

Topic: Area Structure Plan (ASP) Prioritization Project – Recommendations

**Introduction:**

Administration recommends that the Council receive the report on the Area Structure Plan (ASP) Prioritization Project (“the Project”) recommendations for information.

The ASP Prioritization Project aligns with the County’s strategic approach for supporting economic growth and adaptability. This project provides direction on the desired future state of the County’s Area Structure Plans by:

- Conducting a review of existing ASPs;
- Researching best practices for ASPs in rural serviced and non-serviced areas; and
- Creating and executing a framework for prioritizing the creation, updating, or rescinding of ASPs.

The goals of the ASP Prioritization Project are:

1. Align ASP policies to the County’s statutory and non-statutory plans/initiatives;
2. Streamline services to reduce overall red tape;
3. Make ASPs living documents that are flexible and adaptable; and
4. Create policies and plans that are user friendly.

Please see **Attachment 1: ASP Prioritization Project Goals, Objectives, and Expected Outcomes** for further details.

**Facts (Background Information):**Why are Area Structure Plans Important?

Area Structure Plans are statutory land use plans that give detailed policy direction to areas where development is more intense in use and/or is more technically complex. Examples of lands that warrant the creation of ASPs could include lands with high commercial / industrial demand where strategic build out of municipal services is required, lands surrounding interconnected Environmentally Significant Areas (ESAs) and water bodies, and lands within Growth Hamlets.

Challenges with Existing ASPs

The County’s ASPs vary in scope, level of detail, and technical background. The majority of the County’s ASP’s have not been reviewed within the intended five (5) year cycle, resulting in outdated policies and objectives that need updating to align with the County’s strategic priorities, changing economy, and social and environmental conditions. This lack of consistency creates barriers and uncertainty for the public, applicants and County staff which can create delays during the development process. These delays impact the County’s ability to attract economic development, provide diverse housing choices,

and increase the quality of life for County residents. See **Attachment 2: Existing State of ASPs** for a table of all existing ASPs, their time of creation, and the time of their last amendment.

### **Analysis:**

Analysis of the County's statutory plans provided direction regarding which ASPs need to be updated, rescinded, or newly created. This analysis will support the implementation of the County's new Municipal Development Plan (2024-22), the County's new Land Use Bylaw (2025-12), and other County department's key plans and policy documents.

### Proposed Project Scope

A review of all existing ASPs in the County was completed and recommendations were created through:

1. Hiring an external consultant that completed a:
  - a. Jurisdictional Scan comparing the County's ASPs to those in similar municipalities
  - b. Gap Analysis of the County's planning framework to determine if the County's ASPs contain the appropriate level of detail or if another type of plan may be more suitable
  - c. Draft ASP Evaluation Framework that the County could use to determine whether an ASP needs to be updated, rescinded, or newly created.
  - d. Updated mapping of existing statutory and non-statutory secondary plans
  - e. Updated ASP template that aligns with the new Municipal Development Plan and can be used for both County or developer-led ASPs.
2. Conducting engagement with other departments to identify what works well, what does not, and what could be improved.
3. Running each ASP through the Evaluation Framework to create the final project deliverable:
  - a. A breakdown of which ASPs should be prioritized for:
    - i. Updating;
    - ii. Rescinding; or
    - iii. New ASP or other planning policy creation.

### Outcomes and Recommendations

The outcomes of Jurisdictional Scan, Gap Analysis, and internal engagement supported a two – part approach to the County's future secondary planning hierarchy:

1. Development Area Policies (DAPs) – Policies embedded into the existing Development Concept Map areas of the County's Municipal Development Plan (MDP) – see **Attachment 3: MDP Development Concept Map**. The DAPs serve to add context to the existing MDP policy structure and are not an additional layer in the County's planning hierarchy. These policies will provide clarity and context sensitivity, including direction for Area Structure Plan and Local Plan (Conceptual Scheme and Master Site Development Plan) requirements within the different Concept Map areas.
2. Area Structure Plans – Generally a smaller footprint and more focused on the most in-demand and complex development areas than the County's existing ASPs -- see **Attachment 4: Parkland County Secondary Plans In Effect**. This approach will make ASPs simpler, more consistent, and easier to maintain.

The Evaluation Framework categorized the County’s existing ASPs and made recommendations for updating ASPs, rescinding ASPs, or creating Development Area Policies based on:

1. Consultants recommendations (Level of Relevance and Usefulness)
2. Readiness of both the County and the public to make change
3. Potential for Tax Uplift
4. Development Demand
5. Financial and Staffing Resources Required

The Evaluation Framework recommendations and implementation timeline are shown in **Attachment 5**.

Timeline

The proposed timeline for information sharing is as follows:

Item	Description	Duration
1	Council Presentation – Request Decision to go Forward	February 10, 2026
2	Implementation of Recommendations – Public Engagement Events, Public Hearings, and Council Readings	2026-2033

Alignment with Council Strategic Plan 2022-2025

The Project aligns with the following Strategic Pillars:

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 - Strategic 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.
- B3: To attract diversified energy investment in Parkland County.
- B4: To support existing and new businesses in Parkland County with a focus on micro and small businesses.

### Pillar C - Respected Environment and Agriculture

- C1: To develop a policy framework that ensures the protection of environmentally significant areas.
- C2: To recognize the importance of preserving prime agricultural land available for production.
- C3: To support our agricultural community.

### Pillar - 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.

### **Alternatives:**

1. Council may propose a motion to direct Administration to shift priorities and timelines for which ASPs to update and rescind, and / or which DAPs to newly create.

### **Conclusion/Summary:**

Administration supports the proposed approach for the ASP Prioritization Project and recommends that the Council accept the report on the Project's recommendations for information.

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## Attachment 1: ASP Prioritization Project Goals, Objectives, and Expected Outcomes

Project Goals	Project Objectives	Expected Outcomes
Goal 1 – Align Policies	1.1: Create a land use planning policy structure that is predictable, easy to maintain, and consistently applied throughout the County.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ASPs are consistent with the County’s statutory and non-statutory planning documents.</li> <li>2. ASPs are consistent with other County Department’s documents and standards.</li> <li>3. The County sees a reduction in the number of ASP amendment applications required for development to proceed, resulting in reduced application processing times and costs.</li> </ol>
Goal 2– Streamline Services	2.1: Ensure that each ASP in the County contains the appropriate level of policy detail to enable a streamlined development process.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Number of policies in ASPs are simplified and right sized.</li> <li>2. Policies are easy to maintain and contain reasonable development requirements.</li> <li>3. Remove/Reduce: ASP policies that are outcomes in disguise, require syntax updates, duplicate direction, external references and tips, regulations in disguise, not suited to the ASP level, or are vague, outdated, or not implementable are either updated or removed.</li> <li>4. ASPs that are no longer required to meet the County’s development and growth targets are recommended to Council for rescinding.</li> <li>5. ASPs that require updates or need to be newly created to meet the County’s development and growth targets are ranked in terms of priority and are recommended to Council for actioning.</li> <li>6. Determine areas within the County that do require an ASP to support development opportunities/ environmental protection.</li> </ol>
Goal 3 – Flexibility and Adaptability	3.1: Make ASPs living documents that manage risk for the County and provide opportunities/transparency to applicants that identify “hard no’s” early in the process while always working towards “how can we get to a yes?”	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ASPs contain policies that meet the intent of the new Municipal Development Plan’s Decision-Making Framework.</li> <li>2. Major developer-led ASP amendment applications are reduced.</li> </ol>
Goal 4: User Friendliness	4.1: Write ASPs that are approachable to the general public and adaptable to the changing economic environment.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A member of the public can interpret what they need to know from an ASP within 15 minutes of opening it.</li> <li>2. Plain language is incorporated as much as possible.</li> <li>3. Increase in the use of graphics or imagery.</li> <li>4. Reduction in the number of pages for each ASP in the County.</li> <li>3. ASPs avoid reference to other County documents wherever possible.</li> </ol>

Attachment 2: Existing State of ASPs

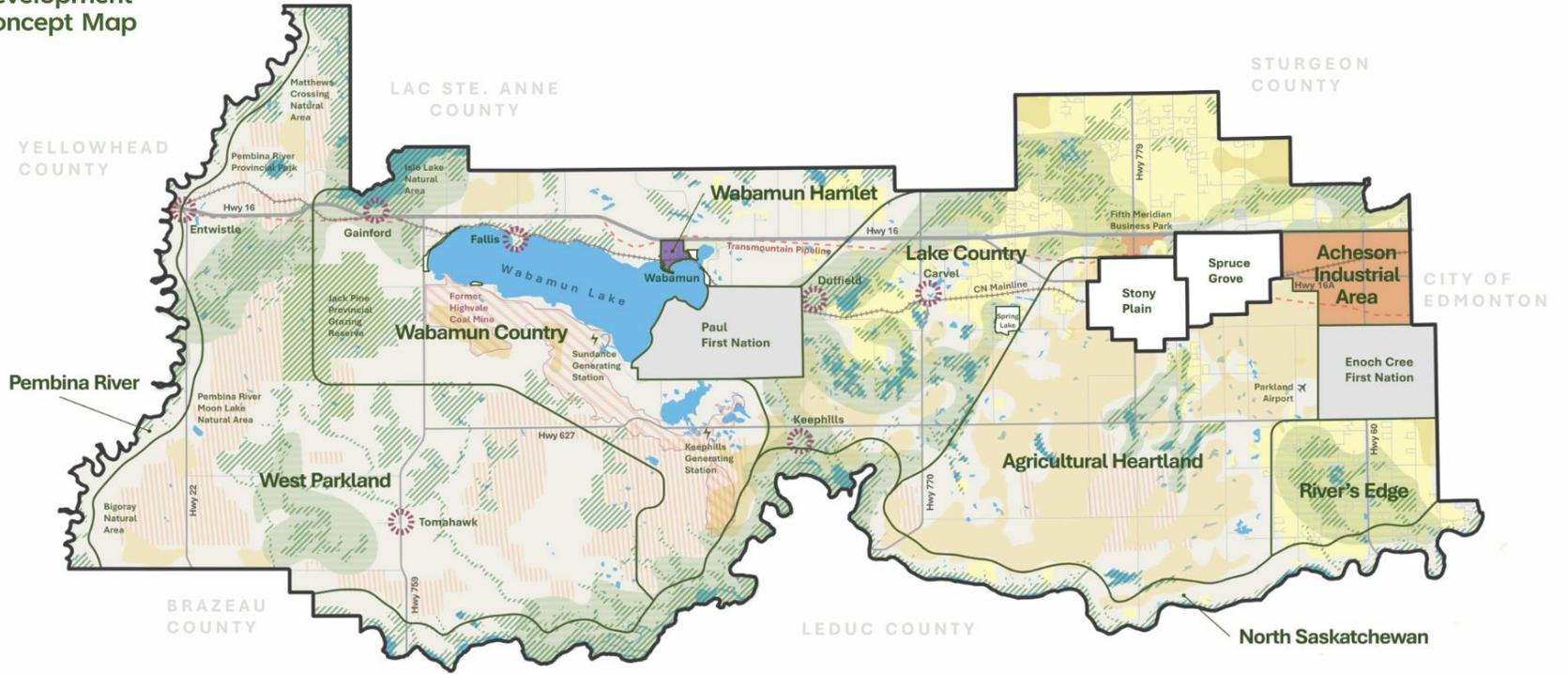
Name	Date Created	Last Amendment*
Acheson Industrial	2014	2020
Atim Creek North	2002	2013
Big Lake	1991	2013
Entwistle	2012	2017
Fifth Meridian	2001	2003
Glory Hills	1979	2010
Highvale End Land Use	1997	2025
Jackfish Lake	1997	2013
Jackfish-Mayatan	1981	2013
Woodbend-Graminia	1984	2013
Wabamun Hamlet	2023	-
Wabamun Waterfront	2010	2011

*\*Date of Last Amendment does not mean that the amendment was a comprehensive review and update. Recent amendments have mainly been site specific amendments or changes to a specific policy.*

# Attachment 3: Municipal Development Plan Development Concept Map

Parkland County Municipal Development Plan  
Chapter 2: Development Concept

## 2.3 Development Concept Map



### Legend

- Municipal Boundaries
- Special Area Boundaries
- First Nation Reserves
- Villages & Summer Villages
- ✿ Hamlets
- Highway and Major Road Corridors
- - - Interregional Pipeline Corridors
- Interregional Rail Corridors
- Former Mine Areas
- Water
- Rural Agricultural Areas
- Prime Agricultural Areas
- Major Employment Areas
- Priority Growth Hamlets
- Country Residential Areas
- High Priority Landscapes
- Environmentally Significant Areas
- Confined Feeding Operation Compatible Areas

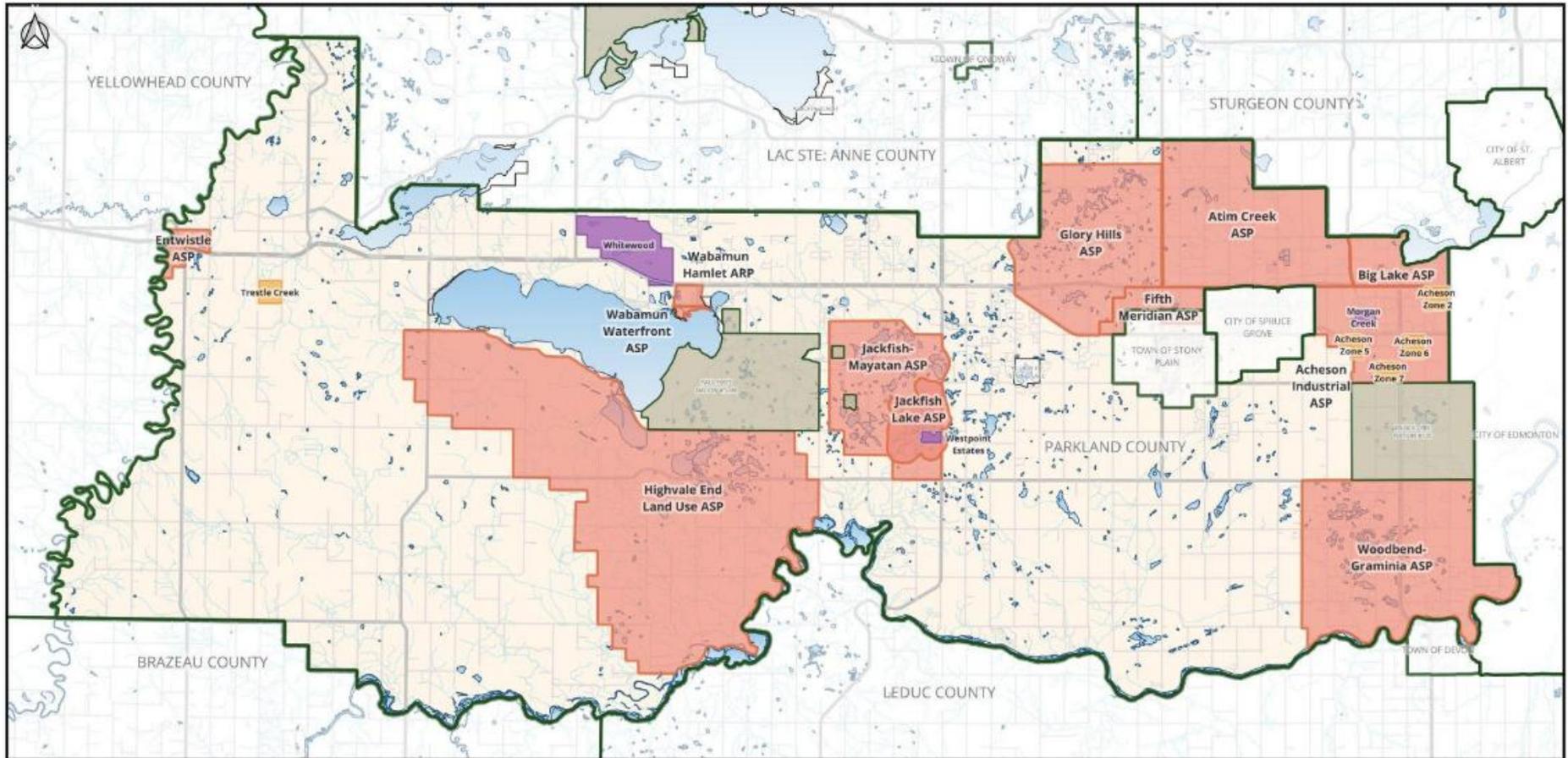


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Figure 4. Development Concept Map

# Attachment 4: Parkland County Secondary Plans In Effect

## Map of In-Effect Plans



### Legend

- Conceptual Schemes
- Outline Plans
- Area Structure Plans
- Parkland County
- Waterbodies
- First Nation Reserve Lands



Attachment 5: Evaluation Framework Recommendations and Implementation Timeline

Plan / Policy Name	Recommendation	Expected Timeline
Acheson Industrial ASP	Update	2026-2027
River's Edge DAPs	Create	2026-2027
Woodbend Graminia ASP	Rescind	2026-2027
Entwistle ASP	Rescind or Update	2026-2027
Wabamun Country DAPs	Create	2027-2029
Fifth Meridian ASP	Update	2027-2029
Lake Country DAPs	Create	2028-2030
Wabamun Hamlet ARP and Wabamun Waterfront ASP	Update and Consolidate	2029-2030
Highvale End Land Use ASP	Update	2030-2032
Atim Creek North – Glory Hills ASP	Update and Consolidate	2030-2031
Big Lake ASP	Update	2031-2032
Jackfish Lake / Jackfish Mayatan ASPs	Rescind	2032-2033