for its impact on infrastructure and resident quality of life in accordance with Requirements for Resource Extraction Operations Policy #6614.
- 5.2.8 Pipelines are encouraged to be constructed along property lines or within existing right-of-ways.
- 5.2.9 Abandoned resource extraction facilities should be reclaimed by the licensee.
- 5.2.10 The County will continue to constructively engage the oil and gas industry to minimize the impact on lands within the districts for watershed protection.

**Objective 5.3 Support the agro-industrial activities**

Agro-industrial activities such as the processing or shipment of agricultural products will benefit the agricultural industry and create additional employment in other industrial sectors. Locating such uses close to the material source and transportation corridors is important for a successful operation.

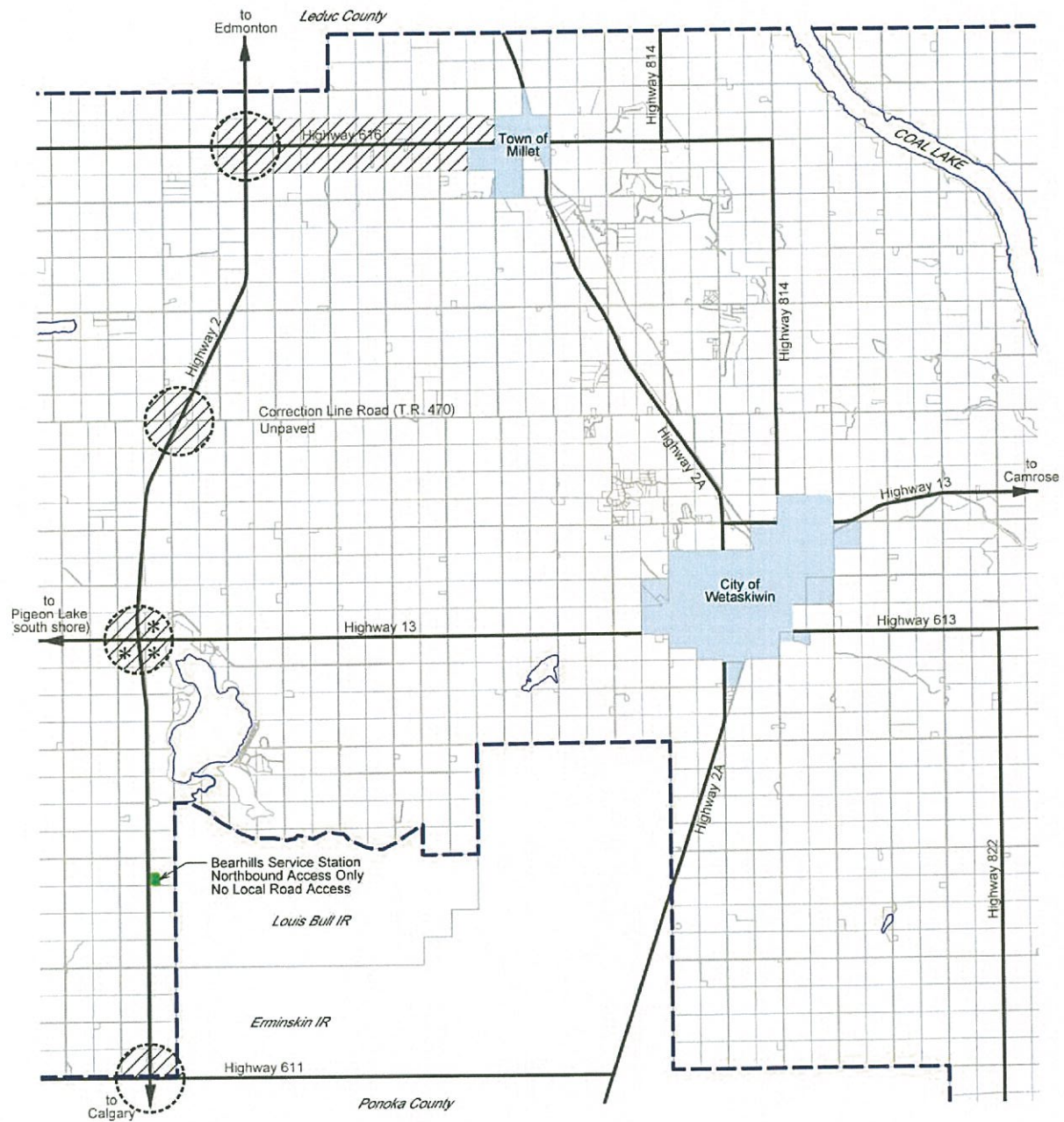
- 5.3.1 A separate land use district or a direct control district may be created to accommodate agro-industrial activities.
- 5.3.2 Regardless of any previous subdivision, Council may allow the subdivision of a parcel from a quarter section of agricultural land for an agro-industrial use.
- 5.3.3 The developer of a proposed agro-industrial subdivision may be required to demonstrate the economic viability of the proposed use prior to subdivision approval.

**Objective 5.4 To ensure that natural resources deposits are protected for the benefit of future generations**

Parts of the County between Highway 2 and Secondary Highway 795 are underlaid by surface mineable coal. The deposits are the south-easterly extension of the same coal seam mined at Genesee and around Lake Wabamun.

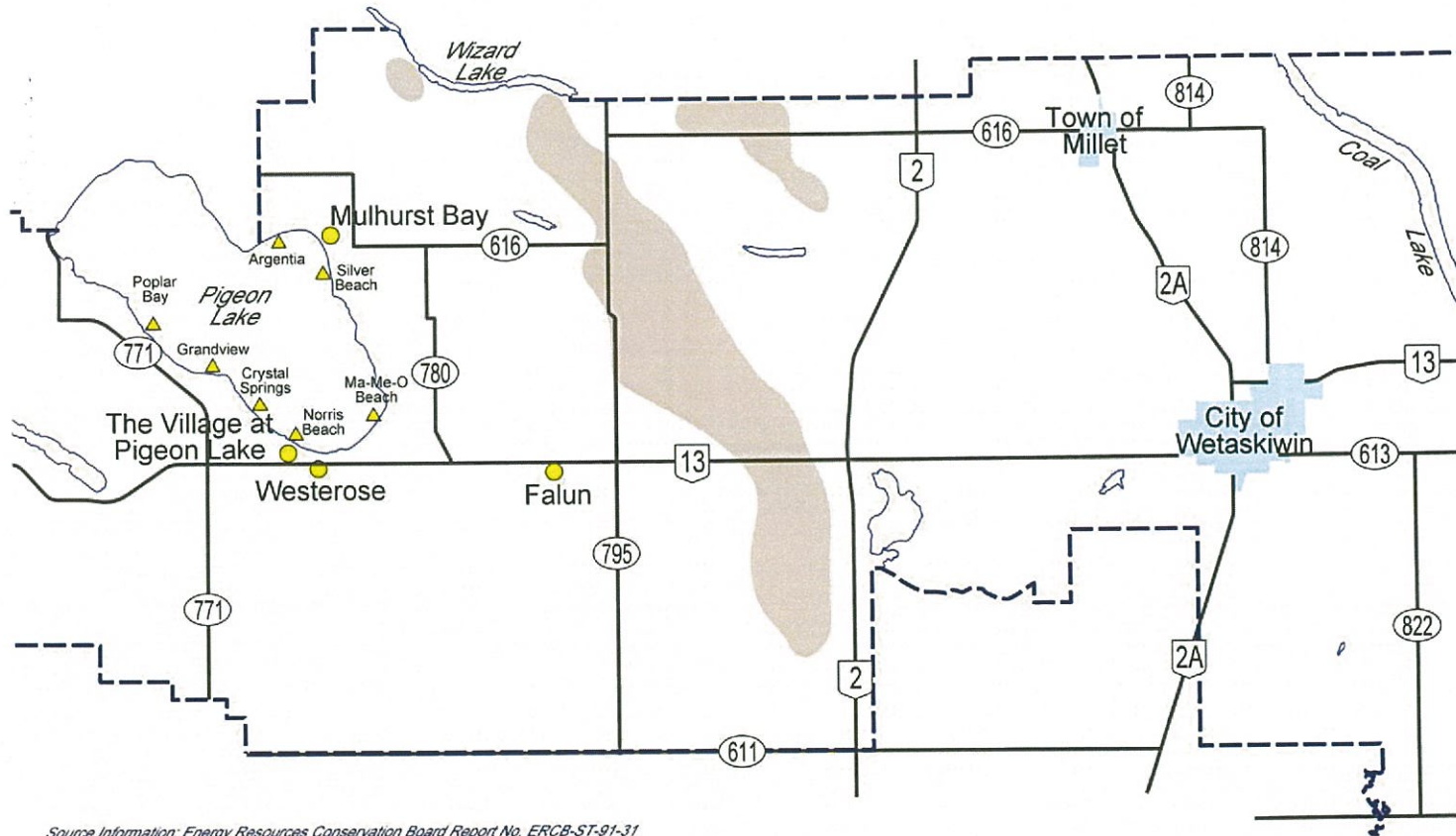
Gravel is in constant demand in the County as gravelling is a major component of the County's road maintenance. The County has a program to identify and secure gravel reserves for the next hundred years.

- 5.4.1 The area between Highway 2 and Secondary Highway 795, is identified to have surface coal according to Provincial records and designated as Surface Coal area as shown in Figure 6A. For information purposes only, the approximate Oil and Gas Fields are shown in Figure 6B. These matters are regulated by the Province's Energy Resources Conservation Board.
- 5.4.2 Multi-lot residential development is not allowed in the Surface Coal area.
- 5.4.3 Land in Surface Coal area should remain in large parcels.
- 5.4.4 If a parcel of land is believed to have significant, usable amounts of gravel, a developer may be required to prove otherwise before proceeding to develop the land.



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Figure 5: Potential Development Locations in the Highway 2 Corridor



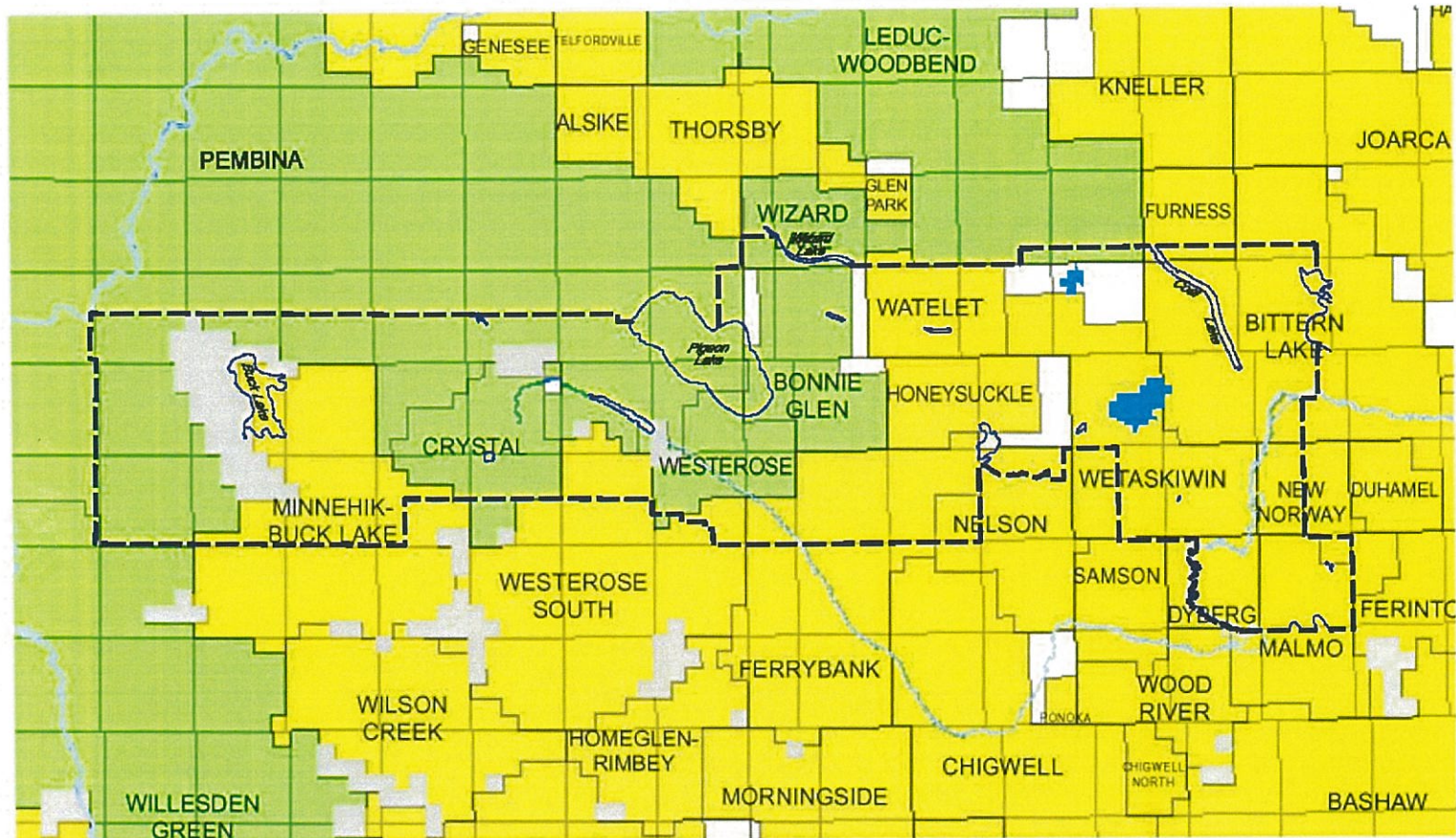
Source Information: Energy Resources Conservation Board Report No. ERCB-ST-91-31

 Potential Surface Mineable Coal Deposit

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Figure 6A: Coal Resources

Scale 1:250 000





Source Map Information: Energy Resources Conservation Board, "Designated Fields (Oil and Gas) and Oil Sands Areas", 01 March 2010, Alberta Canada  
 (\* The Board's estimate of the reserves in the field and oil sands areas are published in the ST98-2010 report.)

- County Boundary
- Field Overlap
- Field - Mainly Gas
- Field - Mainly Oil

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Figure 6B: Designated Oil and Gas Fields

Scale 1:600 000



## **6 Commercial/Recreational**

Commercial and other economic development opportunities exist in the County in hamlets and recreational and resort-based industries near the lakes. Limited highway commercial development may be developed along highways for the travelling public.

### **Objective 6.1 Commercial development is directed to locations with high success potential**

While the County believes some commercial activities are better suited in urban municipalities, some commercial development may locate within the County's hamlets and other appropriate locations so that they can provide services to agricultural industry and to the local residents.

6.1.1 Retail development should be located in hamlets.

6.1.2 Highway commercial development should locate adjacent to highways.

6.1.3 Regardless of a previous subdivision on the quarter, Council may allow the subdivision of a parcel from a quarter section of agricultural land for a rural/highway commercial use.

6.1.4 The developer of a proposed rural / highway commercial development may be required to provide the information on economic viability of the proposed use prior to subdivision approval.

### **Objective 6.2 Recreational development respects the existing community character**

Recreational development has various degrees of impact on adjacent lands. In addition to boat launches and parks at the lakes, there are several golf courses and campgrounds as well as museums and trails in the County which act as visitor attractions.

6.2.1 Low-impact, passive recreational uses such as trail systems that do not require permanent structures or have the potential to contaminate soil or groundwater may be permitted on good agricultural land.

6.2.2 Recreational uses should be located on poor agricultural land.

6.2.3 Notwithstanding any previous subdivision, the subdivision of a parcel from a quarter section may be allowed for a recreational use.

6.2.4 Developers may be required to demonstrate the economic viability of the proposed recreational use prior to subdivision approval.

6.2.5 Developers are required to provide information on water supply, proposed sewer systems, transportation and other relevant services as well as environmental impact assessment prior to subdivision approval.

### **Objective 6.3 Support the designation of historic resources through the Provincial historic site designation**

The development of historic sites as tourist attractions benefits the County's economic base and preserves the County's historical heritage for future generations.

6.3.1 Council may allow the subdivision of a parcel of land for a registered or Provincial historic resource.

6.3.2 Notwithstanding previous subdivision and soil quality, and subject to rezoning if necessary, Council may allow the subdivision of a parcel of land for a use that has the potential to be designated as a historic resource.

## **7 Intermunicipal**

Adjacent municipalities to the County of Wetaskiwin are:

- Urban Municipalities: City of Wetaskiwin and Town of Millet;
- Rural Municipalities: Leduc County, Camrose County, Ponoka County, Clearwater County and Brazeau County;
- Summer Villages: Argentia Beach, Crystal Springs, Ma-Me-O Beach, Grandview, Ma-Me-O Beach, Norris Beach, Poplar Bay, and Silver Beach; and
- First Nation Indian Reserves: Samson, Pigeon Lake, Buck Lake (Paul), Louis Bull, and Ermineskin.

Many of the issues such as farmland protection programs, identifying areas for residential development, and lake shore development, require input from adjacent municipalities and First Nations.

### **Objective 7.1 Coordinate development in the fringe area with adjacent municipalities and First Nation Indian Reserves**

Maintaining constant communication with adjacent communities is an important part of achieving well planned communities. Development near the municipal boundary influences both municipalities. Neighbouring communities should be properly informed regarding development activities within the fringe area.

7.1.1 Fringe area is established as 1.6 km (1 mile) from the municipal boundary, the established hamlet boundary, or the First Nation Reserve boundary.

7.1.2 All area structure plans, zoning bylaw amendment, subdivision, and discretionary development applications need to be referred to the adjacent municipalities and First Nations within the fringe area for their comment.

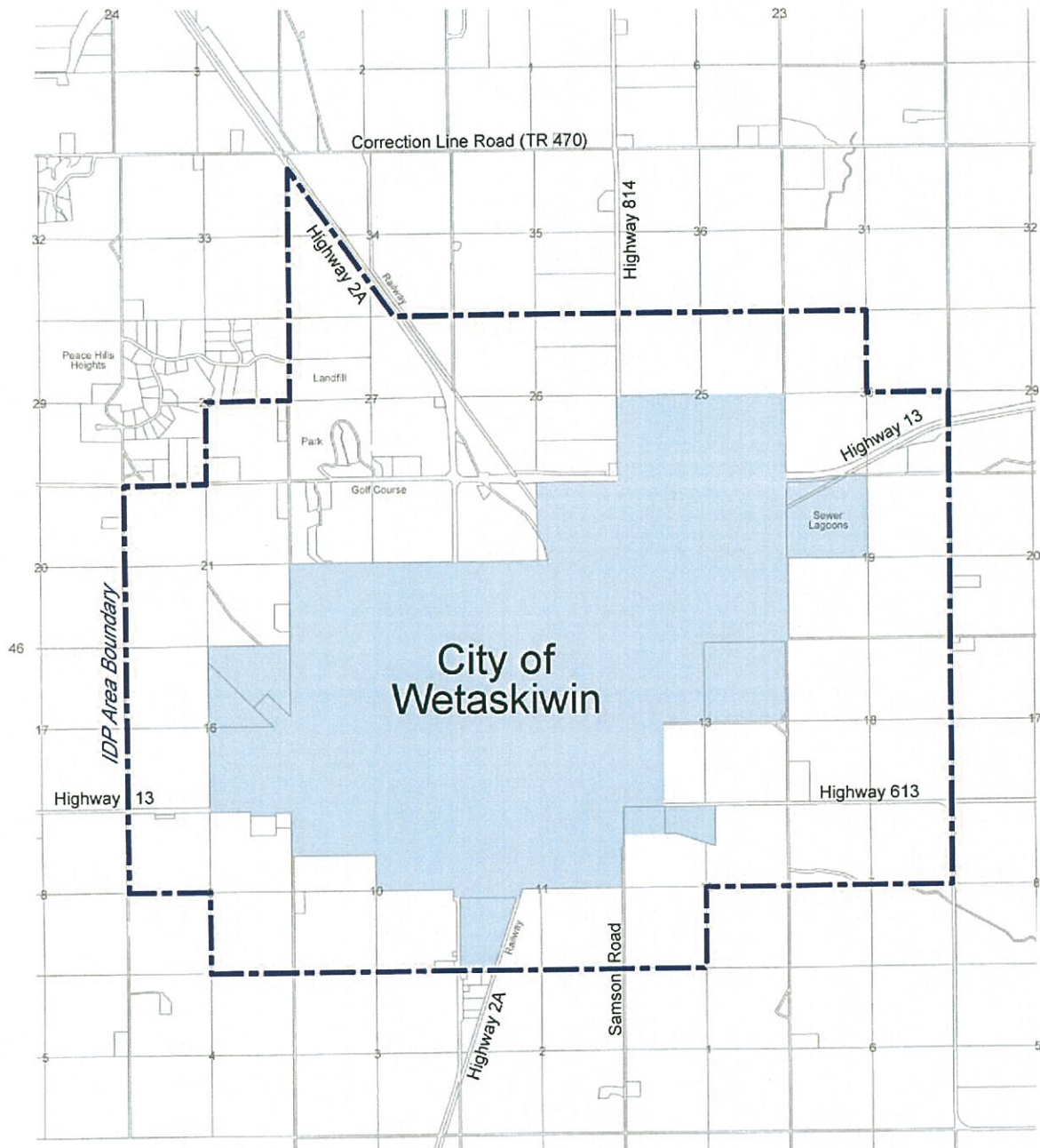
### **Objective 7.2 Preserve the lands adjacent to urban centres for long-term conversion to urban uses**

The County adopted an Intermunicipal Development Plan with the City of Wetaskiwin in 1998 (Bylaw 98/66) and South Pigeon Lake Intermunicipal Development Plan in 2002 (Bylaw 2002/50) with Summer Villages of Crystal Springs, Grandview, Norris Beach and Poplar Bay. The areas for Intermunicipal development plans are shown in Figure 7 and Figure 8. The County has also completed the Millet-Wetaskiwin Acreage Study Area

Structure Plan with input from the town to determine areas for potential residential development.

- 7.2.1 Development adjacent to the City of Wetaskiwin and Summer Villages at Pigeon Lake will follow the respective Intermunicipal Development Plans.
- 7.2.2 With the absence of an Intermunicipal Development Plan, a development proposal in a fringe area of urban municipalities should allow eventual conversion of the subject lands to urban uses if the land is annexed.
- 7.2.3 Residential development in the fringe areas around the Town of Millet is required to meet the development standard that would not encumber potential future annexation of the County land.
- 7.2.4 Low density uses such as multi-lot residential development in agricultural land may be allowed in urban fringe areas if an approved area structure plan designates the land for such development.
- 7.2.5 For the subdivision in urban fringe areas, which are likely to be built with a higher density, the municipal reserve dedication should be made by land, not by cash in lieu payment. If the location of reserves cannot be determined, they will be deferred to the remainder of the land.





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Figure 7: IDP Areas - City of Wetaskiwin



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Figure 8: IDP Areas - Pigeon Lake

Scale 1:50 000



## **8 County Services**

In addition to planning, the County contributes to a range of Municipal services including roads, water, sewer, waste management, agricultural and the protective services. The County operates Winfield Agriplex and Grounds and contribute to several community halls across the County. The Wetaskiwin School Division is the education authority in the County. Health care services are provided in the City of Wetaskiwin or hamlets in the County by Alberta Health Services. Hamlets are suitable for new multi-lot residential development as they can benefit from the existing services. (Residential Policy 2.1)

### **Objective 8.1 Transportation network in the County is well maintained**

The predominant transportation system in the County is the road network. It provides connections within the County and to the adjacent communities. The Canadian Pacific Railway also serves the County.

Skilled labour and general public will benefit from existing or potential transit services between the key locations such as major employment centres.

8.1.1 Transportation network issues with the City of Wetaskiwin will be addressed in accordance with the Intermunicipal Development Plan.

8.1.2 High density subdivision and hamlet designs will recognize how public transit services will be accommodated.

8.1.3 An approach to a parcel is installed in accordance with Policy #6601 for each parcel in the County.

### **Objective 8.2 Community services are provided in a manner that is fair to all County residents**

The County is moving towards user-pay for some Municipal services in an effort to achieve long term fiscal sustainability. Preferably, any proposed development should generate revenue to cover the cost of providing Municipal services. The County may establish an evaluation process to determine the level of Municipal services offered.

8.2.1 The developer or the owner of the lot is financially responsible for connecting to Municipal water and sewer.

8.2.2 Waste management in hamlets and rural subdivisions can be provided for a fee.

8.2.3 All residential development in the County must have a sewer system in accordance with the Sewer Policy #6611 if in an applicable area, and Provincial regulations.

8.2.4 The County and the School Division may negotiate to reach an agreement for the transfer of municipal reserve land and/or cash-in-lieu should a need for a new school site arise.

## Implementation of the Plan

Development applications are reviewed for three principles – site suitability, proposed use compatibility, and compliance to the current rules, policies and regulations.

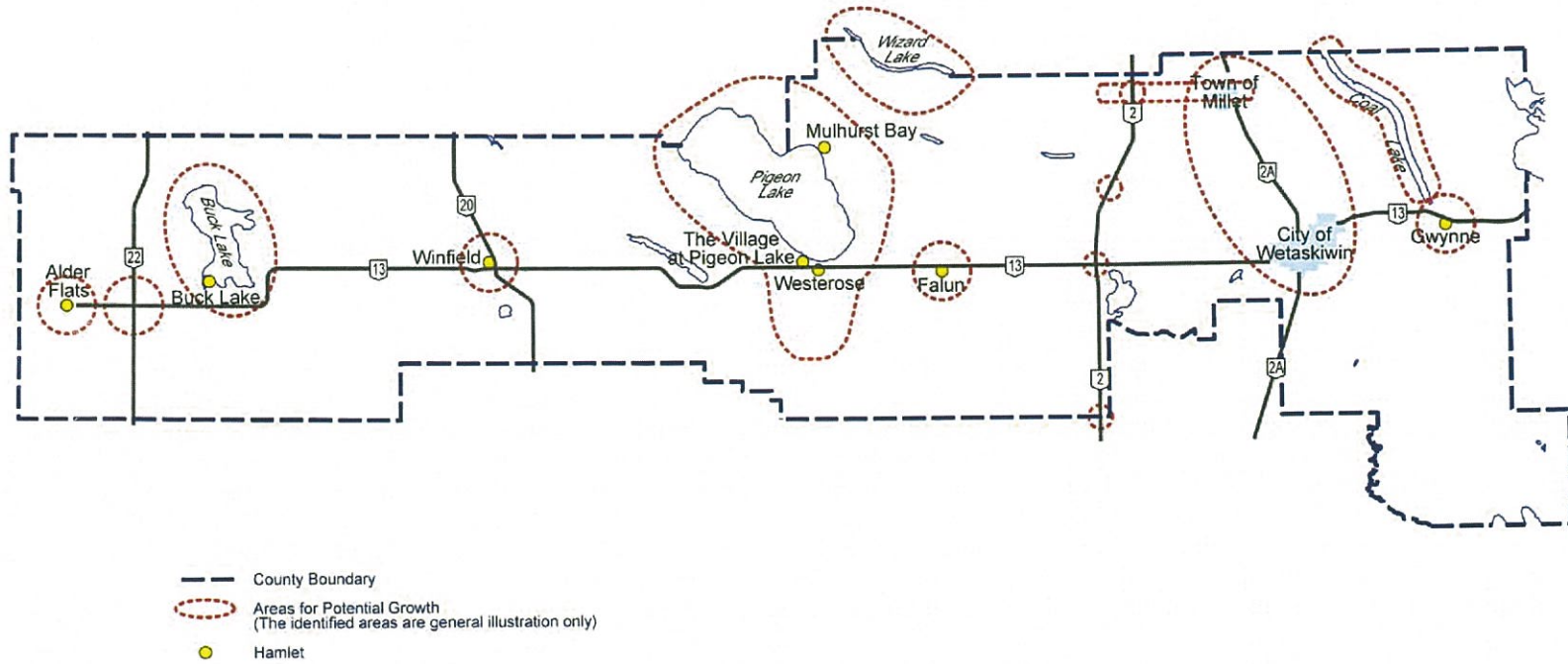
The important part of the planning process is implementation. The implementation tool for the Municipal Development Plan is the Land Use Bylaw, which provides detailed development guidelines for the County. Other policy documents can provide guidance for development in specific areas or on specific issues. Area Structure Plans can provide development concept for land in various sizes – including multi-lot subdivision to more general conceptual development patterns for an area as big as several quarter sections, such as Millet-Wetaskiwin Acreage Study Area Structure Plan. Through these existing and future policy documents, the County will strive to achieve its Statement of Purpose. The County will also seek partnerships from time to time to achieve these goals.

The County will undertake projects and studies to implement the Municipal Development Plan.

- Land Use Bylaw
- Some areas in the County merit special attention to prepare large-scale plans, either statutory (area structure plan) or non-statutory (outline plan, area concept plan), to guide the development concept (see Figure 9: Areas for Growth Potential). Such areas include but are not limited to:
  - Millet-Wetaskiwin Acreage Study Area
  - Along Highway 2 and 2A;
  - Along Highway 20 and 22;
  - Pigeon Lake/Westerose;
  - Wizard Lake;
  - Buck Lake; and
  - Other areas as determined by the County.

The following studies may be considered depending on available resources:

- Lake Management Plans update for Pigeon Lake and Wizard Lake.
- Groundwater monitoring



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Figure 9: Areas for Growth Potential

