Parkland County **Municipal Development Plan**
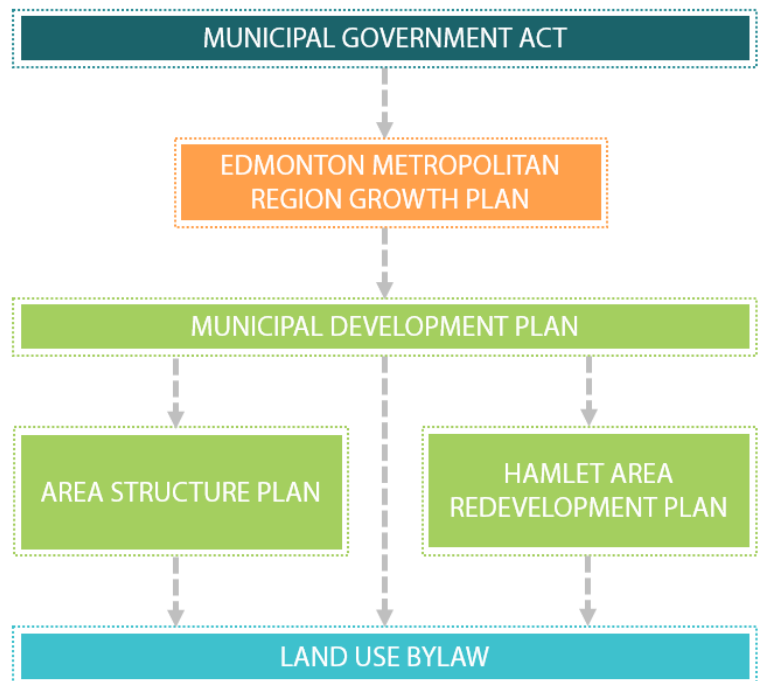
Engagement Plan

01 May 2023

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Parkland County is updating its Municipal Development Plan (MDP) – the highest-level land use plan for the County.

The MDP sets out the County's vision for the future, directing responsible growth and development. It is a legally binding (statutory) document that guides County decisions related to land use, development, infrastructure, and services. It informs all other land use plans and regulations. Every municipality in Alberta is required to have an MDP. Approving changes to an MDP requires a public hearing and three readings by Council.

Municipalities periodically update their MDPs to ensure they remain in alignment with internal priorities and external conditions. Parkland County's MDP was last updated in 2017. The current MDP update is being undertaken to:

- ensure that aligns with current Council and community priorities
- make it easier to use and implement
- align with updates to the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Growth Plan

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT ACT

EDMONTON METROPOLITAN REGION GROWTH PLAN

MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

AREA STRUCTURE PLAN

HAMLET AREA REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

LAND USE BYLAW

- address new growth challenges and opportunities

As part of this work, the County is also updating its Technical Growth Study. This study will provide updated growth projections for the County, which will inform MDP policy updates.

The updated MDP and associated engagement process are being completed by Parkland County staff along with a planning and design consultant called O2.

ENGAGEMENT PRINCIPLES & OBJECTIVES

As part of the MDP update, which will take place through 2023-2024, the County will be conducting a robust public and stakeholder engagement process to ensure updates are informed by meaningful feedback from Council, First Nations, Regional Partners, Stakeholders, and the public. This process will be transparent, relevant, and accessible and all engagement will be undertaken in accordance with International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) best practices.

Engagement Objectives

The purpose of this engagement is to:

- Inform residents and stakeholders of the MDP update project and make all relevant project information easily available.

- Gather meaningful input from a wide range of interests, areas, and partnerships to inform growth priorities and policy changes within the MDP.

- Authentically incorporate community insights into the project's decision making.

- Report back on engagement results and how the results were used in a clear, timely, and transparent manner.

Engagement Principles

The project team will use the following principles to guide engagement design and delivery:

- **Inclusive:** Create a welcoming space for conversation that respects the diverse lived experiences of all participants.

- **Accessible:** Make it easy to participate and access information. Consider diverse abilities, learning styles, and amount of time required.

- **Meaningful:** Provide opportunities for participants to share ideas and concerns openly and authentically.

- **Transparent:** Provide clear information about the process, how decisions are made, and report back on what we heard.

- **Adaptive:** Be flexible to respond and adapt to the changing needs of participants over the course of the project.

Measures of Success

The engagement will be considered successful when:

- Citizens feel well-informed about the process.

- Council sees clear efforts to reach out and solicit input from their constituents.

- Interested stakeholders feel they had adequate opportunity to contribute.

- The project team demonstrates how public input has been considered to develop the updated MDP.

ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

MDP engagement will be conducted in three 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 updated MDP document

In addition to these stages, there will be a circulation process to adjacent municipalities and external agencies in addition to a public hearing as part of the formal adoption process required by the Municipal Government Act.

Each stage will include a minimum of one public open house as per County Policy C-AD51 (see below). In addition to this, the project team will also conduct:

- One online public survey per stage
- One Governance and Priorities Committee (GPC) workshop per stage
- Quarterly public open houses with the LUB Redesign team
- Monthly MDP Committee update meetings (internal)
- Internal stakeholder workshops per stage
- Topic-specific external stakeholder workshops

Specific tactics will be confirmed and detailed in an engagement implementation brief for each engagement stage and may include additional outreach opportunities as required.

Council Policy C-AD51 sets out minimum engagement requirements for an update to the Municipal Development Plan, which include:

- A Public Meeting or Open House at project start: Inform and Engage the Public and stakeholders on the initial purpose of the project, issues and opportunities.
- A Public Meeting or Open House during plan development: Engagement the Public and stakeholders during key project milestones (i.e. May include at community vision and principle development stage, confirmation of principles etc.)
- A Public Meeting or Open House on Draft Plan: Inform the public of plan recommendations and how public feedback was incorporated from previous public engagements.
- A public hearing (statutory requirement): Inform public of formal hearing before Council, as per Municipal Government Act and this policy.

Land Use Bylaw (LUB) Redesign Coordination

The MDP update process is being conducted concurrently with an internally-led Land Use Bylaw update. The MDP project team will work closely with the LUB team to ensure the resulting policies and land use regulations are informed, shaped by, and aligned with one another.

The project teams will coordinate quarterly open houses between Q1 of 2023 and Q3 of 2024 to ensure that the public and stakeholders are informed of the progress of both projects simultaneously. The MDP project team will also attend select LUB engagement events throughout Engagement Rounds 2 and 3 of that process. Messaging and communications regarding both projects will be coordinated to ensure clarity and consistency.

AUDIENCES

The MDP engagement process will include a range of participation opportunities for different audiences, including Parkland County Council, internal County stakeholders and committees, external stakeholders, and the public. Each audience will have a different role and level of engagement in the MDP process. Engagement levels have been informed by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum of Public Participation, which defines the level of impact participants will have in the decision-making process (Figure 1).

The initial stakeholder list for the MDP is similar to the LUB Redesign project, given the similar scope and geography of the project. Additional stakeholders may be added to the list as the team determines specific topic areas for the MDP update.

INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION

	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

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County Council

County Council will be actively involved throughout the MDP process to:

- Provide updates on upcoming engagement events and opportunities
- Workshop key priorities, growth scenarios, and policy options
- Review engagement results and feedback

Prior to each stage of external engagement, the project team will host a workshop with the Governance and Priorities Committee (GPC). Presentations will serve to introduce topics for engagement and present options/scenarios for input.

For Stages 2 and 3, the workshop with GPC will also include an update on What We Heard from the previous phase of engagement. Councillors will have the opportunity to contribute additional feedback they may have received from their districts at this time.

Internal Stakeholders

Engagement with internal County staff is critical to creating a document that is user-friendly, implementable, and aligned with ongoing County initiatives. An MDP Committee has been selected with representatives from relevant departments. The MDP Committee will meet each month to review project progress to date and provide input on the technical analysis, growth scenarios, and policy options for the MDP.

Indigenous Rights Holders

Parkland County is situated on Treaty 6 Territory, on the traditional lands of many diverse Indigenous Peoples. As part of the MDP update, the County will engage on a government-to-government level with First Nations rights holders in the region, including:

- Paul First Nation
- Enoch Cree First Nation
- Alexander Cree Nation
- Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation
- Metis Nation of Alberta, Region 4

Indigenous engagement will be separate from the public and stakeholder engagement stages. The timeline, format, and topics for engagement will be determined collaboratively. O2 is working with Parkland County currently to help establish steps and relationships that will support these conversations beyond the bounds of the MDP scope.

Regional Partners

Parkland County shares a border with several municipalities and is part of the Edmonton Metropolitan Region. As part of the MDP process, the County will consult with its neighbours and regional partners to ensure that regional interests and strategies are considered within the updates to the plan. The

project team will meet with regional partners at least once during each of the three stages of engagement.

External Stakeholders

As the MDP is applicable to the entire County, is it essential that it be informed by input from a diverse selection of stakeholders. External stakeholders for this project include local builders and developers, landowners, commercial farming enterprises, local businesses, community associations and environmental groups. These groups will be invited to participate in targeted stakeholder engagement on specific topics during each phase, in addition to being invited to participate in the broader public engagement opportunities (see Appendix A for a comprehensive list of external stakeholders). Topics will be determined after the initial review of the MDP is completed.

Public

Changes to the MDP will impact all residents, landowners, and visitors to the County. As such, the engagement for the project will include broad engagement with the public. This will include a range of both online and in-person tactics to ensure there are multiple opportunities to participate. Specific tactics will be determined in an engagement plan for each phase.

Table 1 Engagement Audiences

Type of Group	Example Groups	Engagement Purpose & Approach	Level of Engagement
County Council	Council, Governance and Priorities Committee (GPC)	Seek Council feedback and direction on key priorities, project milestones, and upcoming engagement stages.	(Decision makers)
Indigenous Rights Holders Indigenous Nations with Treaty rights in the area.	Paul First Nation Alexander Cree Nation Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation Enoch Cree First Nation Metis Nation of Alberta, Region 4	Separate engagement process to identify and incorporate shared values and priorities in the MDP.	Involve
Regional Partners Adjacent municipalities and summer villages.	City of Edmonton Spruce Grove Leduc County Sturgeon County Lac Ste. Anne County Yellowhead County Brazeau County Town of Devon Summer Villages	Provide project updates and discuss shared growth priorities.	Consult

Type of Group	Example Groups	Engagement Purpose & Approach	Level of Engagement
Internal Stakeholders County staff	MDP Committee, select department staff as required	Monthly committee update meetings to review and inform project deliverables. Internal review of the draft plan and policies.	Involve / Collaborate
External Stakeholders Groups and organizations that have varying levels of interest, including non-profit, user groups, advocacy, and business organizations.	Development community Agriculture / cultural Societies and event organizers Local service / equity-deserving organizations Schools & school boards Business owners / employers / economic development groups	Focused conversations about specific topics relevant to stakeholders as well as invitations to participate in broader public engagement process.	Involve
Public The greater public, including residents of the County.	Households / individuals / landowners / visitors	Provide updates on the project and gather diverse individual insights and feedback from the public through online and in-person tactics.	Consult

TIMELINE

The three stages of MDP engagement will occur from 2023 to 2024, as per the timeline and table below (Figure 2, Table 1). Dates for each stage are approximate, as specific dates will be refined through the detailed engagement plans for each stage.
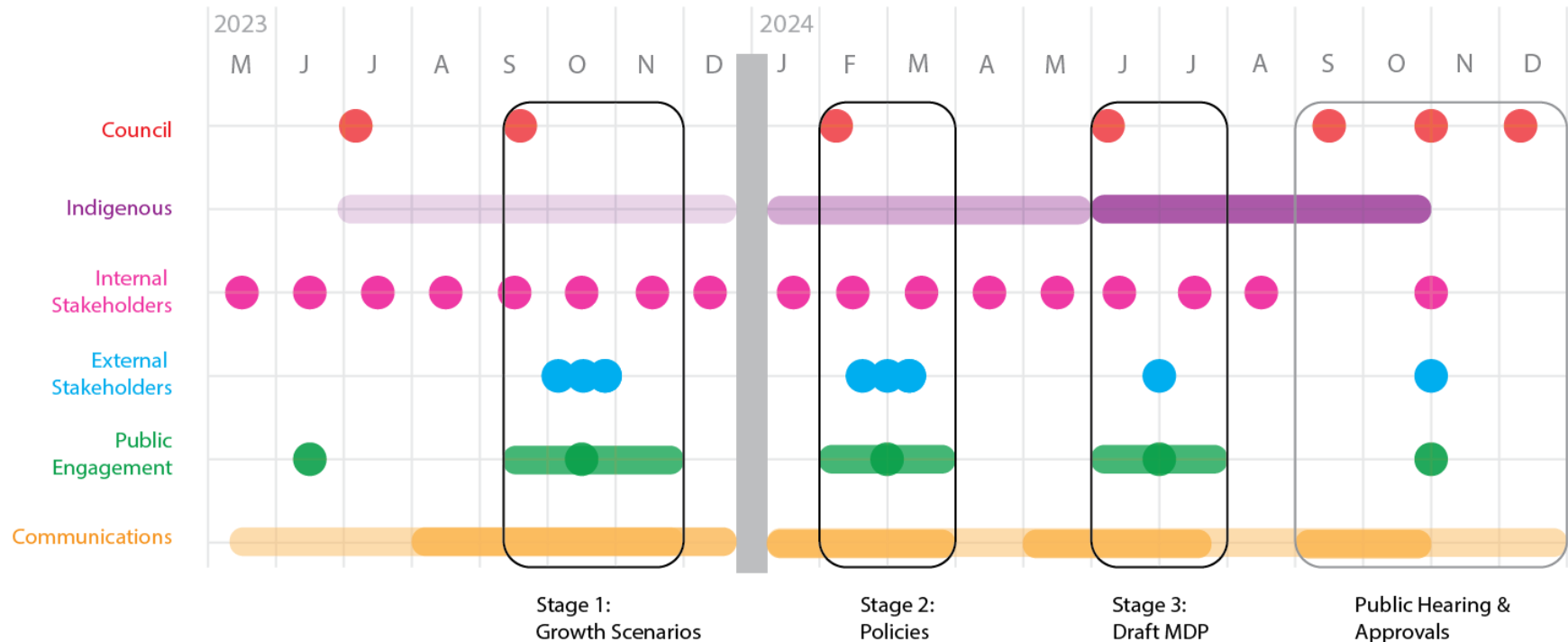

Figure 2 Engagement Timeline

Table 2 Engagement Phases

	Stage 1: Growth Scenarios Fall 2023 (Sep-Oct)	Stage 2: Policies Winter 2024 (Feb-Mar)	Stage 3: Draft MDP Spring 2024 (May-June)	Public Hearing & Approvals Summer / Fall 2024 (Jul-Dec)
Purpose	Collect feedback to inform the growth scenarios in the updated Technical Growth Study as well as the high level vision and priorities for the MDP.	Present and collect feedback on different policy options for the MDP.	Provide the Draft MDP, including concepts, policies, and mapping, for review and feedback.	Formal circulation and approvals process to meet the requirements of the Municipal Government Act and adopt the updated MDP.
Council	• GPC Workshop	• GPC Workshop	• GPC Workshop	• GPC Workshop
Internal Stakeholder Engagement	Monthly MDP Committee Meetings			
	• Internal workshop	• Internal workshop	• Internal workshop	• Internal workshop
Indigenous Rights Holders Engagement	Continuous Engagement Process			
External Stakeholder Engagement	• Meeting with Regional Partners • Stakeholder meetings	• Meeting with Regional Partners • Stakeholder meetings	• Meeting with Regional Partners • Stakeholder meetings	• Meeting with Regional Partners • Stakeholder meetings
Public Engagement	Quarterly Open Houses with LUB Redesign team			
	• Open House Event • Public Survey	• Open House Event • Public Survey	• Open House Event • Public Survey	• Open House Event • Public Survey
Outputs	• Understanding of growth priorities in the County • Understanding of community values and priorities to inform the vision & goals of the MDP.	• Feedback on preferred policy options and solutions • Understanding of MDP usability and areas for improvement	• Level of support for the draft MDP concepts, policies, and mapping • Feedback to support refinement to the draft MDP	• Final input and changes to MDP from Council, public, staff, regional partners • EMRB approval • Council adoption of Updated MDP

COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT TACTICS

The following section outlines the range of engagement and communications tactics considered for this engagement process.

Communications Tactics

Communications approaches will be tailored to each of the specific audiences. A variety of methods will be used to reach the broadest range of participants, including print, in-place, and online communications tools. A project brand and graphics style will also be developed to ensure consistency across all project-related materials. Communications and messaging will be coordinated with the LUB Redesign project to reduce confusion between the two concurrent projects and avoid redundancy.

The initial list of suggested communications tactics includes:

- Dedicated MDP project website (Engagement HQ) and email subscriber list
- Parkland County website
- Social media posts and ads (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram)
- Newspaper ads
- Community newsletters and calendars
- Radio ads
- Posters/signage/notice boards
- Direct email invitations (stakeholder lists)
- Mailouts
- Staff attendance at community events

Communications materials will be developed by the project team and then reviewed and implemented by County communications staff. The County communications team will monitor communications channels for their effectiveness and share this information with the MDP project team to adjust approaches as needed throughout the project.

Engagement Tactics

A list of potential engagement tactics is provided below (Table 3). This will be refined through the individual engagement plans for each Stage.

Table 3 Potential Engagement Tactics

Tactic(s)	Audience(s)
Information Sharing • Information packages (online & print) • Website updates **Quick/Light Touch Engagement** • Polls & questions through project webpage • Pop-up sessions at community events **Medium Level Engagement** • Public survey (online & print) • Open house events (in-person & online)	Public
In-Depth Engagement • Topic-specific focus group sessions / meetings • Discussion guides / workbooks • Interviews	External Stakeholders
Information Sharing • Monthly MDP Committee meetings • Presentations • Staff newsletter **Medium Level Engagement** • Surveys **In-Depth Engagement** • Information packages / slide decks • Subject matter focus meetings / interviews	Internal Stakeholders

ENGAGEMENT LOGISTICS

There are many logistical requirements for the MDP engagement process. The following section outlines high level roles, resourcing requirements, data collection and reporting requirements, and the engagement evaluation process.

Roles & Resources

A variety of resources will be developed to support the engagement process and activities. Specific resourcing requirements will be identified within the engagement plan for each stage.

Content & Material Design

Design and project branding will be completed by O2 Planning & Design and approved by Parkland County Communications staff. This includes the following tasks:

- Overall project branding
- Website design
- Advertisement design
- Report / Plan design
- Informational materials design
- Engagement materials design

The specific materials for each stage will be determined prior to the communications and engagement stage launch.

Engagement Events

All in-person events will require:

- printed engagement materials (such as display boards, pamphlets, paper surveys, tablets)
- project staff to facilitate
- logistical resources (such as a facility rentals, catering, chair / table rentals, audio-visual equipment, childcare)

To reach the broadest audience possible, public events will usually be hosted outside of regular working hours on evenings and weekends. Both County staff and members of O2 Planning & Design will attend and facilitate public events.

Public Relations & Monitoring

In addition to facilitating events, resources will be required to support monitoring and communications tasks, including:

- Monitoring the engagement website
- Monitoring live surveys
- Responding to media requests

- Monitoring social media channels

County communications and County MDP project staff will be responsible for monitoring County communications channels. O2 will support monitoring of online engagement tools.

Data Collection & Reporting

Engagement feedback will be collected in a variety of ways throughout the engagement process. The data collected with include both qualitative (comments) and quantitative (numerical) data. All data collected from the engagement stages will be saved and analyzed by the project team. The results of this analysis will be provided in a What We Heard Report for each stage, which will be shared publicly on the project webpage.

The What We Heard Report will provide a balanced summary of all perspectives to ensure that all stakeholders feel that their perspectives are heard and acknowledged. The project team will demonstrate how the feedback was used to inform the MDP changes, to ensure transparency in the decision-making process. Engagement feedback is one input into this decision-making process, which will also include consideration of Council priorities, expert opinions, and best practice / literature / research. Though the intent is to build support for MDP changes throughout the engagement process, it is acknowledged that true consensus amongst all engagement participants may not be feasible. Final decisions must be economically, technically, ethically, and environmentally suitable and made in the best interests of the County as a whole.

Engagement Evaluation

The project will monitor the overall success and inclusivity of the engagement process, including tracking:

- Number of engagement participants reached out to
- Number of visitors who accessed the project website
- Number of project webpage subscribers
- Number of event attendees
- Number of survey responses
- Number of comments received
- Demographics of survey respondents

As part of the County's commitment to always improving its engagement processes, there will also be opportunities to provide input on the quality of the engagement process for each stage. Participant feedback forms will be included within each public survey and at public events. The input from these surveys will be reviewed after each engagement stage to help improve upon the next stage.

Additionally, staff will consistently review and debrief engagement activities and apply learnings to future engagement sessions, communications approaches, and tactics.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The following risk management strategies will be considered throughout the design and facilitation of the engagement process (Table 4).

Table 4 Risk Management Approaches

Barriers	Mitigation Measure
Timing constraints – Participants have variable availability due to work, family and other commitments.	• Provide multiple engagement tools with different levels of time commitment required • Provide alternative methods to collect input outside of attendance at events/workshops
Access – Some residents may not want to participate in person or may not be able to because of transportation or health concerns. Others may not be able to participate online.	• Choose locations for in-person pop-up events and lobby displays that are at common community gathering spaces across the county that are easily accessible • Provide multiple engagement tools for different accessibility needs and learning styles (e.g. reading, audio, visual) and host both online and in-person events • Select accessible venues • Provide offline tool options that are easy to access within the community • Conduct in-person engagement in locations with adequate cell service
Vocal participation – A few vocal local public members or groups may attempt to speak over the voices of others, which may deter involvement.	• Provide conversation forums that facilitate one-to-one or small group discussions, rather than public speaking in front of a large group • Report on the diversity of uses and varied experiences of all users
Engagement fatigue – Residents may be fatigued due to the large number of engagement opportunities planned departmentally and corporately in 2023 and 2024.	• Provide quick engagement polls and questions, so participants can choose how long they wish to spend engaging with the project • Invite organizations that represent different user groups to participate in stakeholder meetings to share insights on behalf of their members/communities
Awareness – Residents are not aware of the project or participation opportunities.	• Install signage located across the County to reach local users • Provide broad online communications • Outreach to relevant organizations to leverage existing trusted communications channels

Barriers	Mitigation Measure
Information access – language barriers, discomfort with traditional methods, or prevalence of misinformation	• Use plain-language and communicate through graphics (e.g. icons, diagrams) whenever possible • Distribute tools to organizations to facilitate their own discussions • Collaborate with local organizations/stakeholders to work with identified communities and user groups

APPENDIX A: INTERNAL STAKEHOLDER LIST

Department	Contact	Level of Engagement	Method
Council	Natalie Skalicky Laura Swain	Collaborate	Presentations to the Governance and Priorities Committee Info sessions & Workshops
Planning & Development	Nancy Domijan		Regular Updates to Manager and Director Meetings & Discussions Draft MDP Update Review MDP Internal Committee
Development Planning	Rachelle Trovato		
Current Planning	Julia Buffam Sharif Ibrahim		
Agricultural Services	Barb Shackle-Hardman		
Economic Diversification	Joel Wilson		
Community Sustainability	Krista Quesnel		
Land Development Engineering	Jody Hancock		
Recreation and Culture	Suzanne Merrills		
Executive Committee	Dana Schlecker	Involve	Meeting & Discussion General Updates
Safety Codes	Braden Slemko		Meetings & Discussions General Updates
Municipal Land Management	Dawna Woytowich		Meetings & Discussions General Updates
Legislative Services	Barb Williams	Consult	Meetings & Discussions General Updates
Enforcement	Kayla Gunnarson		General Updates
Communications	Simon Yackulic		Coordination of Communications Draft MDP Review
Public Works	Shawn Satz Trent Tompkins		General Updates
Customer Service	Jenn O'Brien Cherice Schribar		General Updates
Fire Services	Fred Nash		General Updates
Assessment	Darvin Evans Ron Van Dam	Inform	General Updates

APPENDIX B: EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDER LIST

Level of Engagement	Type	Identified Stakeholder / Stakeholder Group
Rights Holders	Indigenous Groups	Paul Band First Nation
		Enoch Cree Nation
		Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation
		Metis Nation of Alberta, Region 4
Consult	Adjacent Municipalities	City of Spruce Grove
		Town of Stony Plain
		City of Edmonton
		Town of Devon
		City of St. Albert
		Sturgeon County
		Lac Ste. Anne County
		Yellowhead County
		Brazeau County
		Leduc County
		V of Spring Lake
		SV of Point Alison
		SV of Lakeview
		SV of Kapasiwin
		SV of Betula Beach
		SV of Seba Beach
	Regional Partners	Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board
		Rural Municipalities of Alberta
	Provincial Organizations	Alberta Transportation
		Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation
		Alberta Environment and Parks
	Legal Counsel	Parkland County Legal Counsel
		SDAB Legal Counsel
	Council Committees	Agricultural Service Board
		Community Sustainability Committee
		Economic Diversification Committee
		Truth and Reconciliation

Level of Engagement	Type	Identified Stakeholder / Stakeholder Group
Involve	Economic Diversification	Acheson Business Association
		Greater Parkland Regional Chamber of Commerce
		Energy Industry Leaders (i.e. Transalta)
		Major Developers / Builders
	Agriculture / Rural communities	General Public
		Agri-Tourism Businesses
		Agricultural Communities (Large and Small holdings + Hobby Farming)
		Agricultural Support Services
		Small-Scale Family Farms
	Residential	General Public
		Country Residential residents
		Residential Developers
		Owners / Renters / Landlords
	Environment / Sustainability	Alberta Environment and Parks
		Local Environmental Groups
		Local Watershed groups
		Regional Environmental Groups
	Community Wellness & Supports	Alberta Health Services
		School Divisions
		Arts and Heritage Groups (i.e. Allied Arts Council of Spruce Grove, Heritage Agricultural Society, Stony Plain)
		Affordable Housing Groups (i.e. Meridian Housing Foundation, Parkland Foundation)
		Senior & Youth focused organizations
	Rural Centres	Small Business Owners
		Local Organizations
	Tourism & Recreation	Regional Tourist Attractions
		Local Tourist Attractions
		Recreational Interest Groups