

**Bylaw 2024-22 – Parkland County Municipal Development Plan****Recommendation:**

1. THAT Bylaw 2024-22 receive second reading.
2. THAT administration be directed to submit Bylaw 2024-22 to the Edmonton Metropolitan Regional Board to be reviewed for recommended approval under the Regional Evaluation Framework.

**Background Information:**

The Municipal Development Plan (MDP) establishes a vision for the County's long-term growth. It identifies where future residential, employment, recreation, and community services growth will occur. It also has policies to guide infrastructure, transportation, and environmental protection. A MDP is required by the Municipal Government Act (MGA) for all municipalities in Alberta. It is a statutory plan that must align with provincial and regional requirements.

It is important to update a MDP on a regular basis. The quality of policy documents directly impacts the quality of service provided to residents and visitors. Up to date policy and regulations allows the County to respond to changes in the market, ensure a more efficient approval process, and reduce costs during the land development process. The last substantive MDP update was completed in 2017. A minor update was completed in 2022 to reflect the City of Spruce Grove annexation and the absorption of the Hamlet of Wabamun into the County.

Since 2017 several regional and economic changes have occurred. This project was initiated to respond to:

- **The phase out of coal:** With the phase out of coal as a primary industry in the region, Administration reviewed policy to foster and diversify growth opportunities within the County.
- **Integration of Wabamun:** The former Village of Wabamun became a hamlet within Parkland County in 2021. The County completed a minor amendment to the MDP in 2022, but a broader amendment was necessary to align with work being done in Parkland County, such as the Wabamun Area Vision.
- **Alignment with the Regional Agricultural Master Plan:** The Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board (EMRB) approved the Regional Agricultural Master Plan (RAMP) in 2021. As part of the EMRB, the County's MDP must be amended to align with the RAMP and other shared regional priorities.

**Municipal Development Plan Project**

The MDP Project was divided into two (2) phases. Phase 1 of the MDP Project included the completion of a Technical Growth Study (TGS) to reflect the current economic and market state of the County. As part of this analysis a high-level Highway Corridor Study was completed to identify opportunities and patterns for future highway corridor growth in the County.

Phase 2 of the project, creating the new MDP, focused on reviewing and updating policies that create a clear vision for the County that is adaptable to changing markets, aligned with policy direction, supports streamlining land development services, and is easy to read. The new MDP was informed through public engagement, the outcomes provided in the technical work completed during Phase 1, and previous study work carried out by Parkland County (ex. Storm Water Master Plan, Trails Strategy Plan, Wabamun Area Vision, future Natural Assets Framework). With the completion of Phase 2, the MDP project has now entered into the final phase of approvals.

**Analysis:**

The new MDP reflects the quantitative outcomes of the TGS and external and internal collaboration with the public, industry, agencies, interest groups, community associations, and technical experts within Administration. The changes to the MDP support adaptability, readability, streamlined policy, and regional policy alignment. These changes included a restructuring of the MDP for better readability, a reduction in policy, and a reduction in mapping references to reduce confusion. A high-level breakdown of the changes made can be found in **Attachment 2- MDP Changes**.

#### Municipal Development Plan – Highlighted Updates

In addition to **Attachment 2- MDP Changes**, below are highlighted updates for consideration.

### **1. Shared Responsibilities**

The MDP is guided by a vision and set of values. It also uses six (6) shared responsibilities that outline how Administration and industry and residents can work together to meet and exceed these shared responsibilities. The six (6) shared responsibilities are:

1. Build Safe and Resilient Places
2. Protect Natural Functions
3. Conserve Agriculture
4. Manage Growth
5. Deliver Efficient Infrastructure and Services
6. Support Tourism and Recreation

These shared responsibilities support the Decision-Making Framework referenced below.

### **2. Decision-Making Framework**

The Decision-Making Framework is a tool which can be used by Administration and the public to determine what is needed to get future proposed developments to a 'yes', 'no', or 'yes if'. Proposed future developments can be measured against each of the shared responsibility policies to determine if the proposed future development aligns with Parkland County's vision and values or if changes are necessary or possible to support a 'yes'.

### **3. Alignment to the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board (EMRB) Regional Agricultural Master Plan (RAMP)**

As part of the MDP Project, additional agricultural policies were added to support regional agricultural efforts. The additional agricultural policies reduced the number of subdivisions allowed on prime agricultural land from four (4) total parcels to three (3) total parcels and emphasize uses on prime agricultural lands to be agricultural or agricultural related. General agricultural policy updates were also completed to support the reduction of fragmentation and support diversifying agricultural operations for producers. The changes align the MDP to RAMP and provide stronger support for Parkland County's agricultural community.

### **4. Protect Parkland County's Natural Features and Functions**

The MDP added and strengthened policies to better protect natural features and functions. Additional policies include:

- Direction for managing cumulative impacts from development
- Use of reserves and easements
- Climate mitigation and adaptation to support overall environmental health including impacts on waterbodies and wetlands
- Direction for County efforts to continue developing tools to support and protect natural features and assets

## 5. Alignment to Land Use Bylaw ReDesign (LUB)

The new MDP was drafted in collaboration with the Land Use Bylaw ReDesign project. Together, these tools are the backbone for land development services. The MDP provides the vision and direction and the LUB is the on the ground implementation tool of the MDP. Updating them together means that direction and policy are aligned.

## 6. Economic Growth and Drivers

The TGS proposed a development concept which anchored Acheson as Parkland County's industrial anchor and the Hamlet of Wabamun as the main growth hamlet. The MDP has strengthened policies to support infrastructure and services for these areas to continue bringing more business and amenity opportunities for residents and business owners. The Decision-Making Framework is a tool implemented in the MDP to drive economic growth.

### Engagement

Engagement for the MDP project was completed in three (3) stages.

- **Stage 1:** Growth Scenarios (Fall 2023) – engage on growth priorities and scenarios.
- **Stage 2:** Policies (Winter 2024) – engage on policy options.
- **Stage 3:** Draft MDP (Spring/Summer 2024) – engage on the draft MDP document.

The MDP Project generated many opportunities for engagement and interface through its phases. In total the MDP Project conducted:

- 16 Open Houses
- 1 Cross County Roadshow (accounted in Open House Total)
- 3 Community Workshops
- 3 Industry Workshops
- 3 Survey Rounds
- 18 Internal MDP Committee Meetings
- 5 MDP Internal Committee Formal Document Reviews
- 3 rounds of 1:1 meeting(s) with affected departments

As part of the engagement process, the draft MDP was provided to the public, adjacent municipalities, industry, agencies and internally. Feedback provided throughout the engagement process, including pre-circulation and legal review of the draft MDP, have been addressed and are reflected in the Bylaw. As part of the Bylaw, stages 1-3 What We Heard Reports (WWHR) can be found in the appendices along with the Phase 1 Technical Growth Study.

### Circulation

In compliance with the requirements of the Municipal Government Act, Administration circulated the proposed bylaw to relevant agencies and adjacent municipalities. The second circulation of the document for comment occurred between October 22, 2024, and November 12, 2024. Internal circulation occurred prior to first reading. In total, Administration received 4 external written responses. Received responses can be reviewed under **Attachment 3- External Comment Submissions**.

The referral included language which stated no response would equate to no concern. Administration moved forward with the understanding a nonresponse was a no concern.

Below is the list of received responses.

Agency/Adjacent Municipality	Response Received (Yes/No)	Comment/Concerns
Town of Devon	Yes	No Concerns
Yellowhead County	Yes	No Concerns
ATCO Pipelines	Yes	No Concerns

Transmountain Pipelines	Yes	No Concerns- Comments to be considered in Land Use Bylaw Re Design
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During circulation, Administration identified minor grammatical changes which were necessary to update prior to submission to the EMRB and third reading of Bylaw 2024-22. Administration has included a redline of the changes proposed. The changes do not affect the intent of the policy nor the bylaw and do not require restarting the approval process. Proposed changes can be found under **Attachment 4- Bylaw 2024-22 Redline**.

## Policy Framework Review

The policy frameworks relevant to the consideration of the proposed Municipal Development Plan are as follows:

1. Edmonton Metropolitan Region Growth Plan (EMRGP): Statutory plans such as Municipal Development Plans are required to be referred under the Regional Evaluation Framework (REF). Bylaw 2024-22 is required to be submitted to the EMRB as per the REF process.
2. Parkland County Strategic Plan 2022-2025: The following policy statements within the current Parkland County Strategic Plan support the proposed amendment:

### Pillar A: Complete Communities

- A1: To ensure that County infrastructure meets the needs of residents, businesses, and industry
- A2: To create a sense of belonging and well-being by enriching our communities with relevant amenities

### Pillar B- Economic Diversification

- B1- To explore strategies that encourage new businesses to locate in Parkland County, with strategic emphasis on Acheson and the Wabamun area
- B2- To add emphasis to recreation and rural tourism to diversify the County's economic opportunities
- B4- To support existing and new businesses in Parkland County with a focus on micro and small businesses

### Pillar C- Respect Environment and Agriculture

- C3- To support our agricultural community

### Pillar D- Responsible Leadership

- D1: To ensure that County Council is supported by a robust and current framework of bylaws, policies, and plans
- D2: To strive for organizational excellence in delivering County services and programs to residents, businesses, and community groups

## Next Steps / Conclusion

Administration recommends that Council give Bylaw 2024-22 second reading as it is in alignment Parkland County's Strategic Plan 2022-2025 Pillars A-D and the Edmonton Metropolitan Regional Growth Plan. The following are options for Council's consideration:

1. If Council desires to receive further information, Council may adjourn the Public Hearing to continue to receive additional information accordingly.
2. Should Council be satisfied with the information received at the Public Hearing, that the Public Hearing be closed and:
  - a. That Bylaw 2024-22 be presented to Council at this meeting for second reading and submitted to the EMRB to begin the Regional Evaluation Framework process.  
OR
  - b. That Bylaw 2024-22 be presented for second at a later date or a date directed by Council.

Bylaw 2024-22 will be required to be submitted to the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board (EMRB) Regional Evaluation Framework (REF). The REF requirement has been included as a motion to direct Administration to prepare and submit the REF application to the EMRB.

Once the County has received a recommended approval from the EMRB through the REF process, Administration will return to Council in Q1 2025 for third and final reading of Bylaw 2024-22.

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