



Safe and Resilient Development

Safety and hazard related policies have been grouped and moved to the front of the MDP and organized by topic. This makes it easier to make sure a development has addressed built and natural hazards early in the development process. A few County led initiatives have also been added around hazard education and collaboration.

Development Policies

	Key Development Policies	Level of Change
Floodway	No development allowed in a floodway.	Same as current MDP.
Natural Hazards	Development is responsible for addressing risks from natural hazards, including flooding, shallow water table, fire, and steep slopes. The County may request supporting studies.	Strengthened language on addressing risks but provided flexibility on how they are addressed in a development and when studies are required.
Built Hazards	Development is restricted or has additional requirements near built hazards, including railways, airports, utilities, pipelines, sour gas facilities, confined feeding operations, and contaminated sites.	Strengthened language on addressing risks but provided flexibility on how they are addressed in a development and when studies are required.

County Initiatives

	Key County Initiatives	Level of Change
Education	Educate residents and developers about legislative requirements for development near built and natural hazards.	New policy.
Flood Information	Collaborate with the Province to keep flood mapping and regulations updated.	New policy.
Collaboration	Collaborate with regional watershed groups to fill knowledge gaps around groundwater hazards.	New policy.



2

Natural areas policies have been moved closer to the front of the MDP, reflecting their importance to the community. These policies are structured to match the County's draft Natural Policy Framework, focusing on avoidance, mitigation, and other innovative tools to protect natural features and their functions. Environmental policies have been strengthened for High Priority Landscapes, Environmentally Significant Areas (ESA), and waterbodies.

Development Policies

	Key Development Policies	Level of Change
Natural Function	Development must protect natural systems and their functions. The County may request supporting studies.	Strengthened language on protection but provided flexibility on how it is addressed in a development and when studies are required.
Environmental Reserve / Easements	Development must dedicate as environmental reserve / easements for: setbacks from waterbodies, steep slopes and ravines, areas identified by the County for pollution prevention, and hazard areas.	Updated location criteria.
Environmentally Sensitive Areas & High Priority Landscapes	<p>Development ESA and High Priority Landscape must: achieve no net loss of natural features and functions, maintain natural systems connectivity and wildlife corridors, and provide conservation reserve or conservation easements as required.</p> <p>Should: avoid disturbance or alteration of natural systems and naturalize, retain, or enhance natural drainage patterns.</p> <p>May: offset impacts to natural systems if disturbance cannot be avoided.</p>	Strengthened language for environmental requirements in ESAs and High Priority Landscapes.
Water	<p>Development must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protect surface water and not increase nutrient runoff. • protect groundwater from contamination. • be buffered and setback from riparian areas using environmental reserve, environmental reserve easements, or conservation easements. • demonstrate enough waterbody carrying capacity to support the density of proposed development. <p>Supporting studies may be required.</p>	Strengthened language about development's responsibility to protect surface & ground water, while providing greater flexibility on when studies are required.
Wetlands	Development must avoid and retain high value wetlands, avoid or mitigate impacts to moderate value wetlands, and should contribute to net-gain of wetlands in the County.	Stronger language on development's responsibility to protect / mitigate impacts to wetlands, tied to the County's Wetland Inventory.

2 Protecting Natural Functions

County Initiatives

	Key County Initiatives	Level of Change
Natural Function	Implement tools to protect, mitigate, and offset natural features, their functions, and the services they provide.	Strengthened language for County protection.
Cumulative Impacts	Establish Area Structure Plans to manage cumulative impacts of development on Environmentally Sensitive Areas, High Priority Landscapes, and water bodies.	New policy.
Reserves & Easements	Acquire land to protect natural features in the following order of priority: Environmental reserve or environmental reserve easement; Conservation easement; then Conservation reserve. Establish a Conservation Reserve Fund and natural asset investment plan.	New policy.
Waterbodies & Wetlands	Protect, enhance and restore the water quality, water quantity, and aquatic ecosystems in the region by retaining buffers in their natural state, using best practices, and conserving wetlands. Encourage net gain of wetlands.	Minor language edits and additional policy on net-gain of wetlands.
Climate mitigation and Adaptation	Develop a Climate Change Adaptation Plan, support energy transition, collaborate on climate change initiatives, and support sustainable infrastructure.	New policies and strengthening of previous policies.
Education, Incentives, and Collaboration	Provide education and incentives for sustainable initiatives and land stewardship and partner with the Government of Alberta, Indigenous communities, neighbouring municipalities, industry, non-government organizations. Support regional air quality monitoring, regional watershed planning, and lake monitoring and management.	Minor language updates and new policy to support air quality monitoring.



3

Conserving Agricultural Land

This section has been updated to strengthen the conservation of farmlands and operations, while removing detailed technical or subdivision requirements. It has also been updated to align with the Regional Agricultural Master Plan (RAMP). New Prime Agricultural Lands are introduced as the highest priority areas to conserve.

Development Policies

	Key Development Policies	Level of Change
Rural Agricultural Areas	<p>In rural agricultural areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agriculture is the primary land use and existing agricultural operations have priority over other land uses.• Agriculture-related, value-add, or diversified uses are supported, but should be clustered away from Prime Agricultural Lands.• Quarter sections can be subdivided into 4 parcels.	<p>Removal of specific sizing requirements for different subdivisions. Language updated to align with RAMP.</p>
Prime Agricultural Areas	<p>These are West Parkland and Agricultural Heartland. In these areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prime Agricultural Lands must be protected and conserved for agricultural uses (demonstrated through Agricultural Impact Assessments).• Non-agricultural uses should be clustered in hamlets and employment areas.• Undivided quarter sections can be subdivided into 3 parcels.	<p>Prime Agricultural Areas are the same, but “small holdings” distinction has been removed.</p> <p>Updated language and strengthened protection of Prime Agricultural Lands within Prime Agricultural Areas aligning with the Regional Agricultural Master Plan.</p>
Agriculture in Country Residential Areas	<p>In Country Residential areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Existing agricultural uses have the right to farm.• New subdivisions on Prime Agricultural Lands should be clustered and directed to the least agriculturally productive site on the quarter section.	<p>Updated language to align with the Regional Agricultural Master Plan.</p>

County Initiatives

	Key County Initiatives	Level of Change
Conserving Agricultural Land	<p>Enable transfer of development credits in new Area Structure Plans within Environmentally Significant Areas and High Priority Landscapes to conserve agricultural and natural lands.</p> <p>Use conservation reserve to conserve agricultural lands that support natural assets / their functions.</p>	<p>Strengthened policy on transfer of development credits and new policy for conservation reserve.</p>
Encouraging Agricultural Activity	<p>Accommodate emerging agricultural sectors.</p> <p>Prepare an urban agricultural plan for the County’s Growth Hamlet and Employment Area.</p> <p>Enable multigenerational housing and supportive uses on agricultural land.</p>	<p>New policy for urban agriculture plan in alignment with the Regional Agricultural Master Plan.</p>
Education	<p>Increase public awareness, support, and understanding of agricultural operations and businesses</p>	<p>Minor language edits.</p>





Coordinating Growth

This section merges multiple sections from the current MDP about residential and employment growth. In the Development Concept, Wabamun is identified as the County's Growth Hamlet and Acheson as the Major Employment Area. Additional direction is also provided for the location of renewable energy.

Development Policies

	Key Development Policies	Level of Change
Employment Areas	Acheson and Fifth Meridian Business Park are the Major Employment Areas, which support intensive commercial, industrial, and institutional uses.	No change to Major Employment Areas.
	Local Employment Areas are hamlets and Keephills and Sundance generation stations, which allow commercial and light industrial uses to support everyday needs and employment.	Light industrial uses allowed in Local Employment Areas.
Hamlets	Wabamun is the County's Growth Hamlet. All other hamlets are considered Rural Hamlets.	Entwistle has been updated to a Rural Hamlet.
	All hamlets should support a range of residential uses and densities, open spaces, pathways, recreation.	Minor updates to hamlet policies.
Country Residential	Country residential development must be located within an approved Area Structure Plan or on lands already zoned for Country Residential. Infill Country Residential must be guided by an Area Structure Plan (ASP) or Local Plan.	New policy for infill development.
Lakefront Development	Lakefront development should be limited to Wabamun Country, as well as locations identified within existing Area Structure Plans.	Minor language updates.
Renewable Energy	Microgeneration supported everywhere.	No change to microgeneration policy.
	Energy development should be located on low quality, disturbed sites and not on Environmentally Sensitive Areas or Prime Agricultural Lands.	New policies directing where large energy development is appropriate.

County Initiatives

	Key County Initiatives	Level of Change
Hamlets	Support a full range of land uses within hamlets and maintain a Hamlet Area Redevelopment Plan for all Growth Hamlets.	Only Wabamun Hamlet subject to Hamlet Area Redevelopment Plan requirement.
Employment Areas	Maintain an Area Structure/Redevelopment Plan for all Major Employment areas.	Updated language.
Energy Development	Develop a long-term strategy to grow and diversify Parkland County's energy tax base and explore incentives for the microgeneration of renewable energy sources.	New policies.
Collaboration	Build and maintain relationships with industry, the Province, neighbouring municipalities, and post-secondary institutions to increase and promote economic opportunities within the County.	Updated language.





Delivering Efficient Infrastructure & Services

The infrastructure and servicing policies have been simplified to reduce overlaps. Additional direction is provided to make more efficient use of existing infrastructure by requiring connections to systems when available.

Development Policies

	Key Development Policies	Level of Change
Roads	Development of new roads should limit the disturbance and fragmentation of Environmentally Significant Areas.	New policy.
Servicing Costs	Development is responsible to pay all servicing levys and front end the cost of connection to municipal servicing.	Simplifications and removal of redundant policies.
Water and Wastewater	Multi-parcel development must connect to high-pressure water systems where available and should connect where low-pressure water systems are available. Multi-parcel subdivisions should connect to wastewater systems where existing services are available.	Strengthened.
Stormwater Management	Development of stormwater management facilities may make use of existing natural features where permitted. Stormwater management facilities may not be constructed in crown-claimable wetlands.	Clarified.

County Initiatives

	Key County Initiatives	Level of Change
Childcare	Support childcare uses in all residential, commercial, and mixed use areas of the County.	New policy.
Electric Vehicles	Explore electrification of the County fleet and EV strategy updates to the Transportation Master Plan.	New policy.
Transit	Ensure that Area Structure Plans account for potential future transit service and raise awareness of established transit services.	New policy.
Airports	Support airport and aerodromes and compatible development adjacent to them	Updated language.
Digital Connectivity	Support the development of digital connectivity across the County through the creation of a long-term digital connectivity strategy and collaboration with regional, provincial, and federal governments, organizations, and operators.	Modernized language.
Waste	Review possible requirements for Extended Producer Responsibility in growth hamlets, in country residential, and at transfer stations.	New Policy.



6

Sharing Experiences Through Tourism & Recreation

Prime tourism and recreation areas have been updated to put greater focus on Wabamun County, the North Saskatchewan River, and Pembina River. The draft MDP continues to support agri-tourism and eco-tourism across the County. New policies clarify the appropriate locations for motorized trails and support the growth of arts and culture in the County.

Development Policies

	Key Development Policies	Level of Change
Prime Tourism Areas	Focus major tourism and recreation investment in the Prime Recreation and Tourism areas of Wabamun Country, North Saskatchewan River, and Pembina River.	Updates to the areas classified as Prime Recreation and Tourism Areas.
Agri and Eco-tourism	Development of agri-tourism and eco-tourism amenities is supported throughout the County.	No change.
Former Mine Lands	Reclaimed natural resource extraction areas should be considered for future recreational, tourism and resort purposes.	No change.
Water Access	Development of Lakefront Residential should enhance public access to the lake.	Minor language updates.
	Development of resort, tourism, and recreation facilities should be sensitive to their environmental context and promote the enjoyment of the County's environmental assets.	
Motorized Access	Development of motorized recreation trails and facilities must be located to minimize disruption to residents and sensitive natural areas. Motorized trails are not allowed on Environmental or Conservation Reserves or Easements.	New policy.

County Initiatives

	Key County Initiatives	Level of Change
Parks	Establish standards for recreation facilities and open spaces in hamlets.	No change.
Education	Educate the public and visitors about safe and responsible recreational use of natural areas.	No change.
Former Mine Lands	Explore opportunities for off-highway vehicle recreation use in the former Highvale Coal Mine area.	New policy.
Arts & Culture	Encourage growth of arts and culture throughout the County and collaborate with local arts and culture groups.	New policy.
	Explore ways to integrate art into planning and development, particularly on County-owned infrastructure.	

