

# County of Grande Prairie No.1 Growth and Economic Development Strategy 2016-2066













# **Acknowledgments**

# **County of Grande Prairie No. 1 Council**

Leanne Beaupre, Reeve County Councilor Division 3
Harold Bulford, County Councilor Division 1
Daryl Beeston, County Councillor Division 2
Ross Sutherland, County Councillor Division 4
Bob Marshall, County Councillor Division 5
Peter Harris, County Councillor Division 6
Linda Dianne Waddy, County Councillor Division 7
Karen Rosvold, County Councillor Division 8
Corey Beck, County Councillor Division 9

# **County of Grande Prairie No. 1**

Bill Rogan, County Administrator

# **Steering Committee**

Pamela Nordin. Project Manager Nick Lapp, Director of Planning and Development Chris King, Economic Development Manager Matthew Konowalchuk, Senior Planner

# **Project Team**

Armin Preiksaitis, Principal, ParioPlan Inc.
Marcelo Figueira, Senior Planner, ParioPlan Inc.
Evan Joyes, Project Planner, ParioPlan Inc.
Naomi Roy, Project Planner, ParioPlan
Sonak Patel, Assistant Planner, ParioPlan Inc.
Merilyn Carlstad, Planning Technician, ParioPlan Inc.

Tom Ogaranko, Principal, Tessellate

Chad Maki, Manager – Infrastructure, Associated Engineering Alberta Sandra Meidinger, Manager, Senior Environmental Scientist Associated Engineering Alberta Ryan Batty, Transportation Planning Engineer, Associated Engineering Alberta Candice Gottenstein, Infrastructure Engineer, Associated Engineering Alberta Lisbeth Medina, Water Resource Engineer, Associated Engineering Alberta Jeff O'Driscoll, Division Manager, Associated Engineering Alberta



# **Table of Contents**

<b>EXECUT</b>	IVE SUMMARY	V
1.0 INT 1.1 1.2 1.3 1.4 1.5	1	1 5 9 12 13
2.0 COI 2.1 2.2	MMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION Community and Stakeholder Engagement Activities What We Heard	<b>15</b> 16 19
3.1 3.2	Vision Statement	23 23 24 28 28
	PULATION AND EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS AND EMENTS  Historic Population Growth Future Population and Employment Growth Land Requirements	<b>D LAND</b> 29 29 30 34
5.0 GRO 5.1 5.2 5.3	OWTH MANAGEMENT STRATEGY What is Growth Management Growth Options Evaluation Criteria for Assessing Growth Options	<b>51</b> 51 51 63
<b>6.0 BAL</b> 6.1 6.2	ANCED GROWTH OPTION  Environmental Implementation Strategies Infrastructure Gap Analysis	<b>69</b> 69 80



7.0 ECO	NOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY	101
7.1	Strategic Directions	101
7.2	Investment Attraction	105
7.3	Diversification	106
7.4	Sustainability	108
7.5	Collaboration	109
7.6	Marketing	110
7.7	Key Performance Indicators	111
8.0 SUN	MARY OF KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	113
8.1	Growth Management	113
8.2	Infrastructure Gap Analysis	115
8.3	Economic Development	117
9.0 IMP	LEMENTATION PLAN	119

GLOSSARY OF TERMS
REFERENCES
PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS
APPENDIX



LIST OF MAPS	
Map 1: Balanced Growth Option	xi
Map 2: Regional Context	3
Map 3: Generalized Existing Land Use	7
Map 4: Nodal Growth Option	53
Map 5: Balanced Growth Option	57
Map 6: Concentrated Growth Option	61
Map 7: Environmental Conflicts	73
Map 8: Agricultural Land Conflicts	75
Map 9: Utility Infrastructure Transportation	83
Map 10: Utility Infrastructure Water and Wastewater	85
Map 11: Utility Infrastructure Communication and Internet	99
LIST OF FIGURES	
Figure 1: Plan Hierarchy	11
Figure 2: Work Program	12
Figure 3: Desired Future Development Process	23
Figure 4: Historical Population Growth 2001-2016	30
Figure 5: Projected Population Growth	31
Figure 6: Projected Employment Growth	32
Figure 7: Forecast of Future Residential Land Requirements	39
Figure 8: Balanced Growth Option New Residential Land Requirements	41
Figure 9: Balanced Growth Option Gross Industrial Land Demand	43
Figure 10: Balanced Growth Option Industrial Land Requirements	44
Figure 11: Balanced Growth Option Gross Commercial Land Requirements	47
Figure 12: Balanced Growth Option Commercial Land Requirements	48
Figure 13: County of Grande Prairie Strategic Economic Development Opportunities	102
Figure 14: Economic Development Strategy Summary	104



# **LIST OF TABLES**

Table 1: Population and Employment Projections (Moderate)	33
Table 2: Required Dwelling Unit Forecast	36
Table 3: Existing Residential Typology Within the County	37
Table 4: Balanced Growth Option Residential Land Forecast	41
Table 5: Total Industrial Land Required	43
Table 6: Balanced Growth Option Industrial Land Forecast	44
Table 7: Balanced Growth Option Commercial Land Calculation	46
Table 8: Balanced Growth Option Commercial Land Forecast	47
Table 9: Forecast of Land Requirements	49
Table 10: Population in New Growth Areas	69
Table 11: Summary of Environmental Considerations	70
Table 12: Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Requirements	95
Table 13: Summary of Land Requirements	114
Table 14: Five Year Action Plans for Implementation of the Strategy	119



# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

# What is a Growth and Economic Development Strategy?

A *Growth and Economic Development Strategy* is a strategy that can be adopted by Council that provides a road-map for attracting new investment and ensuring long-term sustainable growth. The *Growth and Economic Development Strategy* (the Strategy) also provides a framework for how land in the County can best be utilized to create additional economic opportunities.

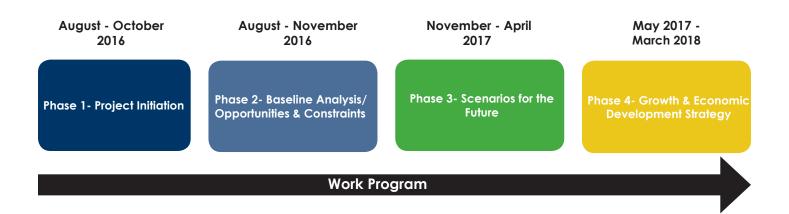
# Why is the County of Grande Prairie Preparing a Growth and Economic Development Strategy?

The County of Grande Prairie is proactively identifying current and future economic opportunities that can supplement its rich agricultural, resource, and tourism based economy.

By gaining a comprehensive understanding of the social, economic, and environmental factors at play in the County, the *Growth and Economic Development Strategy* will establish a 50-year vision that shows how to best accommodate future growth, and how to strengthen economic development in a sustainable, responsible way. In doing this it will become part of the foundation for a review and update to the County's *Municipal Development Plan* (MDP) and can serve as a strategic document for participation in the *Upper Peace Regional Plan* when it is being prepared by the Alberta Government.

# How was the Growth and Economic Development Strategy Prepared?

The preparation of the County of Grande Prairie *Growth and Economic Development Strategy* followed a four-phase work program completed over 19 months between August 2016 and March 2018 as seen in the figure below. Opportunities for stakeholder and public consultation were provided during each phase of the work program.





# What are the Vision and Guiding Principles for the Strategy?

Vision building and establishing guiding principles are effective planning tools for establishing a single shared vision for the future while incorporating the needs of the community and affected stakeholders. Vision and Guiding Principles benefit a project by developing a greater sense of community consensus, establishing a long-term direction for the project and community, helps in setting priorities, and allocates responsibilities for implementation.

#### Vision 2066

"Capitalizing on its strategic location, as the "Middle of Everywhere", by the year 2066 the County of Grande Prairie will have grown to a community of over 74,000 people and a model of sustainable development for the region. Building on Clairmont's transformation into a model "green community", the hamlets and rural areas of the County will become vibrant and desirable places to live, work, and play.

The traditional economic base of agriculture, oil and gas, forestry, and tourism will look to grow and diversify through innovation, the application of new technology, and value-added manufacturing. The County will continue to be open for business and foster collaboration with neighbouring municipalities by promoting economic development and efficient, cost effective delivery of physical and social infrastructure.

People will recognize that the County of Grande Prairie is an ideal place to invest, start a business, raise a family, and age in place."

#### **Guiding Principles for Achieving the Vision 2066**

- 1. Grow and diversify the County's economy through innovation, use of technology, and entrepreneurship.
- 2. The County will continue to protect its natural environment and pursue environmentally sustainable practices.
- 3. Ensure that agriculture remains an important economic activity and way of life in the County by maintaining the Right to Farm and avoiding the premature fragmentation of high quality farmland.
- 4. Through the provision of social infrastructure (i.e. health, education, recreation and cultural facilities and programming), the County will be a healthy, safe, and inclusive community that provides high quality of life for people of all ages.
- 5. Promote land use patterns that provide for the economic and responsible use of infrastructure and avoid land use conflicts.
- 6. The County will help facilitate regional partnerships with industry, neighbouring municipalities, and the provincial and federal orders of government to continue to develop a competitive, resilient, attractive, and liveable region.
- 7. County Council and staff will endeavor to facilitate responsible, transparent and well-informed decision making based upon on-going public engagement to better understand the needs of County residents and ratepayers.



# What is the Best Growth Option for the County of Grande Prairie?

To determine which of the three alternate Growth Options developed would form the basis of the Strategy, a series of evaluation criterion were developed. These Evaluation Criteria aim to evaluate which growth option most closely aligns with the agreed upon seven Guiding Principles for the project to ensure these principles have concrete outcomes that can be seen throughout the project.

The Balanced Growth Option was chosen because it offers the following key features:

- Supporting continuous growth and development of the urban municipalities of Sexsmith, Beaverlodge, Hythe, and Wembley. Intermunicipal Development Plans are being prepared to manage growth and development in the urban fringe areas.
- Directing future residential and industrial development and growth to the growth hamelets of Clairmont, La Glace, and Bezanson.
- Revitalizing and maintaining service in the stable hamlets of Hueallen, Dismsdale, Wedgewood, Teepee Creek, and Valhalla Centre.
- Clustering country residential development to maintain efficient and cost effective provision of municipal services including water, wastewater, and roadways.
- Directs, whenever possible, industrial and commercial development away from high productivity farmland to promote agriculture in the County.
- Ensures that existing community services and amenities such as schools, hospitals, community halls, and arenas remain viable and accessible to the greatest number of residents. It provides opportunities to create new services in these communities as they are needed.
- Creates complete communities that are healthy, safe, and inclusive that provide a high quality of life for residents by preserving the existing community fabric while providing housing choices from country residential or country estate, to single family, to apartment style housing along with recreational and community amenities.
- Protects environmentally sensitive areas around the Wapiti River Corridor, the Smoky River, Saskatoon Mountain Park and the many streams, creeks, ponds, and lakes throughout the County. Wildlife habitat and movement corridors are protected.
- Supports the County's guiding principles of growing and diversifying the economy and providing ample "shovel ready" land for commercial and industrial development by creating a variety of locations and servicing levels for industrial and commercial development that cater to a range of industry sectors and commercial typologies.

Overall, the Balanced Growth Option provides the best mix of quality of life, cost of servicing, protection of environmentally significant areas and agricultural lands, and support of economic activities within the County. See "Map 1: Balanced Growth Option" for an overview of the growth option.



# What are Strategic Directions for Diversifying the Economy?

Through engagement with residents, stakeholders, and industry representatives along with research into economic trends and forecasts, a number of strategic directions and principles were identified that the County could adopt to promote growth and diversification of it's economy.

Though agriculture, energy and forestry will remain critical drivers of the regional economy, emerging opportunities in value added agriculture, bio-industry, tourism, and commercial and retail development will play an increasingly important role in the region's development. The ability to provide high quality education and training to leverage important public investments such as the new regional hospital will be important enablers to capitalize on new growth opportunities.

To capture the many opportunities identified, based on the feedback received, the following are directions the County needs to work towards:

- **1. Support Collaboration** by facilitating community dialogue.
- **2. Foster Entrepreneurship** to capitalize on the entrepreneurial and driven community.
- 3. **Develop Local Leadership** to foster a strong and diverse team of local leaders.
- **4. Foster Market Access** by developing initiatives that carefully balance agricultural, industrial, commercial and residential land uses with regional environmental sustainability.
- **5. Leverage Natural Advantages** have driven historical growth and will be critical to developing new value-add opportunities in evolving bio-economy and energy markets.
- **6. Focus on Impacts** to target and achieve a clear set of outcomes.

# What are the Key Initiatives the County and Its Partners need to Undertake Over the Next 5 Years (2018-2023)?

To acheive the vision, and guiding principles the County of Grande Prairie needs to undertake 22 initiatives related to growth management, required infrastructure, and economic development:

# **Growth Management**

- 1. Review and update the County's Municipal Development Plan.
- 2. Complete Intermunicipal Development Plans (IDPs) and Intermunicipal Collaboration Frameworks (ICFs) with neighbouring municipalities.
- 3. Complete Area Structure Plans (ASPs) and Master Servicing Plans for the growth hamlets of La Glace and Bezanson.
- 4. Prepare Area Structure Plans for the three (3) country residential growth areas identified in the Balanced Growth Option.
- 5. Participate in the creation of the Upper Peace Regional Plan with the Government of Alberta.



#### **Provision of Infrastructure**

- 6. Work with Aquatera to implement the required upgrades to sewer and water infrastructure in: Clairmont, Mercer Hill Reservoir, and a Regional Lift Station to Grande Prairie.
- 7. Make representation to the Province of Alberta to twin Highway 40 to Grande Cache.
- 8. Make representation to the Province of Alberta and the Government of Canada to twin Highway 43 to British Columbia.
- 9. Make representation to the Province of Alberta and the Government of Canada to construct the Grande Prairie Highway 43 Bypass, Southwest Resources Road, and Southeast Bypass.
- 10. Design and construct upgrades to the Bezanson lagoon.
- 11. Investigate municipal water systems for La Glace.
- 12. Investigate implementation of municipal water system in Dimsdale after regional line to Wembley is constructed.
- 13. Update County Design Standards to reflect Alberta Environment and Parks Standards and Guidelines regarding stormwater quality.
- 14. Adopt Infrastructure Resiliency Practices with County Design Standards.
- 15. Investigate opportunities to improve broadband speed or wireless internet system within County.
- 16. Include wetlands in policy development; consider identifying wetland areas where onsite replacement instead of in-lieu fee payment should take place.
- 17. Investigate the development of a intermunicipal bus system with the County and surrounding Municipalities.
- 18. Rank agricultural capability of the growth areas and prioritize conservation of the highest value agricultural land through land use zoning and development permitting as part of the MDP review and update.

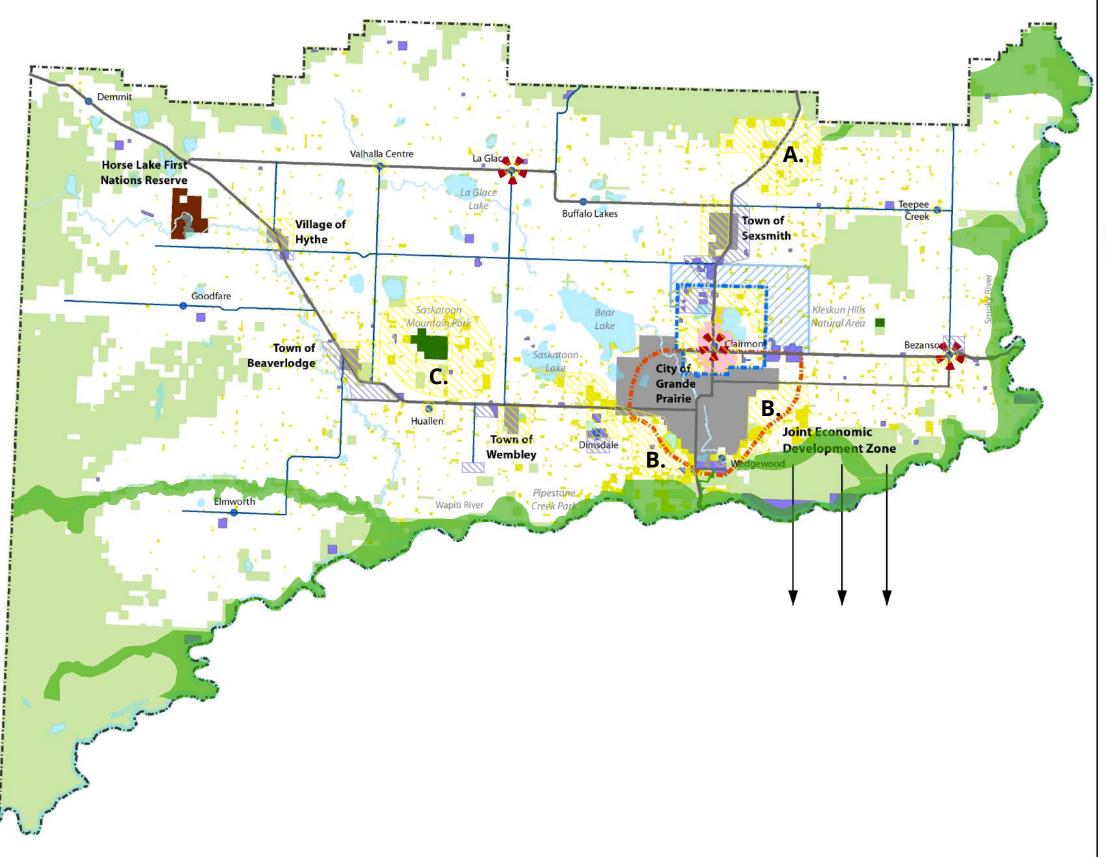




# **Economic Development**

- 19. Strengthen Economic Development Governance to engage key community leaders in the growth strategy.
- 20. Develop a measurement and reporting framework to share with County Stakeholders the impacts of the Economic Development Strategy.
- 21. Create an integrated advocacy plan to leverage key stakeholders and partners in a common effort to influence local, regional, provincial, and national partners around the Strategy and its initiatives.
- 22. Develop strategic initiatives that align with the Strategies objectives to attract investment, improve productivity, and develop regional capacity to support growth.





File No.: 16-018

# Growth & Economic Development Strategy

County of Grande Prairie No.1, Alberta



# Legend

Growth Hamlets

Stable Hamlets

Urban Municipality

Horse Lake First Nations Reserve

Clairmont Boundary

Clairmont Growth Area

Agriculture/Rural

Crown Land

Country Residential

Industrial / Commercial

Clairmont Urban Area
Provincial Park

County of Grande Prairie

Natural Areas

#### **Growth Areas**

lno

Industrial / Commercial Growth Areas

illii.

Residential Growth Areas

# Transportation

Primary Highway

Secondary Highway

Future Trail Network
Future Ring Road

Railway (CN Rail)

# Map 1: Balanced Growth Option







# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

In 2016 the County of Grande Prairie No.1 (the County) engaged ParioPlan Inc. in association with Associated Engineering Alberta Ltd. and Tessellate Inc. to develop a *Growth and Economic Development Strategy* for the County to guide growth and development over the next 50 years from 2016 to 2066

As shown on "Map 2: Regional Context", the County of Grande Prairie lies between the Wapiti River and the Smoky River in northwestern Alberta. With a diverse and thriving economy built upon a large agricultural land base, a successful energy sector, and a robust construction industry. The County has grown substantially in the last twenty years. A unique combination of natural beauty, outdoor recreation, employment opportunities, and a high quality of life attracts new residents from around the province and across Canada.

The County of Grande Prairie is at a critical juncture in terms of its future population growth, development patterns, and quality of life. Over the next 50 years, the County's population could double in size adding approximately **27,785 people** and **18,695 jobs**, while diversifying its economic base. Future growth needs to be managed, not limited. Promoting economic and efficient and environmentally sensitive land use patterns and the development of physical and social infrastructure needs requires clear guidance and a realistic plan for implementation to ensure the County of Grande Prairie achieves its vision given its strategic location as the "Middle of Everywhere".

# 1.1 Purpose and Background

From 2001 to 2016, the County of Grande Prairie has seen a 40% percent rise in population, resulting in an increase of **6,466 new residents**. In addition to this, the economic landscape of Alberta has also changed, and many Albertans now view diversifying the economy as essential. In response to these changes, the County needs a *Growth and Economic Development Strategy* (the Strategy) that will guide growth and development in the region while ensuring the County's economy is sustainable, socially responsible, and diversified. As such, the County is undertaking this Strategy to:

"Understand the current challenges and opportunities with the County to establish an implementation strategy to moving toward sustainable growth. This requires a thorough understanding of the social, economic and governances, and the environmental factors that influence how the County moves forward."

This Strategy will help guide the County in implementing Strategic Priorities 3.0 Encouraging Community Development Across the Region and 4.0 Managing Economic Development Across the County from the County of Grande Prairie Strategic Plan, 2014-2017 which pertains to the expansion, diversification, and sustainability of the County of Grande Prairie's economy. By planning and coordinating land availability, service and utility infrastructure for new businesses, and expansion of established businesses in various locations based on market needs, the County can achieve investment attraction and economic diversification.



# What is a Growth and Economic Development Strategy?

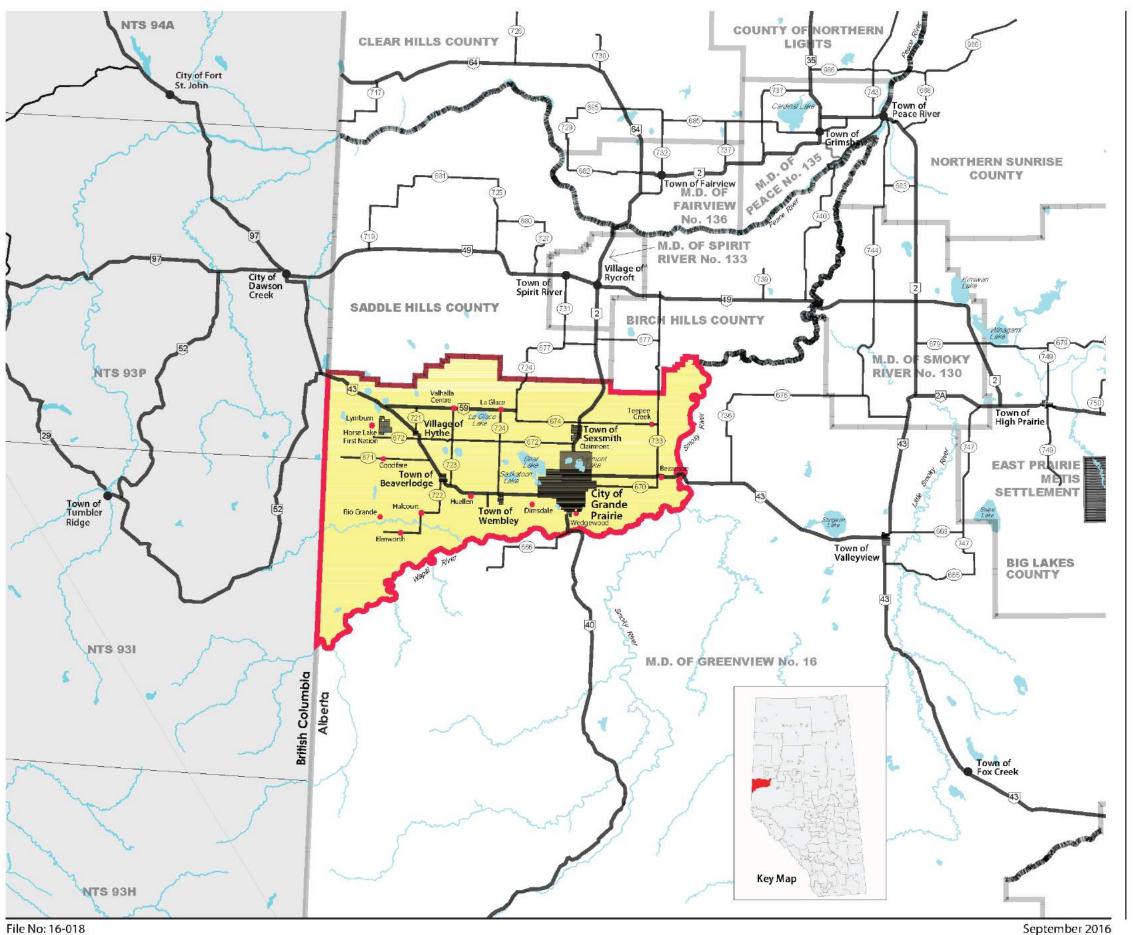
A *Growth and Economic Development Strategy* is a plan that can be approved and adopted by Council that provides a roadmap for attracting new investment and ensures long-term sustainable growth. The *Growth and Economic Development Strategy* also provides a framework for how land in the County can best be utilized to create additional economic opportunities for area. The primary objectives of the County of Grande Prairie *Growth and Economic Development Strategy* include:

- "Understanding the current status of the County with respect to land usage and infrastructure.
- Understanding the prevailing economic and social considerations.
- Understanding the current drivers and inhibitors of growth within the County and neighbouring communities.
- Identifying actions that will provide greater opportunity for the development of existing communities within the County.
- Gathering input and feedback in conjunction with other County initiatives including the Upper Peace Regional Plan under the Alberta Land Use Framework.
- Developing an implementation plan that includes a list of actions required to lead the County towards greater economic sustainability. "

# Why is the County of Grande Prairie Preparing a Growth and Economic Development Strategy?

The Alberta economy is experiencing significant and widespread challenges, requiring many municipalities to evaluate and assess their long-term strategic goals. Accounting for these challenges, the County of Grande Prairie is proactively defining current and future economic opportunities that can supplement its rich agricultural and resource-based economy.

By gaining a comprehensive understanding of the social, economic, and environmental factors at play in the County, the *Growth and Economic Development Strategy* will establish a 50-year vision that shows how to best accommodate future growth and how to strengthen economic development in a sustainable, responsible way. In doing this it will become part of the foundation for a review and update to the County's Municipal Development Plan (MDP) and can serve as a strategic document in participation in the *Upper Peace Regional Plan* being prepared by the Alberta Government.



# Growth & Economic Development Strategy County of Grande Prairie No. 1, Alberta



# Legend

Primary Highway
Secondary Highway
M.D. / County Boundary
Hamlet
Water Body

**Map 2: Regional Context** 







# 1.2 Regional Context

# **Locational Factors**

Located approximately 460 km northwest of Edmonton in northern Alberta, the County of Grande Prairie encompasses an area of 5,802.21 km² ("Map 2: Regional Context"). Due to this advantageous location, the County of Grande Prairie benefits from a large trade area, estimated at 150,000 people in 2015¹.

Located within County boundary is the City of Grande Prairie, four urban municipalities (Wembley, Sexsmith, Hythe, and Beaverlodge), fourteen hamlets (Bezanson, Buffalo Lakes, Clairmont, Demmitt, Dimsdale, Elmworth, Goodfare, Halcourt, Huallen, La Glace, Lymburn, Teepee Creek, Valhalla Centre and Wedgewood), and numerous country residential communities. The Horse Lake First Nation, a Danezaa nation under the Western Cree Regional Council and party to Treaty 8, is located in the northwest part of the County near the Village of Hythe.

# **Current Population**

The population for the County of Grande Prairie and its many towns and hamlets have grown dramatically from 2001-2016, the last year for which Statistics Canada completed a census. The County grew 40% over a 15-year period, **from 16,036 in 2001 to 22,502 people in 2016** with a population density of 3.8 residents per km².

Wembley, Beaverlodge, La Glace and Sexsmith also saw double digit growth over the same period. However, Hythe, Bezanson, and Valhalla saw declines in their population of -22% and -75% respectively. Several other smaller communities within the County do not have official population numbers and historical growth or decline is not known.

In 2015, 29% of the County of Grande Prairie's population was under the age of 19, while 8% were over the age of 65, and 63% between the ages of 20-65. The population has experienced a recent natural increase with children under 10 representing 15% of the population. Other large age cohorts include people aged 35-39 and 50-54, both of whom represent prime working age populations.

#### **Economic Drivers**

Based on the 2011 Federal Census, the largest economic sectors were mining, quarrying oil and gas extraction (13%), agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (10%), construction (9%), and retail (8%).

As of 2014, there were 77 active wells in the County, capitalizing on the 38.8 billion cubic metres of natural gas reserves in the area. However, overall energy exploration activity and gas production activities has declined since 2006. The County also has the substantial opportunity to develop geothermal power generation stations using steam assisted gravity drainage (SAGD) bore wells.

The key crops of the region's agricultural producers include canola, alfalfa, and spring wheat, in addition to livestock and a large apiary industry. There are two Forest Management Agreements (FMAs) in the County of Grande Prairie, granting the right for a number of companies to conduct forestry activities.

<sup>1</sup> County of Grande Prairie Economic Development, "Middle of Everywhere Retail Gap Analysis", http://www.middleofeverywhere.ca/full-retail-gap-analysis/



# **Existing Land Use**

Land use within the County of Grande Prairie varies widely and includes large agricultural and crown land areas spread throughout the County, crown land, residential located in urban municipalities and country residential areas, commercial, industrial, provincial parks, natural areas, and the Horse Lake First Nations Reserve. For an overview of the existing land use see "Map 3: Generalized Existing Land Use". Each of the land uses shown on the map are described below.

# Agriculture/Rural

Is land designated for the systematic production of crops and livestock for the purpose of providing food or food products to humans. It is synonymous with farmland, fields, pastures, and rangelands.

#### **Crown Land**

Are publicly owned lands held in trust by the Government of Alberta and are managed with the public interest in mind.

#### Residential

Is land designated under the County of Grande Prairie's *Land Use Bylaw #2680* to provide space for residents to live in dwelling units. This includes many housing typologies and styles such as country residential, urban style, mixed-use, and multi-family.

#### **Commercial**

Is land designated under the County of Grande Prairie's *Land Use Bylaw #2680* to provide space for buildings or land that are intended to generate a profit from the selling of goods or rental income. It can include commercial storefronts, restaurants, or entertainment facilities.

#### **Industrial**

Is land designated under the County of Grande Prairie's *Land Use Bylaw #2680* to space land for the production, storage, and delivery of goods or services in a variety of business sectors. It can include manufacturing, warehousing, transportation services, storage, or service provision.

#### **Clairmont Urban Area**

The Clairmont Urban Area has been designated in the County's *Municipal Development Plan* (MDP) as a part of the County intended to accommodate more comprehensive and intensive forms of urban development than has been traditionally found in the County.

#### **Provincial Park**

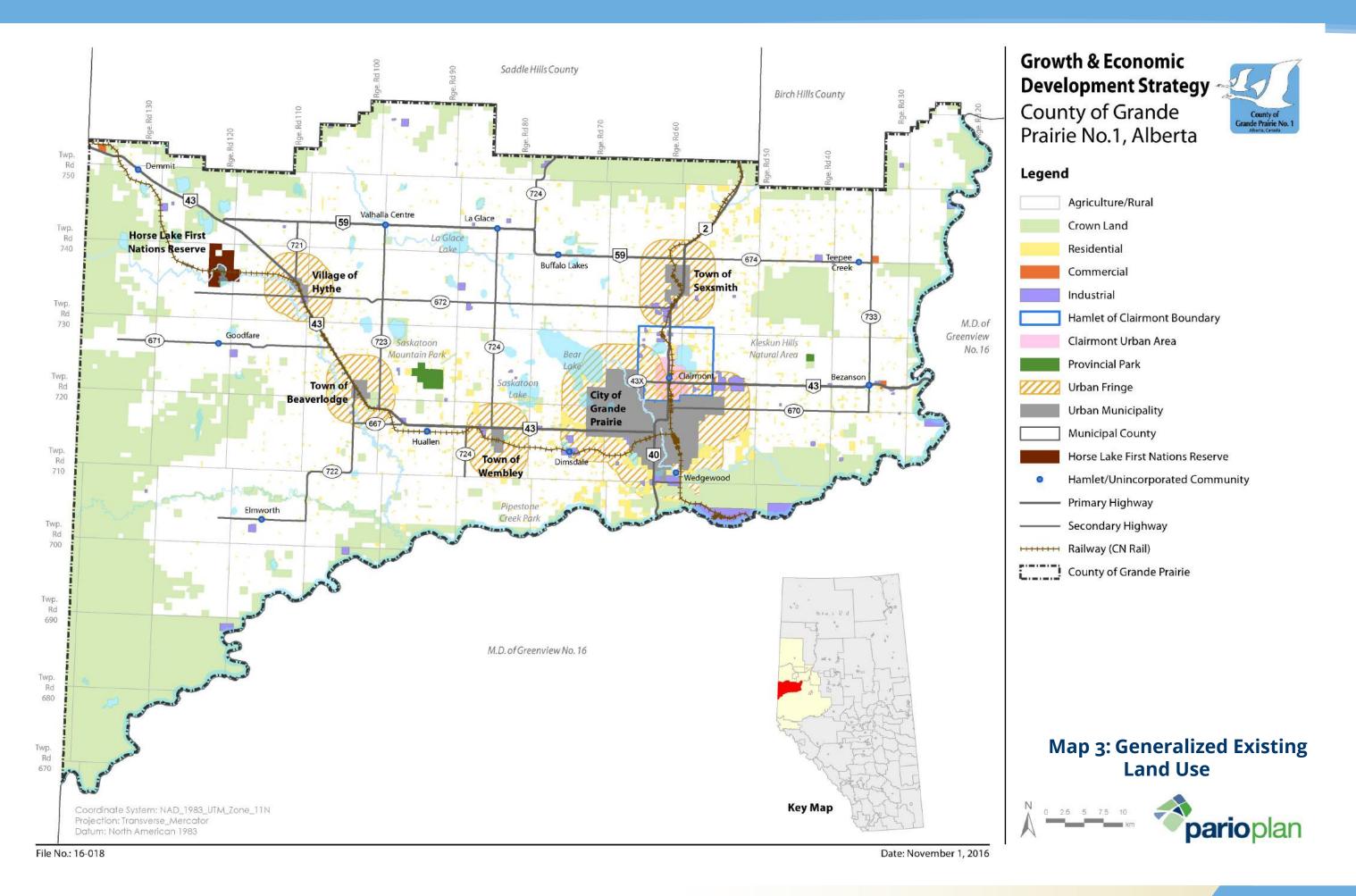
Are lands set aside to preserve for all time the landscapes and natural features that represent the environmental diversity of Alberta while providing opportunities to experience and enjoy nature.

#### **Urban Fringe**

These lands are loosely identified as the area surrounding an urban municipality not under the jurisdiction of the County. They are heavily influenced by the nearby municipality and are often more densely populated.

#### **Horse Lake First Nation**

Are the lands under the jurisdiction of the Horse Lake First Nation, a party to Treaty 8 and a member of the Western Cree Tribal Council. Horse Lake 152B reserve is one of two the band has.



County of Grande Prairie No.1 Growth and Economic Development Strategy



# 1.3 Legislative Framework

The planning process in Alberta follows a hierarchy of statutory plans, policies, bylaws, and regulations that govern land use and development decisions. Planning authority is legislated through the *Alberta Land Stewardship Act* (ALSA) establishing the authority for regional plans, and the *Modernized Municipal Government Act* (*Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000 Chapter M-26*) (MGA) which determines the perimeter, guidelines, and authority for municipal planning, land use and development decisions and processes. The legislation mandates municipalities of a certain size to adopt a hierarchy of statutory plans including Intermunicipal Development Plans, Intermunicipal Collaboration Frameworks, Municipal Development Plans (MDP), and Area Structure Plans (ASP). Land Use Bylaws (LUB) are also mandatory for municipalities.

Pursuant to *Section 638* of the MGA, all statutory plans must be consistent with each other. Within the planning hierarchy, statutory plans need to comply with each other. In addition, decisions made by federal and provincial authorities such as the Alberta Natural Resources Conservation Board, the Energy Resources Conservation Board, and the Alberta Utilities Commission, supersede policies contained below the *Municipal Government Act*.

The Alberta Land Use Framework, Alberta Land Stewardship Act, and Municipal Government Act are policies and regulations that direct and govern land use planning at the provincial level. The Upper Peace Regional Plan is a regional land use plan that manages planning at the regional level. This is followed by the municipal level which contains "local" plans and regulations developed by municipalities. These regulations are classified as either Statutory Plans or Non-Statutory Plans. Statutory Plans are developed by a municipality for the purposes of identifying future policies for development within municipal boundaries and the immediate surrounding area. These statutory plans facilitate local planning and economic growth, and act as a guide for future land-use expectations for both citizens and businesses. Statutory plans must be consistent with one another and with any regional plans adopted for the area under the Alberta Land Stewardship Act.

# Statutory Plans in effect in the County of Grande Prairie include the following:

- City of Grande Prairie & County of Grande Prairie No. 1 Intermunicipal Development Plan, County Bylaw No. 2896
- County of Grande Prairie No. 1 Municipal Development Plan Bylaw No. 2360
- Land Use Bylaw County of Grande Prairie Bylaw # 2680
- Area Structure Plans

#### **Adopted Area Structure Plans**

Althen Corner Area Structure Plan Bylaw No. 2710 Bacon Area Structure Plan Bylaw No. 2921 Balderston Area Structure Plan Bylaw No. 3022



Balisky Hodges Area Structure Plan Bylaw No. 2779 Carriage Lane Estates Area Structure Plan Bylaw No. 2733 Clairmont Area Structure Plan Bylaw No. 1547 Clairmont Heights Area Structure Plan Bylaw No. 2945 Correction Line Industrial Area Structure Plan Bylaw No. 2548 Crosslink Area Structure Plan Bylaw No. 3026 Crossroads North Area Structure Plan Bylaw No. 2764 Crossroads South Phase 1 Area Structure Plan Bylaw No. 2752 Crossroads South Phase 2 Area Structure Plan Bylaw No. 2757 Cowan Area Structure Plan Bylaw No. 3039 Dimsdale Area Structure Plan Bylaw No. 3012 Emerson Trail Area Structure Plan Bylaw No. 2857 Hwy 2 and 43 Area Structure Plan Bylaw No. 2578 Lakeside Area Structure Plan Bylaw No. 3009 Makena Area Structure Plan Bylaw No. 2734 Mercer Hill Area Structure Plan Bylaw No. 2915 Municipal Complex Area Structure Plan Bylaw No. 2620 Mountview Area Structure Plan Bylaw No. 2462 Taylor Estates Area Structure Plan Bylaw No. 2930 West Clairmont Area Structure Plan Bylaw No. 2847 West Kehr Althen Area Structure Plan Bylaw No. 2747 West Mountview Area Structure Plan Bylaw No. 2920

Non-Statutory Plans are documents adopted by Council resolution. They are often developed to set a Non-Statutory Plans are documents adopted by Council resolution. They are often developed to set a policy direction for growth and development in a particular area, or for the County as a whole.

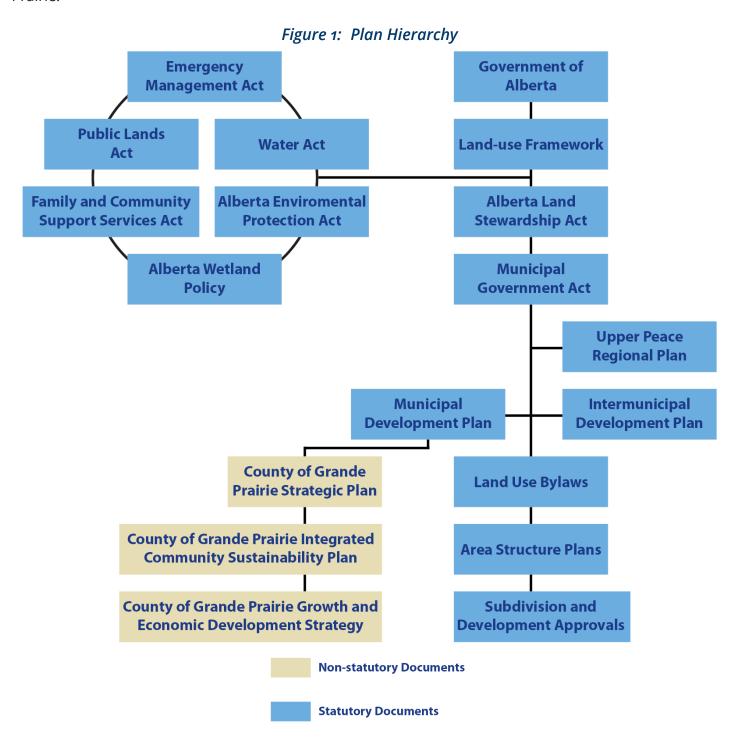
# Non-Statutory Plans in effect in the County of Grande Prairie include the following:

- County of Grande Prairie Strategic Plan, 2014-2017
- County of Grande Prairie Integrated Community Sustainability Plan, 2009-2013, December 2008
- Grande Prairie Area Joint Recreation Master Plan, September 2016

This *Growth and Economic Development Strategy* for the County of Grande Prairie will be a non-statutory document. For a more detailed analysis of the legislative framework and how it applies, please see the *Baseline Analysis 2017: Growth and Economic Development Strategy County of Grande Prairie No. 1* previously completed by the Project Team.



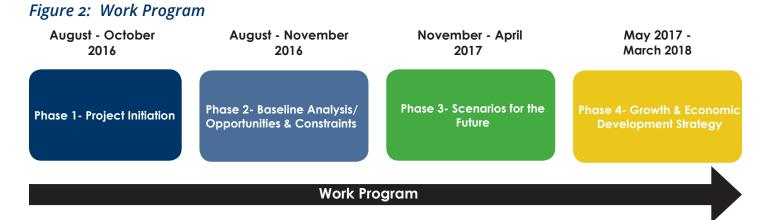
*Figure 1: Plan Hierarchy* illustrates the planning context and hierarchy in Alberta and how it relates to legislation and plans in the County of Grande Prairie. The column on the far right includes policies relevant to the development of a *Growth and Economic Development Strategy* for the County of Grande Prairie.





# 1.4 The Planning Process

The preparation of the County of Grande Prairie *Growth and Economic Development Strategy* followed a four-phase work program completed over 19 months between August 2016 and March 2018 as seen in *"Figure 2: Work Program"* below. Opportunities for stakeholder and public consultation were provided during each phase of the work program.



# **Phase 1: Project Initiation**

At the outset of the *Growth and Economic Development Strategy*, during the Project Initiation Phase, work focused on gathering data to be used for analysis in the project, developing a Communication Plan, developing an Engagement Plan, establishment of the project website by ParioPlan and 3Pikas, and reviewing existing background information and policies. A project start-up meeting was held August 5, 2018 with a subsequent start-up meeting and workshop with County Staff and Council on September 27, 2017. Presentations were made to the Municipal Planning Commission and Steering Committee at key points in the first phase.

# Phase 2: Baseline Analysis / Opportunities & Constraints

During this phase, the Project Team worked on developing a Baseline Analysis Report for economic conditions, social and physical infrastructure, and land use patterns within the County. This served as a foundation for identifying opportunities and constraints that could be capitalized on and addressed. The majority of the work comprised of identifying land use patterns within the County, developing a demographic profile including population and employment forecasts for a 50-year timeframe. An evaluation of existing infrastructure was conducted resulting in an inventory and descriptions of social and physical infrastructure present in the County. In addition to this a desktop analysis of environmental areas, natural resources, and high-quality farmland was undertaken.

A *Resiliency Analysis* was completed to identify and predict what the short and long-term climate hazards in the County of Grande Prairie might be and recommend infrastructure solutions that would improve infrastructure resiliency and permit informed and insightful decision making.



#### **Phase 3: Scenarios for the Future**

Phase 3 included several engagement events and development of future Growth Options and the selection of a preferred Growth Option that will direct future growth and development. Along with data received from the County and a review of external reports and papers, the Symposium, and several open houses where held (see Section 2.0 Community and Stakeholder Consultation) and a situation analysis was completed to determine what, if any, gaps were present in regard to land use, infrastructure, and economic development.

Three (3) growth options were developed outlining three future scenarios for growth within the County. The Project Team worked with County Administration to develop evaluation criteria and weighting of each criteria with which to measure and rank each growth option and aid in choosing a preferred growth option.

A preferred growth option was then chosen using the evaluation criteria and through consultation with County of Grande Prairie Administration - the Balanced Growth Option. The Balanced Growth Option was adopted – in principle – as the preferred growth option moving forward. Feedback and comments were recorded from the Council and Administration and incorporated into the Strategy.

# **Phase 4: Growth and Economic Development Strategy**

The final Phase of the project involved finalizing the Balanced Growth Option, identifying infrastructure gaps for the Balanced Growth Option, developing key recommendations, and creating an Implementation Plan, and Economic Strategy to address the key findings. Two Open Houses were held to get comments and determine the public level of agreement with the ideas presented. A draft *Growth and Economic Development Strategy* was written and sent out for comment and review by County Administration. Final revisions were made and the *Growth and Economic Development Strategy* was presented to County Council for adoption on March 26, 2018.

# 1.5 Report Organization

The *Growth and Economic Development Strategy* is organized as follows:

- **1.0 INTRODUCTION:** This section of the Strategy provides the purpose and background for conducting the project, positions the County of Grande Prairie in the regional context with regards to location; population; economics; and land use, outlines the Legislative Framework that guides planning in the County, and the planning process used during the project
- **2.0 COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION:** Provides and overview of the community and stakeholder consultation activities that were completed by the Project Team and a summary of the findings from each activity or session.
- **3.0 VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES:** Confirms the Vision and Guiding Principles for the project that provide for a single Vision to work towards and a set of principles that establish consensus for the project and establish a long-term direction for the project.



- **4.0 POPULATION PROJECTION AND LAND REQUIREMENTS:** The Project Team, using data from Statistics Canada and existing reports and documents projected the expected population as well as residential, commercial, and industrial land requirements to accommodate the growth for the County out to the year 2066 a 50-year timeframe.
- **5.0 GROWTH MANAGEMENT STRATEGY:** Using the projected land requirements and population the Project Team developed three (3) Growth Options for land use within the County and a set of fourteen (14) Evaluation Criteria to assess each option and pick a preferred Option for future growth in the County.
- **6.0 BALANCED GROWTH OPTION:** This section contains an analysis of the infrastructure required to support the growth as outlined in the preferred Balanced Growth Option. It includes environmental considerations, a transportation analysis, and infrastructure gap analysis for water, wastewater, stormwater, and telecommunications.
- **7.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY:** The Economic Development Strategy outlines the Strategic Directions the County could take to grow and diversify the economy. It suggests ways to achieve this through investment attraction, diversification, sustainability, collaboration, marketing, and monitoring progress.
- **8.0 SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS:** This section summarizes the findings and conclusions reached from both the growth and economic analysis, public engagement sessions, and research conducted. From this the Project Team has formed a number of recommendations for the County regarding growth and economic development.
- **9.0 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN:** An implementation plan was developed that includes 22 specific initiatives in the short, medium, and long term to help the County of Grande Prairie carry out and achieve the recommendations.







# 2.0 COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

This section of the report describes the Community and Stakeholder Consultation process employed by the Project Team and Steering Committee throughout the duration of the project. Section 2.1 lists all the Community and Stakeholder activities and their purpose while Section 2.2 describes the outcomes.

County Council indicated that effective Community and Stakeholder Engagement be essential to of the preparation of the *Growth and Economic Development Strategy*. During the first phase of the Strategy, an Engagement and Communication Plan found in *Appendix A: Community and Stakeholder Consultation Materials*, was prepared by ParioPlan Inc. and approved by the Steering Committee. The Engagement and Communications Plan used standards and best practices set out by the *International Association for Public Participation* (IAP2).

Both innovative methods such as the *Building the Future, Setting the Direction Together Symposium,* held in May 2017 with industry leaders, to more traditional methods of engagement such as key person interviews, open houses, and online surveys were used. Furthermore, to ensure effective outreach from all relevant groups and regular updates on information gathered and engagement opportunities, the Project Team enlisted 3Pikas, an online engagement firm that designed and maintained the project website, MyCountyGP.ca as well as made use of Civicly. The County also used its social media accounts to gather feedback from the public and advertise project events.

# **Steering Committee**

A Steering Committee comprised of planning and economic development staff was formed to provide direction to the Project Team for the *Growth and Economic Development Strategy* for the County of Grande Prairie No.1. Members of the Steering Committee are as listed below:

- Nick Lapp, Director of Planning and Development
- Chris King, Economic Development Manager
- Matthew Konowalchuk, Senior Planner
- Pamela Nordin, Project Manager

Regular communication between the Project Team, Steering Committee, and Council ensured effective execution of the Engagement and Communications Plan.

The following sub-section describes each of the engagement activities undertaken by the Project Team throughout the duration of the Project. For a detailed description of all the findings see *Appendix A: Community and Stakeholder Engagement Materials* which contains summary reports from each engagement activity.









# 2.1 Community and Stakeholder Engagement Activities

# **Project website and Other Social Media**

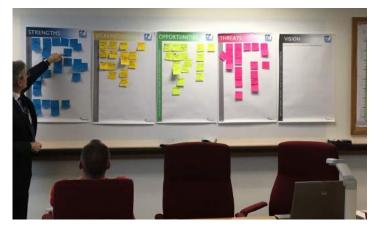
The Project Team worked with the County's Communications Department and 3Pikas to launch the Project website *MyCountyGP.ca* which went live on October 19, 2017. This website was used throughout the duration of the project to post updates, documents, and event information. County Administration also regularly posted polls/questions to gain public feedback relating to the project. The County's existing social media accounts were used to engage the public. As the Project gained momentum, the website was adjusted to improve its user-friendliness and appeal to stakeholders.

# **Project Backgrounder**

A Project Backgrounder was produced to launch the project and inform all interested parties about the project scope, objectives and approach. A media release accompanied the Project Backgrounder describing all the project components was released online (project website) and via mail (postcard) on October 19, 2016.

# Vision Building Workshop - September 27, 2016

The Project Team held a Vision Building Workshop/ SWOT analysis with Key Staff and the Steering Committee wherein participants were prompted through a series of questions to brainstorm the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). Participants responses informed the development of a 50 year Vision for the County of Grande Prairie



# **Surveys -October - November 2016**

Questionnaires along with project background materials were sent to the CAOs and Mayors of the rural and surrounding municipalities and Horse Lake First Nation Reserve. The purpose of this survey was to determine major land use and/or economic direction of the neighboring municipalities. Through this initiative the Project Team could deduce potential inter-municipal initiatives that could serve as economic opportunities for all or be aware of potential conflicting initiatives. The information received helped to identify common interests and partnerships opportunities for economic development efforts.

# **Intermunicipal Workshop - October 8, 2016**

Members of the Project Team held a workshop with Mayors and CAOs of the Urban and Rural Municipalities in and adjacent to the County to identify key opportunities and challenges within each municipality. The Project Team used the information gathered from this session to identify locations to support different types of industries and methods to avoid land use conflicts in the fringe areas.

#### Interview with Horse Lake First Nation Reserve CAO - October 8, 2016

Members of the Project Team also visited Horse Lake First Nation Reserve to meet with their CAO,



Darwin Eckstrom. This focused on the Community's revenue sources through grants from the federal government and oil and gas businesses, their housing issues and their opportunity to capitalize on their indigenous culture to promote tourism. This improved the Project Team's understanding of the local community and their contribution to the County.

# **Group Interview with the Grande Prairie Chamber of Commerce - October 8, 2016**

With the purpose of understanding the private sector's perspective on growth and economic development for the next 50 years, Project Team members conducted a group interview with executives from the chamber of Commerce. Through this, future growth prospects for the County were identified. Participants reinforced that growth was expected to be concentrated around the City of Grande Prairie, in the form of country residential developments. Currently there is a preference for larger lots with access to piped water and sewer. However, there was also a consensus that the hamlets should be promoted as locations for growth. In addition, regional tourism was identified as a viable economic opportunity. However, it will require support services around existing tourist attractions. This information was factored into the development of the growth options discussed in Section 5.2 of this document.

# Meeting with City of Grande Prairie Mayor and Administration - October 8, 2016

The County and City of Grande Prairie have many of shared resources (residents, labor, infrastructure, etc.). Acting as facilitator, the Project Team held a working session with the City to get the City's perspective on land use planning and key economic drivers such as the Regional Hospital, the potential to collaborate with MD of Greenview, and Grande Prairie Regional College. The City agreed that infrastructure determines land use patterns but questioned where it should be directed. Currently, the majority of future development is being directed to the immediate south of the City. Future collaboration will allow the County to maximize the use of existing social and physical infrastructure and align the action plans with the City's future growth plans.

# **Key Person Interviews - November 2016 - February 2017**

Interviews with key stakeholders were conducted by phone to solicit expert opinions for each of the economic drivers of the County's economy. The Project Team held interviews with representatives from the Petroleum Association, agricultural sector, Grande Prairie Regional Airport, the bio-industrial sector and Grande Prairie Regional College. It provided an understanding of how and why businesses choose to locate in certain areas, and their needs along with insight on their future investment plans that could be capitalized on to promote regional economic development. Through this the Project Team could provide policy recommendations that would promote business in a safe, sustainable manner while minimizing land use conflicts but also reducing the barriers to business development.

# **Open Houses - March-June 2017**

To further promote the Project, County Administration presented the project at the Peace Country Classic Agri-Show (March 19-11, 2017), Grande Prairie Home & Garden Show (Mar 31-April 2, 2017) and the Peace Country Petroleum Show (May 17 & 18, 2017).

Subsequently, three open houses were conducted to inform and update residents and interested parties about the status of the project and to acquire additional input about the Strengths, Weaknesses,



Opportunities and Threats and reaffirm the vision of the community. Input from these sessions were also used to develop three (3) alternative scenarios for the future. Overall approximately 800 people attended over the three nights. Project Team members and County Administration spoke with numerous County residents and had 44 people fill out the survey at the open houses over the three days. In all there were 125 responses to this survey on Survey Monkey (including the 44). Residents were receptive to talking about the future of the County. Overall the three days were successful. Open houses ran on June 19 at Crystal Creek Hall, June 21 at Albright Community Hall and June 22 at Clairmont Community School.

# Symposium - May 26, 2017

The purpose of the Symposium was to address trends and directions of industries in the energy, forestry and advanced technology sectors (information technology, genomics). It had a local focus discussing key trends and direction of industries critical to the current and future development of the County. This also included workshop break-out sessions, scenario building and a keynote speaker along with seven other speakers. The insights shared by the high caliber speakers provided an optimistic view of the County's future, but also presented some honest assessments of the critical and important steps needed to realize the growth potential of the region. The Symposium was instrumental in building new networks, deepen understanding of important economic trends that impact the region and helped community and business leaders envision new possibilities for a sustainable future. It also provided community leaders an opportunity to share their understanding of future directions and implications for the region. The information gathered from this activity was used to develop/refine growth scenarios and implementation plans in the final *Growth and Economic Development Strategy*.

# Working Session with Steering Committee - October 19 & 20, 2017

Over the course of two days, the Project Team and the Steering Committee reviewed and discussed the three Growth Options, the infrastructure gap analysis, and the economic development strategy. During the Growth Strategy discussion the Project Team introduced evaluation criteria in a matrix format to compare and evaluate each of the growth options. This was discussed and refined resulting in a final set of evaluation criteria and the Balanced Growth Option being selected as the preferred Growth Option that would be recommended to Council.

#### Council Workshop - November 14, 2017

A summary of work completed to date was presented to Council with a summary of key findings, preferred growth options, infrastructure gap analysis, and the economic development strategy along with the rationale supporting their recommendations. This enabled Council to provide their input but also understand the full impact of the study on the future of Grande Prairie.

# Final Open Houses - December 6-7, 2017

Two final open houses were held at the Wellington Resource Centre in Clairmont and the Beverlodge Community Center in Beverlodge to give residents and other stakeholders the opportunity to comment and provide feedback on the Strategy, particularly the Balanced Growth Option and economic development strategies before it was presented to Council for approval.



# 2.2 What We Heard

# **Diversifying the Economy**

Numerous people were of the opinion that despite the County's three main industrial sectors (forestry, oil and gas, and agriculture), the County still heavily relied on the oil and gas sector. This notion has also been supported by technical studies. Therefore, the study relied on stakeholders from various backgrounds to understand steps to diversify the economy.

Stakeholders emphasized the potential of the healthcare sector. With the opening of the Grande Prairie Regional Hospital scheduled for 2019, the residents of the County and City of Grande Prairie hope this will propel their healthcare service capacity in two ways: attracting consumers from Northern Canada and retaining highly skilled professionals in the field to relocate to the region. For this, regional cooperation is required to make the region a viable and attractive place for doctors, and other health professionals. Experts even suggested engaging nurse practitioners to become part of the solution, pursuing telehealth systems and exploring shared agreements between communities and municipalities.

The County once had a substantial agricultural and forestry base but there has been a loss of appreciation for these sectors, as seen by its dwindling employment numbers. However, there still are significant value-added opportunities within these sectors. Identifying strategic partnerships within the County that could create the conditions for value added agriculture was viewed as critical. This can be facilitated with differentiated products and business structures that ensure producers and processors work collaboratively and with shared responsibility. Marketing campaigns rooted in the region are critical too. As with harvested crops, participants noted that marketing what value added producers can gain from participation in the region is an important first step.

A majority of stakeholders who shared their views about the County listed the natural landscape and environment as a strength that could be developed into business opportunities. Significant potential exists to leverage existing regional strengths including dark sky, industry, agriculture, and outdoor recreation in addition to current tourism amenities such as the Philip J. Currie museum. Exploring opportunities to develop small communities around a niche (equestrian, archaeological, agriculture, history) and to promote their existing capacities was noted as an important component of the Strategy.

More tourism operators are needed to provide a thorough visitor experience. Many believed that the current image of the County, stemming from the abundance of industrial operations, is and will continue to impede the growth of the Tourism industry. Therefore, to improve the image the County would require marketing strategies as well as training front line staff at first points of contact for visitors (service stations, hotels, restaurants and others).

As for the energy sector, many suggested collaborating closely with industry to minimize land and ecological impacts from development while providing a cost competitive business environment. Collaborate on the attraction, training and retention of talent in the region while exploring regional opportunities in upgrading and alternative power generation.



The energy sector will continue to play a significant role however, innovation and technological advancement will change key industry characteristics, which along with improved broadband coverage will make the County's economy more resilient.

# **Intermunicipal Partnerships**

A reoccurring comment during the Project was the increasing collaboration between the County and City of Grande Prairie. Due to proximity, amenities, infrastructure, and lifestyle choices of residents, the two municipalities have numerous interrelated functions. A mutually beneficial relationship, would minimize the competition for land and economic development and benefit the region.

Residents, administration, and experts agreed the County had a very progressive and responsive Council with an "open-for-business" attitude. The competitive tax rate set by the Council as well as the history of Council decisions has encouraged economic development.

# **Preservation of High Quality Agricultural Lands**

Agriculture has been a driving sector for the County of Grande Prairie but has been adversely impacted by industrial and residential growth. A reoccurring theme amongst residents was the need to preserve and protect high quality agricultural lands from residential and industrial development. They lamented the fact that in the past industrial development in particular led to the loss of high quality farmland. They were of the opinion that preservation of agricultural land can best be achieved by concentrating residential and development in established urban centres and hamlets or clustering country residential development in areas that already have pre-existing country residential subdivisions.

# **Smart Growth and Maintaining Existing Centers of Development**

Through the public consultation activities, numerous residents understood the need for compact development. The idea of directing residential and industrial growth away from higher capability agricultural lands and pursuing higher density and growth in existing towns, hamlets, and villages was well supported. Concentrating residential growth also provides better opportunities to attract and support commercial enterprises. However, in the pursuit of compact development, residents were concerned about maintaining and increasing densities in existing hamlets, particularly those that may be threatened with school closures resulting from the lack of student enrollment.

# **Ensuring Viability of Hamlets**

As above mentioned, infrastructure can play an instrumental role in either fostering or stunting growth. Therefore, while many encouraged diverting growth to areas that had the critical mass and the infrastructure capacities to build or support a thriving community, others were concerned about the viability of other areas, especially hamlets that do have a small but long existing population and history.

Another key driver of population growth would be providing local employment opportunities. This requires identifying niche markets and local economic strengths. The suggestion was that Teepee Creek might be a good location for a food hub or equestrian centre capitalizing on its ranching heritage. A number of hamlets in the County such as Clairmont, Bezanson, and La Glace are growth hamlets that have municipal services that can accommodate additional development. The cost of creating additional



lots in some of the smaller hamlets presents a challenge and makes it difficult to attract developers to a small market.

# **Physical Infrastructure Requirements**

The County can invest in catalytical pieces of infrastructure in strategic locations to direct growth. Residents, administration, and elected officials from the County and City of Grande Prairie have distinct opinions regarding the best course of action moving forward. Some believe the best use of infrastructure should be in and around the City, where majority of services exist. Others believe the County must invest in infrastructure located in other parts around the County so that the County can foster development, which in turn will serve as a means to generate revenue. A major first step lies with Aquatera's abilty to proceed in upgrading sewer and water services to Clairmont, which they have made progress.

The County is well connected in terms of roadways however, it was pointed out on a number of occasions that the roadway infrastructure is aging and requires upgrades but also recognized that most of them fall under provincial jurisdiction. During the economic downtown, the cut backs in flights connecting Edmonton and the region resulted in some challenges for the commuity.

A last infrastructure requirement would be a vast improvement to regional broadband access but since it is a tri-municipal area it would require provincial involvement.

# **Economic Opportunities for Small Scale Agricultural Operations**

The County of Grande Prairie is one of the many centers that has seen a push towards large scale farming operations. Simultaneously, there is still a market for locally grown agricultural products. Various experts and residents from the County expressed that the need to preserve small scale mixed farming operations. They identified economic opportunities with specialty crops and cottage industries. There is a lack of food processing facilities, particularly when it comes to meat products and farmers have to ship their livestock to central or southern Alberta for processing. The suggestion was that the County of Grande Prairie should look at the feasibility of establishing a local food hub for the processing and distribution of agricultural products. Agricultural operations also provide a source of biomass that can be repurposed for other products and be used as a source for the production of renewable energy.

# **Pursuing Alternative Renewable Energy**

Although majority believed the oil and gas industry will continue to be an important driver of the local economy, looking at an alternative, such as geothermal and biomass would reduce the County's susceptibility to fluctuating oil prices and in turn make the economy more resilient. A recent study by the University of Alberta confirmed that parts of the County have tremendous potential to harness geothermal energy around the County, specifically around the Dimsdale. Currently, both the federal and provincial governments are providing policy direction and incentives to move into a green economy, which the County can take advantage of. The development of Clairmont Heights provides an opportunity to build a model sustainable community. Once again, experts and residents alike, identified education and incentives as an important factor in altering consumer behaviour, but also a means to diversify the labor force.



# **Opportunities to Develop Greenhouses and Related Agriculture**

Not only could the geothermal energy be used as an energy source for residential and industrial development but also be used to support intensified agricultural operations such as Greenhouses. The idea of harnessing this energy to support greenhouses was well supported. Many recognized this as an opportunity to continue agricultural operations during the winter, decreasing reliance on import from other countries. This may also reduce cost. Horse Lake First Nation Reserve also encouraged this idea as this would provide the community with healthier eating options, thus hopefully improving eating habits. To date, the people on the reserve have very poor eating habits resulting in a high number of diabetes cases. Furthermore, the community also expressed an interest in investing in a saw mill, which would create bio-char and biofertilizers. This would be another source to support greenhouses as the byproduct of the saw mill heat, could be directed to a local greenhouse.

# **Effective Implementation of County Policies and Plans**

The business and development community identified inconsistent policies and plans that contradicted some of the County's goals. This has led to inconsistent development standards. An example of this being development permits being denied despite being on lands zoned for residential, commercial, or industrial uses mainly because they were on prime farmland.

#### Social Infrastructure - Education

It was also identified that the County supports a young demographic and therefore requires social infrastructure such as schools and post-secondary institutions to support this large section of the population. Grande Prairie Regional College (GPRC), which was recently granted university status, is interested in responding to the growth needs of the region and has developed strong relationships with firms growing employment in the region in order to tailor training and applied research opportunities (e.g., 7Generations and GPRC training program collaborations). This approach localizes regional professional development opportunities through education and industry partnerships, and provides a model for continued education innovation in the region. Moreover, a partnership strategy and a focus on development needs within the region provides applied learning (project-based) opportunities for students focused on industry projects.



# 3.0 VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

This section of the report describes the results of the vision building process the Project Team went through to arrive at a shared vision and guiding principles. At the outset of the project a Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis was completed and used to determine the current state of the County and provide a foundation for the vision and guiding principles.

# 3.1 Importance of the Vision and Guiding Principles

Vision building and establishing guiding principles are effective planning tools for establishing a single shared vision for the future and incorporating the needs of the community and affected stakeholders. A vision and guiding principles benefit a project by developing a greater sense of community consensus, establishes a long-term direction for the project and community, helps in setting priorities, and allocates responsibilities for implementation. These two statements are the foundation for the evaluation criteria used to assess the future scenarios and in the choice of the preferred growth option so that it closely aligns with the goals and outcomes developed for the Strategy.

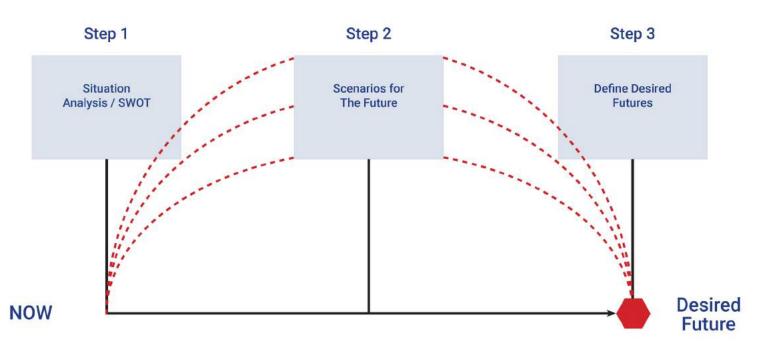


Figure 3: Desired Future Development Process



# 3.2 **SWOT Analysis**

The following SWOT Analysis was the first step in the vision building process (refer to "Figure 3: Desired Future Development Process"). A SWOT analysis is useful to identify both internal and external factors that may influence growth and economic development in the County of Grande Prairie. Developing a full awareness of the current conditions, both real and perceived, can help with strategic planning and decision making. The following SWOT items are a summary of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats from the numerous community engagement sessions and workshops with County Administration, staff, surrounding municipalities, and County Council.

# **Strengths:**

- Large land base (23% Crown Land)
- Low taxes / industrial assessment
- Pro-development / open for business / easy to deal with
- Diversified economy (oil and gas, forestry, tourism, and agriculture)
- Grande Prairie College (future degree granting polytechnic)
- Positive environmental and social impact of new Queen Elizabeth II Hospital
- Adequate highway infrastructure
- High-quality agricultural land
- Large retail and service trade area
- Diverse and large biomass industry
- Railway infrastructure
- Intermodal and logistics potential with airport, railway, and highway
- Sense of community
- Pristine natural environment
- County sportsplex (Crosslink Centre)
- Local schools and the intimate nature of the education.
- Clairmont's image is improving
- Proximity to the City of Grande Prairie enable country living with access to work and big city services
- Ranching history in Teepee Creek that dates back to approximately 1918
- Teepee Creek's annual rodeo is celebrating its 100th Anniversary
- Endless resources and abundant supply of water



Young demographic seen as valuable (future workforce)

#### Weaknesses:

- People are resistant to change/innovation
- Need to improve the image of the Grande Prairie Region, currently imagined as a rough and tussle, oil and gas town, rather than an attractive community with a good quality of life and amenities.
- Council does not always make decisions consistent with approved policy
- Lack of recognition for pristine or unaltered natural areas
- Lack of cooperation by County with neighbouring urban municipalities
- Need for improved communication with County Council
- Poor condition / quality of roadway infrastructure
- Lack of access to, and limited number of, recreation facilities
- Access roads to new subdivisions are not upgraded to accommodate the increased traffic flow
- Lack of piped water infrastructure
- Lack of public transit
- Increased crime rate as a result of the shortage of law enforcement resources
- Spread out village development (sprawl)
- Poor ground water quality
- Lack of a sense of community
- Disapproval of County spending
- Local beef has to be sent to central or southern Alberta for processing
- Interprovincial barriers to food distribution

# **Opportunities:**

- Opportunity to develop Clairmont as a model sustainable development community
- Twinning of Highway 40 to Grande Cache
- Twinning Highway 43 to British Columbia Tourism Route to Yukon and Alaska
- Hamlet revitalization initiative
- Implementation of the Grande Prairie Area Joint Recreation Master Plan (more recreation



#### facilities)

- Work with Provincial Government in implementation of the Wapiti Corridor Multi-Use Plan
- Provide facilities and services for aging population
- Opportunities for the County and municipalities to work together on economic development / tourism initiatives
- Development of Regional Transit System (Federal funding available)
- Value added agriculture and food processing opportunities
- Tri-party agreement with the M.D. of Greenview, City of Grande Prairie, and County to develop the petrochemical cluster in Greenview
- Encourage use of renewable and green energy
- Self-sustaining food industry with the opportunity to establish agricultural processing plants, community gardens, and agricultural intensification this would demand a reduction of red tape for local food production and distribution
- Utilizing existing industrial areas before expanding on to agricultural land
- Opportunities available for the younger demographics
- More commercial development in the County
- Co-operation between adjacent towns, communities, and municipalities
- Development of a niche capitalize on the strengths specific to each community
- Better advertising of local events
- A watershed, that if maintained properly, can accommodate the run off in and environmentally friendly way

#### **Threats:**

- Strained relations with the City of Grande Prairie
- Ability to have Aguatera proceed in upgrading sewer and water services to Clairmont \*
- Impact of depressed oil and gas prices
- Current NDP government perceived to have policies that do not support economic development
- Impact of Bill 21, the new modernized Municipal Government Act.
- Conversion of prime agriculture land for industrial uses
- Aquatera is an independent corporation with an independent board County of Grande Prairie's influence on priorities for coordinating water and sanitary services is limited\*



- Impact of Carbon Levy
- Overspending of municipal resources
- Keeping up with infrastructure needs as the County Grows (social and physical)
- Loss of small town character
- Protection of water and air resources
- Crime in rural areas
- Regionalization
- Threat of school closures
- Foreign investment displacing smaller businesses
- County model of centralization neglecting smaller hamlets
- Another oil boom taking emphasis off renewable resources
- Consolidation of energy companies creating uncertainty
- Lack of good planning

<sup>\*</sup> The comments made here reflect the opinions of individuals who provided them at the time they were collected. Since the time of the engagement sessions, Aquatera has made significant commitments and efforts towards working more closely with the communities to which they provide service.





#### 3.3 Vision Statement

After consultation with County Administration and the Steering Committee, a Vision Statement was developed to capture what overarching ideas would guide the project. The Vision Statement is as follows:

"Capitalizing on its strategic location, as the "Middle of Everywhere", by the year 2066 the County of Grande Prairie will have grown to a community of over 74,000 people and a model of sustainable development for the region. Building on Clairmont's transformation into a model "green community", the hamlets and rural areas of the County will become vibrant and desirable places to live, work, and play.

The traditional economic base of agriculture, oil and gas, forestry, and tourism will look to grow and diversify through innovation, the application of new technology, and value-added manufacturing. The County will continue to be open for business and foster collaboration with neighbouring municipalities by promoting economic development and efficient, cost effective delivery of physical and social infrastructure.

People will recognize that the County of Grande Prairie is an ideal place to invest, start a business, raise a family, and age in place."

#### 3.4 Guiding Principles

#### **Guiding Principles for Achieving the Vision Statement**

- 1. Grow and diversify the County's economy through innovation, use of technology, and entrepreneurship.
- 2. The County will continue to protect its natural environment and pursue environmentally sustainable practices.
- 3. Ensure that agriculture remains an important economic activity and way of life in the County by maintaining the Right to Farm and avoiding the premature fragmentation of high quality farmland.
- 4. Through the provision of social infrastructure (i.e. health, education, recreation and cultural facilities and programming), the County will be a healthy, safe, and inclusive community that provides high quality of life for people of all ages.
- 5. Promote land use patterns that provide for the economic and responsible use of infrastructure and avoid land use conflicts.
- 6. The County will help facilitate regional partnerships with industry, neighbouring municipalities, and the provincial and federal orders of government to continue to develop a competitive, resilient, attractive, and livable region.
- 7. County Council and staff will endeavor to facilitate responsible, transparent and well-informed decision making based upon on-going public engagement to better understand the needs of County residents and ratepayers.



## 4.0 POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS AND LAND REQUIREMENTS

This section outlines the projected population and employment growth in the County of Grande Prairie for three different scenarios (conservative, moderate, optimistic) and an estimate or forecast of the land requirements for residential, commercial, and industrial development would be for the moderate growth scenario. The projections were an exercise using the best available data using a number of assumptions about the location and nature of growth within the County. As with any population projection and land requirement calculations, there is a degree of inaccuracy; any use of these projections must take these factors into account.

#### 4.1 Historic Population Growth

"Figure 4: Historical Population Growth 2001-2016" illustrates the population change for the County of Grande Prairie since 2001. A review of the changes indicates there has been a total increase of 6,466 people and an average growth rate of 2.7% per year between 2001 and 2016.

From 2011 to 2016 there was an increase in population of about five thousand people, inconsistent with the preceding growth in the County. This is due to an error by Statistics Canada in the way that the population for the hamlet of Clairmont was calculated. The polygon used to determine the boundaries of Clairmont was inaccurate, counting about five thousand people as part of the City of Grande Prairie instead of Clairmont. Once this issue was discovered, Statistics Canada has worked to rectified the issue and has released new official Clairmont population numbers.





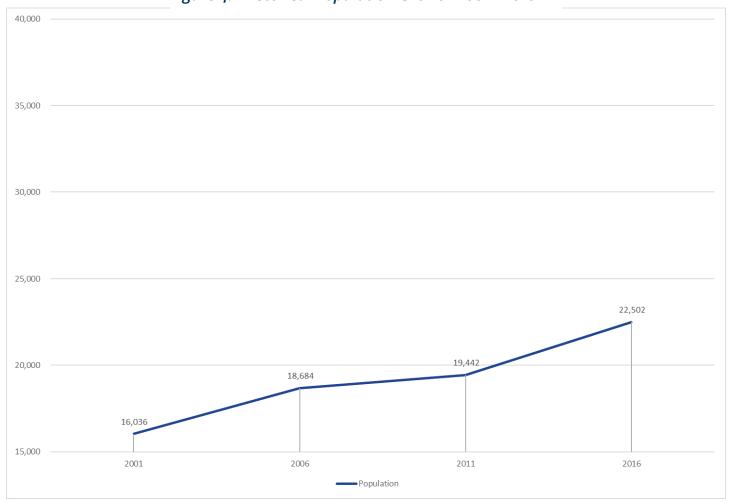


Figure 4: Historical Population Growth 2001 - 2016

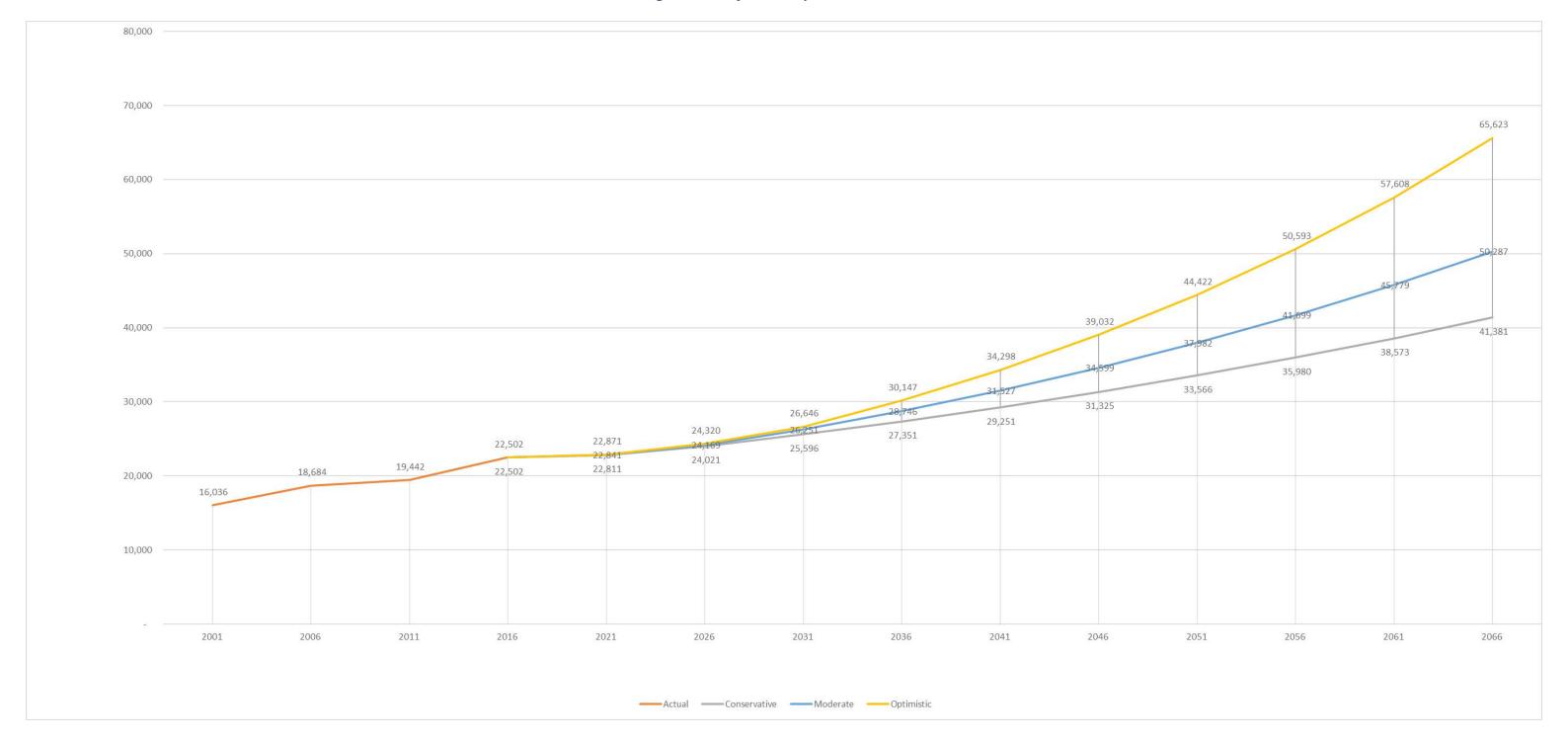
#### 4.2 Future Population and Employment Growth

The Project Team worked with numbers provided by Statistics Canada and employment growth projections as a basis for projecting population growth in the County of Grande Prairie over the next fifty (50) years. Three different scenarios were calculated based on conservative, moderate, and optimistic job and population growth.

"Figure 5: Projected Population Growth" illustrates the projected population change for the County of Grande Prairie over the next 50 years from 2016 to 2066. The projected population changes indicate a **total increase of 27,785** people over 50 years and an **average growth rate of 1.6% per year** for the moderate scenario. Accompanying this population growth is employment growth mirroring the increase ("Figure 6: Projected Employment Growth").



Figure 5: Projected Population Growth





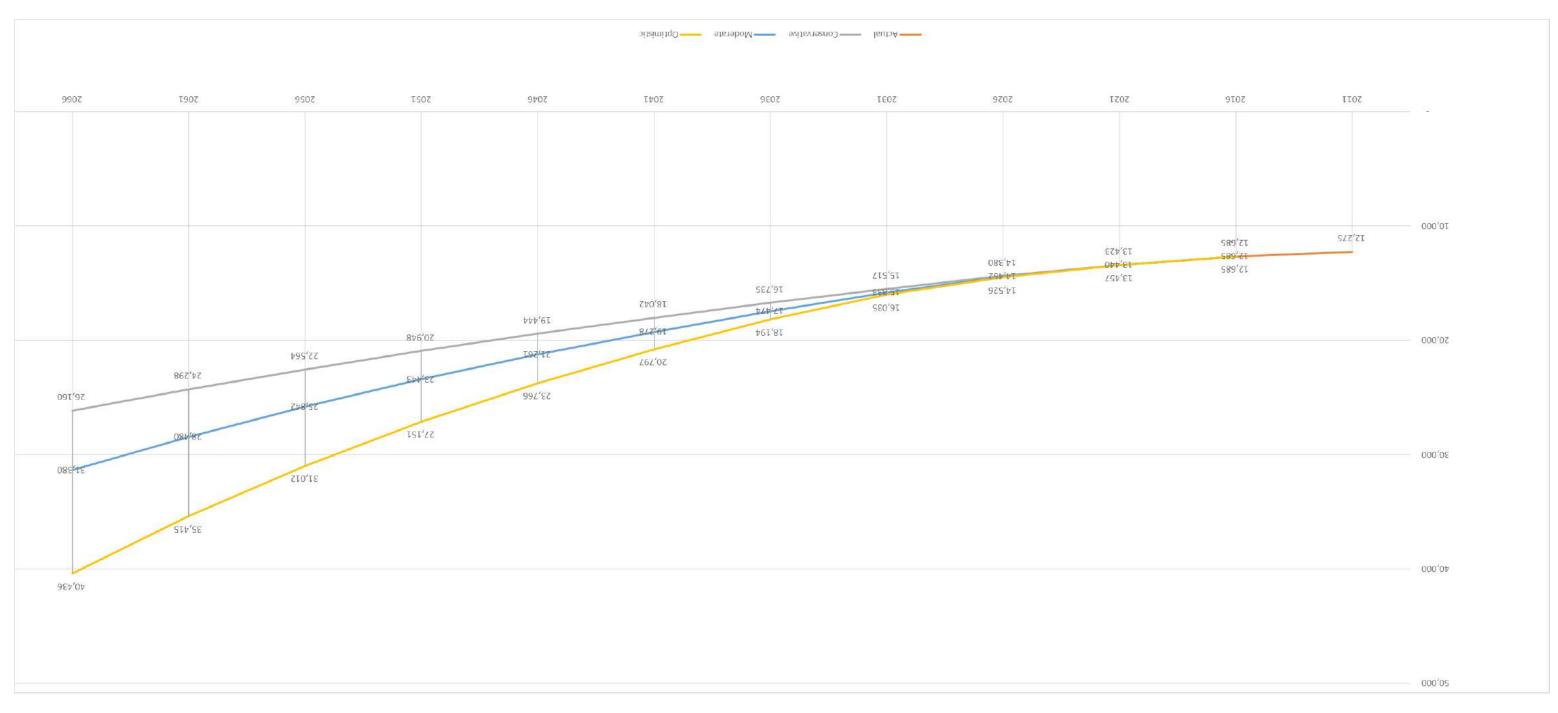


Figure 6: Projected Employment Growth



For the purposes of developing growth options, **the moderate population and employment projections were used**. Detailed numbers for the projected population and employment for the Strategy timeframe are shown below in *Table 1: Population and Employment Projections (Moderate)* in five-year intervals.

Table 1: Population and Employment Projections (Moderate)

Year	Population	Population Increase	Employment	Employment Increase
2016	22,502	- -	12,685	-
2021	22,841	339	13,440	755
2026	24,169	1,667	14,452	1,767
2031	26,251	3,749	15,833	3,148
2036	28,746	6,244	17,474	4,789
2041	31,527	9,025	19,278	6,593
2046	34,599	12,097	21,261	8,576
2051	37,982	15,480	23,443	10,758
2056	41,699	19,197	25,842	13,157
2061	45,779	23,277	28,480	15,795
2066	50,287	27,785	31,380	18,695







#### 4.3 Land Requirements

In order to calculate the land required to accommodate future growth within the County, a number of assumptions have been made about the form and density of future development as well as growth of incomes, household spending, and employment numbers. These assumptions are identified below:

#### **Residential Land Requirement Assumptions**

- According to Statistics Canada, in 2016 the County of Grande Prairie had 2.9 people per dwelling unit while Canada had an average of 2.4 people per dwelling unit. Based on historical data there has been an average decrease of 4% in the number of people per dwelling unit in Canada every Census period (5 years). This was used to project the expected number of people per household/dwelling unit in the County. Given that the County of Grande Prairie is a rural municipality, it has been assumed that it will have a larger average people per household than Canada as a whole and will level out at 2.4 people per dwelling unit.
- For each growth scenario, an assumption was made on what percentage of the County's residents would live in each residential typology based on where growth would be directed in that particular growth option and from recommendations by County Administration.
- A vacant land supply that stays steady at 21.9% of the total land required over the timeframe of the study.
- Average lot sizes and total percentage of dwellings in 2016 are taken from current zoning data supplied by the County of Grande Prairie and is assumed to be accurate. A best effort was made to calculate an average lot size given that there are dual zones on some parcels as well as margins of error.
- Dwelling units in the County are calculated from the projected population using the Moderate Projection divided by the expected persons per dwelling unit each year.
- Based information received from the County of Grande Prairie, the existing inventory of residentially zoned land is 18,514 hectares (45,749 acres).

#### **Industrial Land Requirement Assumptions**

- The share of employment for each industrial classification was determined using current Statistics Canada data to find percent of total employees in the County working in each industrial classification. It was assumed this percentage for each industrial classification will continue through the Strategy timeframe and the Project Team has applied that same percent to future employment numbers.
- For each industrial classification, an assumption has been made on percentage of that industry that will locate on industrial land based on what is currently in the County and from analyzing the *Land Use Bylaw #2680* to determine what uses are permitted and discretionary in industrial zones.
- Share of employment percentage uses actual numbers from the 2011 Census calculated by Statistics Canada, it is assumed these will stay the same over the 50 year timeframe.



- That there will be an average of 12 jobs per net hectare. This is on the lower end of jobs/hectare.
  This is based on the current and expected types of industrial development located in the County.
  These include uses that demand large tracts of land but less labour such as laydown yards,
  equipment storage, and light to medium industrial.
- Based information from the County of Grande Prairie, the existing inventory of industrially zoned land is 5,673 hectares (14,018.29 acres) with a 58% vacancy rate.

#### **Commercial Land Requirement Assumptions**

- Average income per capita was calculated using 2016 Statistics Canada data of a median household income of \$106,438 divided by an average household size of 3.1 people to get a per capita income of \$34,334,84.
- Average income growth is assumed to be 1% growth net inflation per year.
- Spending on retail purchases was calculated using Average Household Expenditure by Province (Alberta) in 2015 from Statistics Canada. It was determined that \$31,187 out of a total expenditure of \$110,024 was spent on retail purchases, a total of 40.7% of spending.
- Food and Beverage Spending per Capita was calculated using Statistics Canada 2015 data on Alberta average household spending on Food Purchased from Restaurants and then divided by the average number of people in a household in the County of Grande Prairie (2.9) for a total of \$1,054 per capita annually.
- That the market capture rate from the *Middle of Everywhere Retail Gap Analysis* was stated at 32.5% for the trade area, the remaining 67.5% is a leakage factor that assumes residents will go to the City of Grande Prairie, the City of Edmonton, and online shopping among others for their retail purchases.
- The average sales requirement of \$505 per square foot was taken from the Middle of Everywhere Retail Gap Analysis to determine warranted floor areas.
- Based information from the County of Grande Prairie, the existing inventory of commercially zoned land is 137 hectares (339 acres) with a vacancy rate of 85%.









#### 4.3.1 Method Used to Forecast Residential Land Requirement

The Moderate Population Projection, Statistics Canada data, and data from the County of Grande Prairie were used to calculate the land area required to house and accommodate the expected residents. Residential land was calculated for the three growth options: Nodal Growth, Balanced Growth, and Concentrated Growth. A detailed methodology can be found below:

#### **Step 1: Determine the number of required dwelling units:**

The first step to determining the residential land requirement was to calculate the number of dwelling units the County would have to accommodate. To calculate this, the population was divided into households.

The moderate population growth projection was used in calculating the residential land requirement. In 2016, the federal census identified an average household size of 2.9 in the County. It was also identified that the average household size in Canada has been decreasing by 4% each year. As such, it was assumed that the average household size in the County of Grande Prairie would decrease by 4% every 5 years until it plateaus at 2.4 people per household in 2041.

Table 2: Required Dwelling Unit Forecast

Year	Persons	Avg. People/Household	Dwelling Units	New Dwelling Units Required
2016	22,502	2.9	7,759	-
2021	22,841	2.8	8,204	445
2026	24,169	2.7	9,043	839
2031	26,251	2.6	10,232	1,188
2036	28,746	2.5	11,671	1,439
2041	31,527	2.4	13,333	1,662
2046	34,599	2.4	14,416	1,084
2051	37,982	2.4	15,826	1,409
2056	41,699	2.4	17,375	1,549
2061	45,779	2.4	19,075	1,700
2066	50,287	2.4	20,953	1,878
			TOTAL	13,194



#### **Step 2: Determine the Average Lot Size and Units per Lot**

To determine the lot size and units per lot, the existing housing stock in the County was analyzed. Using GIS software, the average lot size of each of the residential zoning was determined, as well as the percentage of the total residential land zoned for a given district. Based on industry standards, and current conditions in the County, an average number of units per lot was established. This value accounts for structures that occupy a single lot but provide a number of dwelling units. For example, a single high-density apartment is estimated to provide 120 dwelling units on a single lot.

For the residential typologies of Residential Condo, Manufactured Home, and Medium Residential, the County of Grande Prairie Land Use Bylaw establishes a maximum density of units per hectare allowed in the zone. To convert this value to the maximum density per lot, the average lot size was multiplied by the maximum units per hectare. This equation is provided below:

$$\frac{\textit{Units}}{\textit{Lot}} = \textit{Average Lot Size}\left(\frac{\textit{ha}}{\textit{lot}}\right) * \textit{Maximimum Denisty}\left(\frac{\textit{units}}{\textit{ha}}\right)$$

The findings of the existing residential breakdown are summarized below:

Table 3: Existing Residential Typology Within the County

Residential Typology	Average Lot Size (ha)	Percentage of Residential Land in the County	Units/Lot
Rural Estate	0.36	1.56%	1
Country Residential	1	74.71%	1
Rural Residential	0.17	1.13%	1
Residential Condo	0.49	0.36%	14.79
High Density Residential	0.05	0.03%	120
Manufactured Home	8.01	0.35%	160.14
Medium Residential	0.05	0.02%	2.5
Village Centre	0.25	0.00%	100
Vacant	-	21.85%	-



#### **Step 3: Determine the Residential Mix in the Future**

The next step of the residential land calculations involved determining the housing mix of the County in the future. Here, three different growth options were developed to evaluate what the residential stock could look like in the future given a certain development pattern. The three growth option housing typology breakdowns are described below:

- **1. Nodal Growth**: This model assumes the housing mix will comprise of 45% county residential, 8% medium residential, 5% high density housing, with other typologies providing the rest.
- **2. Balanced Growth:** This model assumes around 50% of the housing mix will be County Residential, 10% will be medium residential, and 5% high density with other typologies providing the rest.
- **3. Concentrated Growth**: This model has the highest assumption of densification for the projected time period. It is assumed that 40% of the housing mix will be county residential, 12% medium residential, and 8% high density residential with other typologies providing the rest.

**Note:** For all Growth Options it was assumed that the stock of vacant land will remain at 21.9%.

For each of the three growth options, the housing mix for a given five-year interval was calculated. The number of required dwelling units was multiplied by the percentage of dwelling units in each housing category and then divided by the number of dwelling units per lot to determine the total number of required lots. This was then multiplied by the average lot size, to determine the total area in hectares demanded.

$$Land\ Requirement = \frac{(\textit{Total\ Dwelling\ Units\ for\ X\ year})(\%\ of\ \textit{Dwelling\ Units\ per\ Residential\ Type})}{\textit{Number\ of\ units\ per\ lot}} * Average\ \textit{Lot\ Size\ for\ Residential\ Type}$$

The land requirement for each housing category was then summed to calculate the total residential land demanded for that year ("Figure 7: Total Residential Land Requirements").

The Balanced Growth Option selected as the preferred growth option, results in **a surplus of 4,780 hectares (11,811 acres) of residential land** given the current supply of zoned land over the next fifty years. The detailed breakdown of the demand, new land requirements, and surplus or deficit for five year intervals from 2016 to 2066 can be seen in "Table 4: Balanced Growth Option Residential Land Forecast".



Figure 7: Forecast of Future Residential Land Requirements

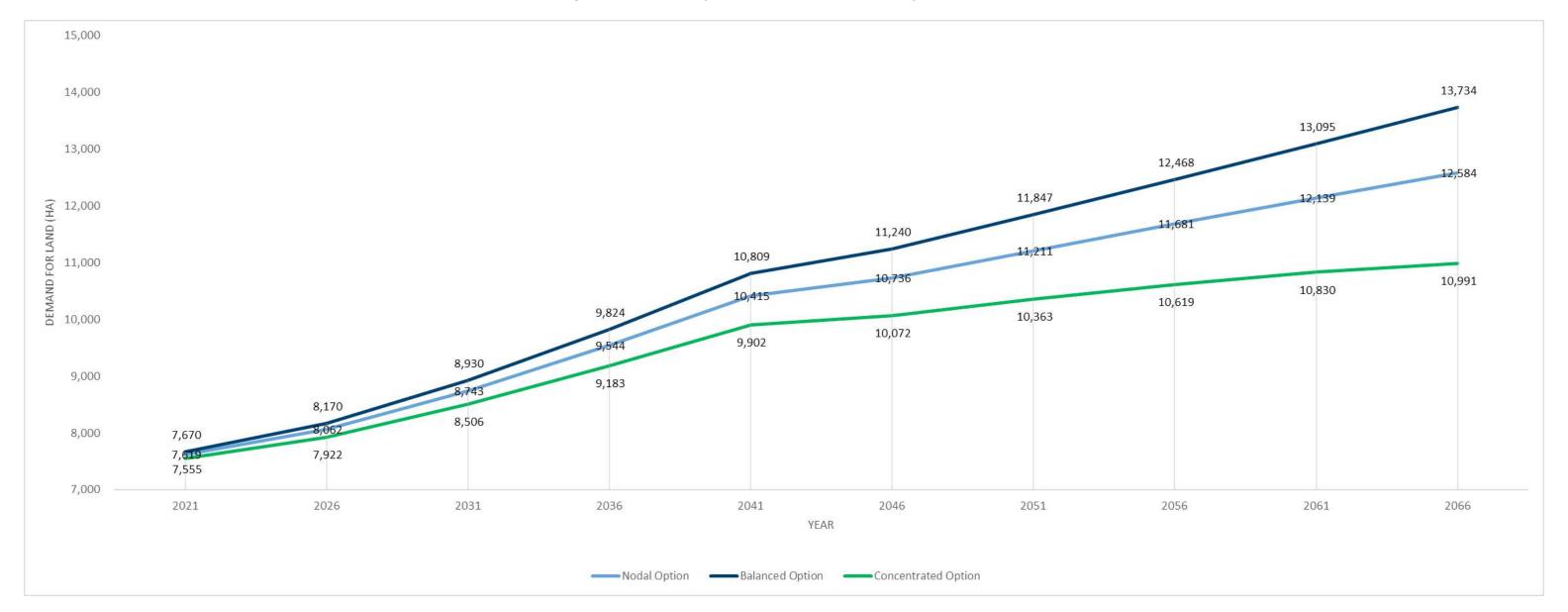
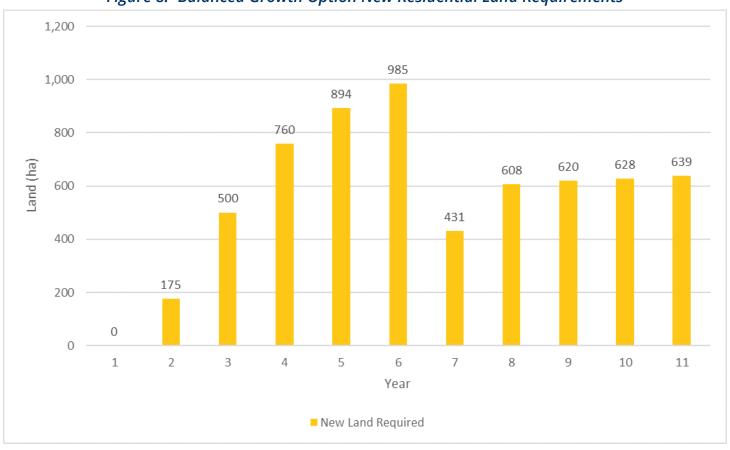




Table 4: Balanced Growth Option Residential Land Forecast

Year	Supply (ha)	Demand (ha)	New Land Required (ha)	Surplus/Deficit (ha)
2016	18,514	7,495	0	11,019
2021	18,514	7,670	175	10,844
2026	18,514	8,170	500	10,344
2031	18,514	8,930	760	9,584
2036	18,514	9,824	894	8,690
2041	18,514	10,809	985	7,705
2046	18,514	11,240	431	7,274
2051	18,514	11,847	608	6,667
2056	18,514	12,468	620	6,046
2061	18,514	13,095	628	5,419
2066	18,514	13,734	639	4,780

Figure 8: Balanced Growth Option New Residential Land Requirements





#### 4.3.2 Method Used to Forecast Industrial Land Requirement

The employment projection calculated by the Project Team was used as the basis for calculating industrial land requirement. The employment projection and Statistics Canada data was used to determine the number of people expected to be working in major industrial sectors in the County. Based on current share of employment and what percentage of each industry locates on industrial land a total number of jobs and land required to support that number of jobs was calculated. A detailed methodology can be found below.

#### Step 1: Determine the Number of Jobs in Each Industrial Sector

Using the Moderate Employment Projection to calculate future industrial land demand first required isolating the number of employees who would be employed on land zoned for industrial use. It was assumed that the existing mix of industrial classifications would remain consistent for the Strategy timeframe.

The percentages for each of the industrial classifications was then applied to the employment projection, resulting in a forecast of how many jobs will be created in a given sector for each five-year interval in the forecast time period.

#### Step 2: Determine the Number of Jobs Locating on Industrial Land and Net Land Required

Using these values, estimates of employment on industrially zoned land was calculated. Going through the *Land Use Bylaw #2680* using the permitted and discretionary uses, approximately 44% of total employment will locate on industrial land. Using an average employment of 12 jobs per net hectare, the employment locating on industrial land value was converted into net hectares demanded. Because industrial land is not always built to capacity immediately, a long-term vacancy of 15% was assumed. This accounts for sites that remained undeveloped due to under-utilization and inefficiency. Long term vacancy is evidenced by in existing parks around Alberta.

#### **Step 3: Forecast Gross Hectares of Industrial Land Required**

Finally, net hectares demanded was converted into gross hectares, assuming a ratio of 0.65 net hectares per 1 gross hectare. This ratio accounts for land set aside for internal roadways, stormwater management, setbacks, municipal reserve requirements, and open space.

The Balanced Growth Option selected as the preferred growth option, results in **a surplus of 1,243 hectares (3.071 acres) of industrial land** given the current supply of zoned land and vacancy rates. The detailed breakdown of the demand, new land requirements, and surplus or deficit for five year intervals from 2016 to 2066 can be seen in "Table 6: Balanced Growth Option Industrial Land Forecast".



Table 5: Total Industrial Land Required

Year	Total Jobs Locating on Industrial Land	Net Hectares Required	Adjusted For Long Term Vacancy of 15% (ha)	Converted from Net to Gross Hectares (0.65:1)	Existing Industrial Land (ha)	Total Land Required (ha)
2016	5,613	468	538	827	3,290	-2,463
2021	5,947	496	570	877	3,290	-2,414
2026	6,395	533	613	943	3,290	-2,348
2031	7,006	584	671	1,033	3,290	-2,257
2036	7,731	644	741	1,140	3,290	-2,150
2041	8,530	711	817	1,258	3,290	-2,033
2046	9,407	784	902	1,387	3,290	-1,903
2051	10,372	864	994	1,529	3,290	-1,761
2056	11,434	953	1,096	1,686	3,290	-1,605
2061	12,601	1,050	1,208	1,858	3,290	-1,432
2066	13,884	1,157	1,331	2,047	3,290	-1,243

Figure 9: Balanced Growth Option Gross Industrial Land Demand

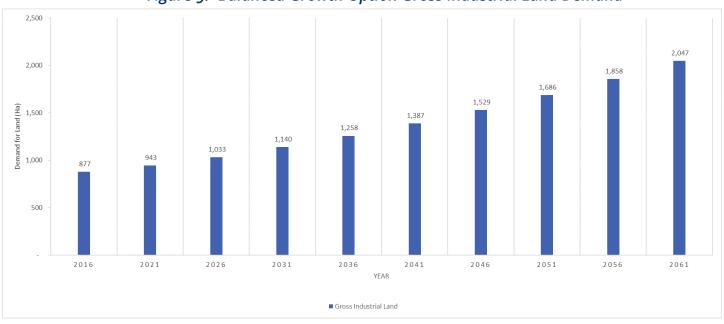
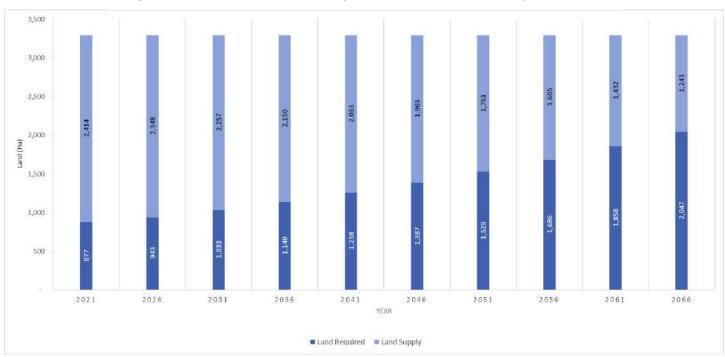




Table 6: Balanced Growth Option Industrial Land Forecast

Year	Supply (ha)	Demand (ha)	New Land Required (ha)	Surplus/Deficit (ha)
2016	3,290	827	0	
2021	3,290	877	49	2,414
2026	3,290	943	66	2,348
2031	3,290	1,033	90	2,257
2036	3,290	1,140	107	2,150
2041	3,290	1,258	118	2,033
2046	3,290	1,387	129	1,903
2051	3,290	1,529	142	1,761
2056	3,290	1,686	156	1,605
2061	3,290	1,858	172	1,432
2066	3,290	2,047	189	1,243

Figure 10: Balanced Growth Option Industrial Land Requirements





#### 4.3.3 Method Used to Forecast Commercial Land Requirement

The Moderate Population Projection calculated by the Project Team was used as the basis for determining the commercial land requirement along with income and consumer spending data sourced from Statistics Canada. Total expenditure potential for the population was calculated, including spending on food and beverages. Once a total expenditure potential was found, a metric of a \$505 sales requirement per square foot was used to calculate required floor area and then converted into net hectares. This was then grossed up to account for parking and transportation A detailed methodology can be found below.

#### **Step 1: Determine Total Income Potential**

The moderate population projection was multiplied by the 2016 average per capita income (median household income divided by average persons per household of 2.9) to get the total income potential for the County.

#### **Step 2: Determine Spending on Retail Purchases**

Total spending on retail purchases was determined by calculating percent of household expenditure on retail purchases from Statistics Canada data on average household expenditure by province data for 2015. In Alberta approximately 40.7% of household expenditure is spent on retail purchases. The total income potential was divided by this figure to get the total retail potential for the County of Grande Prairie.

#### **Step 3: Determine Spending on Food and Beverages at Restaurants**

Food and beverage spending at restaurants is not included in the household expenditure on retail purchase numbers. It is important to include as restaurants, bars, and coffee shops etc. locate on commercial land. Spending on food and beverage was calculated using Statistics Canada data for Average Household Food Expenditure by Province for 2015. The household expenditure of \$3,058 on food and beverages in the County was divided by 2.9 people per household to get a per capita spending of \$1,054 on food and beverages from restaurants. This was then multiplied by the population to get a total spending on food and beverages from restaurants for the County.

#### **Step 4: Determine Total Expenditure Potential**

Total retail potential and spending on food and beverages in restaurants was added together to get a total expenditure potential for the County.

#### **Step 5: Determine Net Warranted Floor Area**

Total Expenditure Potential was divided by an average sales requirement of \$505 per square foot to determine the Net Warranted Floor Area. This was then grossed up to where the Net Warranted Floor Area was at a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 0.3 to account for transportation infrastructure (roadways, parking), municipal reserve requirements, and open space needed to support the commercial activities.



Table 7: Balanced Growth Option Commercial Land Calculation

Year	Net Warranted Floor Area (sq ft)	Potential Market Capture Rate (32.5%)	Warrantod	Net to Gross Hectares 0.3 FAR	Total Demand for Commercial Land (ha)	Existing Commercial Land (ha)	Total Land Required (ha)	New Land Required (ha)
2016	670,403	217,881	2.2	6.7	6.7	116	-110	0.0
2021	712,784	231,655	2.3	7.2	7.2	116	-109	0.4
2026	790,138	256,795	2.6	8.0	8.0	116	-108	0.8
2031	899,182	292,234	3.0	9.0	9.0	116	-107	1.1
2036	1,031,779	335,328	3.5	10.4	10.4	116	-106	1.3
2041	1,185,958	385,436	4.0	11.9	11.9	116	-105	1.6
2046	1,364,255	443,383	4.7	13.7	13.7	116	-103	1.8
2051	1,569,973	510,241	5.4	15.8	15.8	116	-101	2.1
2056	1,807,106	587,309	6.3	18.2	18.2	116	-98	2.4
2061	2,080,251	676,082	7.3	20.9	20.9	116	-96	2.7
2066	2,396,288	778,794	8.5	24.1	24.1	116	-92	3.2

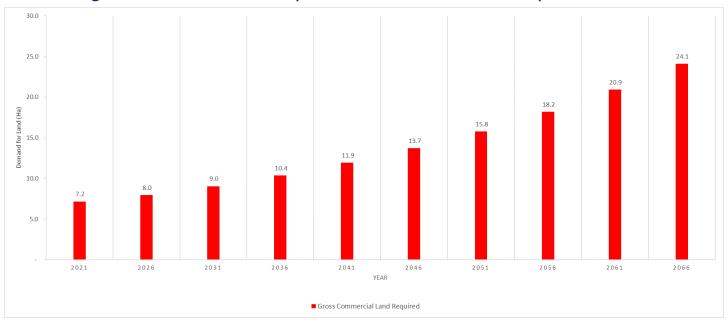
The Balanced Growth Option selected as the preferred growth option, results in **a surplus of 92 hectares (227 acres) of commercial land** given the current supply of zoned land and vacancy rates. The detailed breakdown of the demand, new land requirements, and surplus or deficit for five year intervals from 2016 to 2066 can be seen in "Table 8: Balanced Growth Option Commercial Land Forecast".



Table 8: Balanced Growth Option Commercial Land Forecast

Year	Supply (ha)	Demand (ha)	New Land Required (ha)	Surplus/Deficit (ha)
2016	116	6.7	0.0	
2021	116	7.2	0.4	109
2026	116	8.0	0.8	108
2031	116	9.0	1.1	107
2036	116	10.4	1.3	106
2041	116	11.9	1.6	105
2046	116	13.7	1.8	103
2051	116	15.8	2.1	101
2056	116	18.2	2.4	98
2061	116	20.9	2.7	96
2066	116	24.1	3.2	92

Figure 11: Balanced Growth Option Gross Commercial Land Requirements





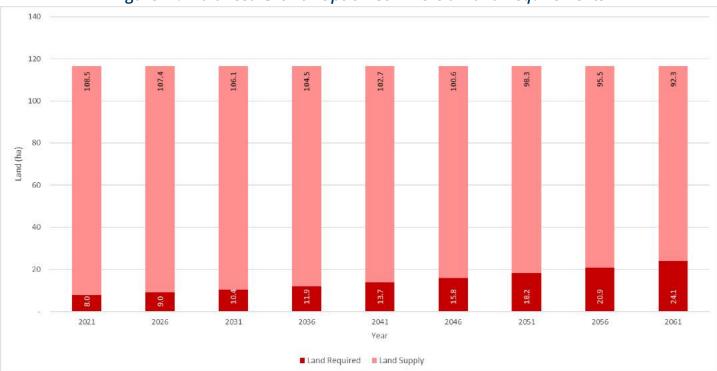


Figure 12: Balanced Growth Option Commercial Land Requirements





#### **4.3.4 Forecast of Land Requirements**

Based on the calculations completed by the Project Team, the following is a summary of the land requirements to accommodate future growth in the County of Grande Prairie from 2016-2066. "Table 9: Forecast of Land Requirements" shows the hectares of new land required each year and whether there will be a surplus or deficit for each year based on the current supply of zoned land within the County.

Residential growth will be accommodated by the current supply of residentially zoned land from 2061 to 2066. In total, the County of Grande Prairie will have a surplus of 4,780 hectares (11,811 acres) of land for residential development.

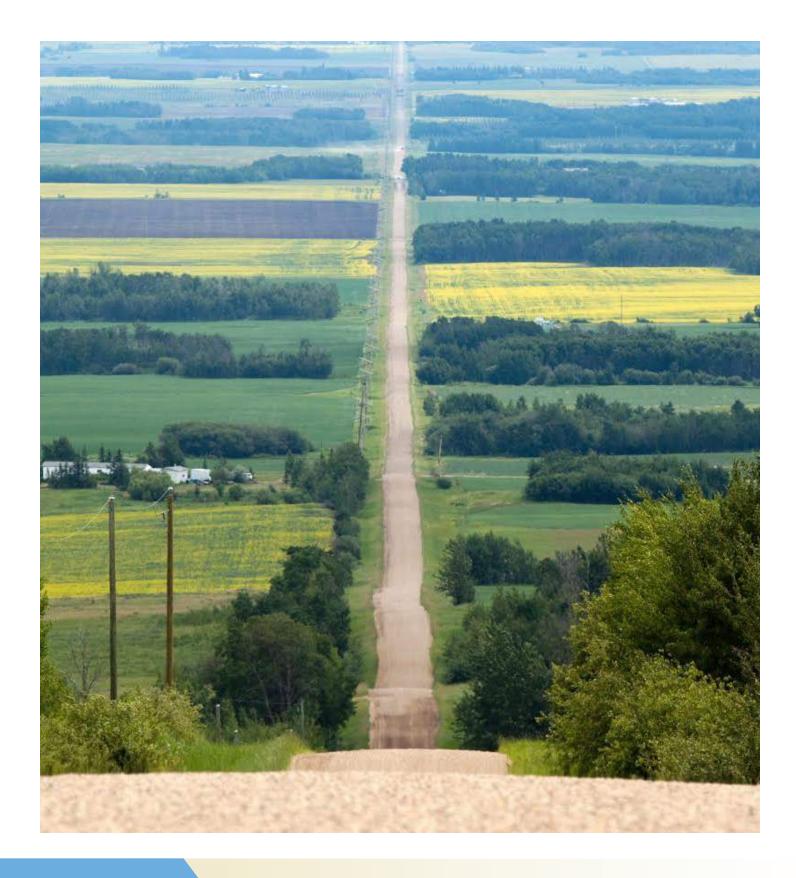
Commercial growth will be accommodated by the current supply of commercially zoned land. Even with the expected commercial growth, the County will have a surplus of 92 hectares (227 acres) of land zoned for commercial uses in the year 2066.

Industrial growth will be accommodated by the current supply of industrially zoned land. With the expected industrial growth, it is estimated the County will have a surplus of 1,243 hectares (3,071 acres) of land zoned for industrial uses in the year 2066.

Table 9: Forecast of Land Requirements

	Land Forecast								
	Res	idential	Con	nmercial	Inc	Industrial			
Year	New Land (ha)	Surplus/Deficit (ha)	New Land (ha)	Surplus/Deficit (ha)	New Land (ha)	Surplus/Deficit (ha)			
2016	0	11,019	0	<u>-</u>	0	-			
2021	175	10,844	0	109	49	2,414			
2026	500	10,344	1	108	66	2,348			
2031	760	9,584	1	107	90	2,257			
2036	894	8,690	1	106	107	2,150			
2041	985	7,705	2	105	118	2,033			
2046	431	7,274	2	103	129	1,903			
2051	608	6,667	2	101	142	1,761			
2056	620	6,046	2	98	156	1,605			
2061	628	5,419	3	96	172	1,432			
2066	639	4,780	3	92	189	1,243			







#### **5.0 GROWTH MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

#### 5.1 What is Growth Management

Growth Management is the process of accommodating growth in the County of Grande Prairie while directing the location and pattern of development in a manner that contributes to, and works towards making the County of Grande Prairie as a whole and each individual community's future vision a reality. It also seeks to ensure that the quality of life in the County of Grande Prairie is maintained as the population and development activity of the region increases.

Lack of coordinated growth management can lead to land use conflicts and inefficient and costly servicing patterns which may compromise the County's ability to allocate funds optimally for capital improvements and upgrades. Balanced growth is one of the core underlying concepts for the land use patterns put forward in this strategy. It relates to the creation of a functional mix of residential and non-residential land uses. This promotes sustainable development in the County that provides for a greater range of housing choices and economic development opportunities throughout the County while being respectful and protecting the environment and preserving valuable blocks of high quality agricultural land.

#### 5.2 Growth Options

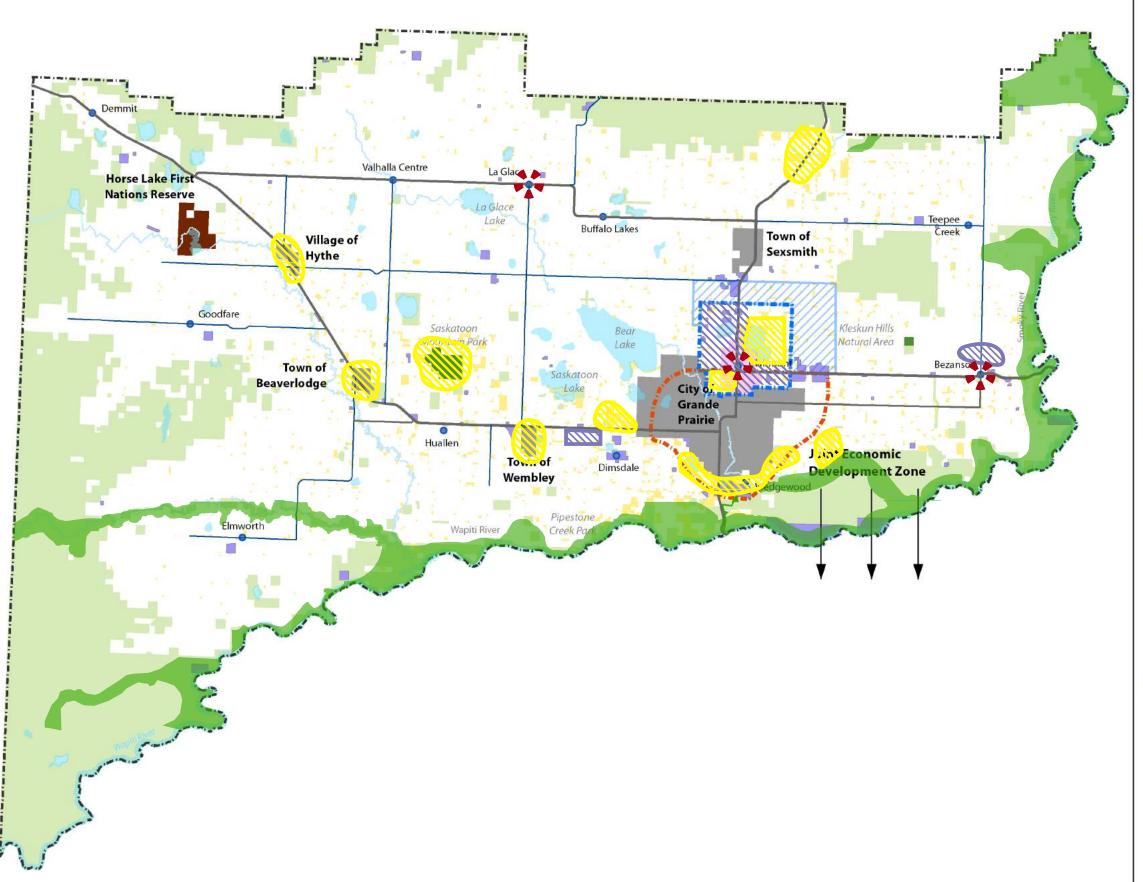
The Project Team developed three (3) different Growth Options each with a unique set of features and locations in which to direct growth. Each option features varying hamlets, towns, and country residential areas to which new residents would be located in addition to differing requirements for utility infrastructure, transportation infrastructure, and access to social infrastructure. Based on the types and location of development the three options also offered varying degrees of housing choices, environmental protection, preservation of agricultural land, business development support, community and political acceptance, and ease of implementation.

A brief description of each growth option and an accompanying map depicting growth areas can be seen in the following sections.

#### **5.2.1 Nodal Growth Option**

As seen on "Map 4: Nodal Growth Option" the Nodal Growth Option has the following features:

- Residential growth areas around the Towns of Beaverlodge and Wembley and around the Village of Hythe.
- Country residential growth and development to the north of Sexsmith, south and east of the City of Grande Prairie, north of Dimsdale, and around Saskatoon Mountain Park.
- Industrial / commercial development along the highway by Dimsdale, in and around Clairmont, and to the north of the hamlet of Bezanson.



# Growth & Economic Development Strategy



County of Grande Prairie No.1, Alberta

### Legend **Growth Hamlets** Urban Municipality Horse Lake First Nations Reserve Clairmont Boundary Clairmont Growth Area Agriculture/Rural Crown Land Country Residential Industrial / Commercial Clairmont Urban Area Provincial Park Natural Areas County of Grande Prairie **Growth Areas** Industrial / Commercial Growth Areas Residential Growth Areas **Transportation** Primary Highway Secondary Highway Future Trail Network Future Ring Road Railway (CN Rail)

### Map 4: Nodal Growth Option







#### **5.2.2 Balanced Growth Concept**

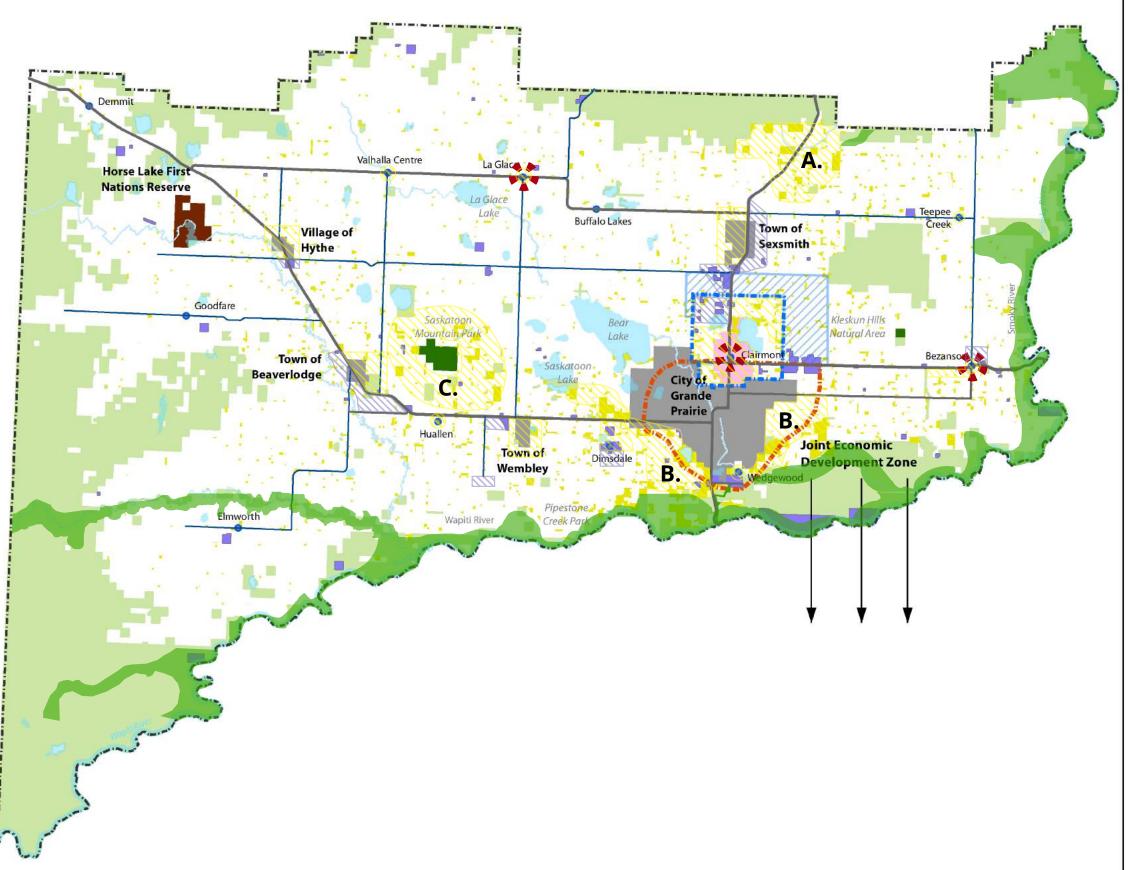
As seen on "Map 5: Balanced Growth Option" the Balanced Growth Option has the following features:

- Supporting continuous growth and development of the urban municipalities of Sexsmith, Beaverlodge, Hythe, and Wembley. Intermunicipal Development Plans are being prepared to manage growth and development in the urban fringe areas.
- Directing future residential and industrial development and growth to the growth hamlets of Clairmont, La Glace, and Bezanson.
- Revitalizing and maintaining service in the stable hamlets of Huallen, Dimsdale, Wedgewood, Teepee Creek, and Valhalla Centre.
- Clustering country residential development to maintain efficient and cost effective provision of municipal services including water, wastewater, and roadways.
- Directs, whenever possible, industrial and commercial development away from high productivity farmland to promote agriculture in the County.
- Ensures that existing community services and amenities such as schools, hospitals, community halls, and arenas remain viable and accessible to the greatest number of residents. It provides opportunities to create new services in these communities as they are needed.
- Creates complete communities that are healthy, safe, and inclusive that provide a high quality of life for residents by preserving the existing community fabric while providing housing choices from country residential or country estate, to single family, to apartment style housing along with recreational and community amenities.
- Protects environmentally sensitive areas around the Wapiti River Corridor, the Smoky River, Saskatoon Mountain Park and the many streams, creeks, ponds, and lakes throughout the County. Wildlife habitat and movement corridors are protected.
- Supports the County's guiding principles of growing and diversifying the economy and providing ample "shovel ready" land for commercial and industrial development by creating a variety of locations and servicing levels for industrial and commercial development that cater to a range of industry sectors and commercial typologies.

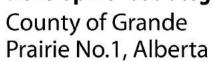








## Growth & Economic Development Strategy





#### Legend



Residential Growth Areas

### Transportation

Primary Highway

Secondary Highway

Future Trail Network

Future Ring Road

Railway (CN Rail)

### **Map 5: Balanced Growth Option**





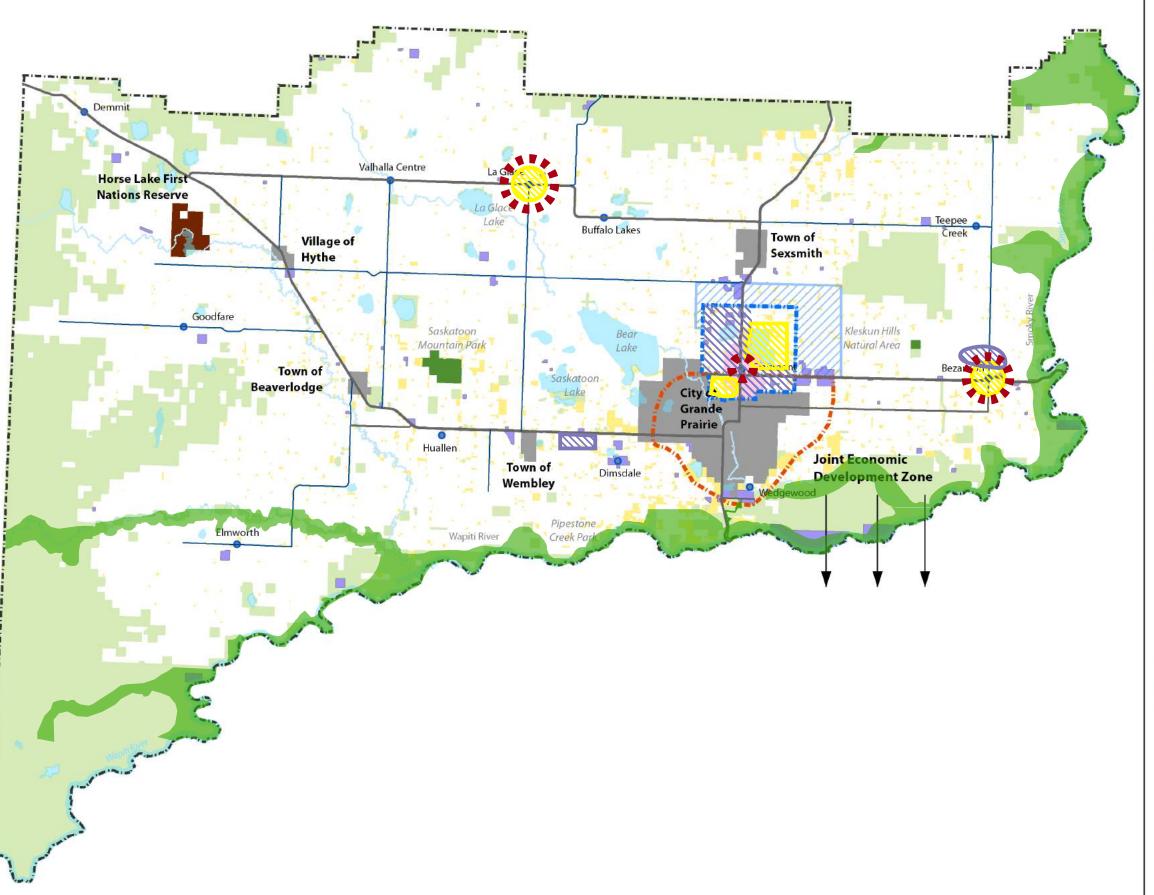


#### **5.2.3 Concentrated Growth Option**

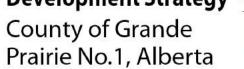
As seen on "Map 6: Concentrated Growth Option", the Concentrated Growth Option has the following features:

- Residential growth areas concentrated in Clairmont, the hamlet of La Glace, and the hamlet of Bezanson.
- Country residential growth and development has been restricted to existing country residential developments with no new areas identified for growth.
- Industrial / Commercial Development growth areas northwest of Dimsdale, in and around Clairmont, and to the north of Bezanson.





## Growth & Economic Development Strategy





#### Legend



Urban Municipality

Horse Lake First Nations Reserve

Clairmont Boundary

Clairmont Growth Area

Agriculture/Rural

Crown Land

Country Residential

Industrial / Commercial

Clairmont Urban Area

Provincial Park

Natural Areas

County of Grande Prairie

**Growth Areas** 

Industrial /

Industrial / Commercial Growth Areas

HHHH

Residential Growth Areas

#### Transportation

Primary Highway

Secondary Highway

Future Trail Network

Future Ring Road

Railway (CN Rail)

## Map 6: Concentrated Growth Option







#### **5.3 Evaluation Criteria for Assessing Growth Options**

This section of the report outlines Evaluation Criteria used to assess the three (3) Growth Options developed for the County of Grande Prairie that will guide and direct growth over the next 50 years. The evaluation criteria drew on the Vision and Guiding Principles developed during the planning process, feedback received from stakeholder and community consultation activities, and incorporated accepted best planning practices for building sustainable and resilient communities. A scoring rubric was developed to help determine which of the three (3) Growth Options best aligned with the Vision and Guiding Principles and overall best met the needs of the County.

#### 5.3.1 Evaluation Criteria

#### 1. Transportation Infrastructure Cost

#### **Aligns with Guiding Principle:**

"To promote land use patterns that provide for the economic and responsible use of infrastructure and avoid land use conflicts."

The upgrading and maintenance of provincial highways is the responsibility of Alberta Transportation. Local and collector roadways are constructed during land development and are the responsibility of the developer. Maintenance and upgrading of these roadways is typically the responsibility of the County. Constructing, upgrading, and maintaining roads from the highway to a community or subdivision is a cost borne by the County.

A metric that can be used to compare options is cost per dwelling unit. This includes the cost of capital infrastructure required to develop plus ongoing maintenance costs. Generally speaking, the denser the development the lower the cost per dwelling of roadway infrastructure and maintenance. A higher expected cost resulted in a lower score while Growth Options that had a lower cost per dwelling unit scored higher.

#### 2. Cost of Providing Utility Infrastructure.

#### **Aligns with Guiding Principle:**

"To promote land use patterns that provide for the economic and responsible use of infrastructure and avoid land use conflicts."

As is the case with transportation infrastructure, compact, higher density development is more economical and efficient to service when extending and maintaining utility infrastructure. Also taken into consideration is the location of existing and planned utility lines within the County. Growth areas close to these existing or planned utility lines will have a lower cost compared to running new lines not currently planned for and scored higher than those that require new utility infrastructure to be built.

#### This criterion includes:

- Determining level of service requirements. i.e. fire protection, piped system, truck haul, etc.
- Assessing availability and capacity of water supply and treatment, and waste-water treatment facilities to accommodate growth.
- Proximity to existing services.
- Relative cost of upgrades to existing and planned utility infrastructure and providing of new utility infrastructure.

#### 3. Environmental Protection

#### **Aligns with Guiding Principle:**

"The County will continue to protect its natural environment and pursue environmentally sustainable priorities."

There are two perspectives in applying this criterion when evaluating the three (3) Growth Options:

- Environmental Protection. Having development avoid environmentally significant natural areas such as riparian areas around lakes, rivers and other water bodies, as well as protecting wildlife habitat and corridors.
- Hazard Avoidance. The second consideration is to avoid development near hazards including steep slopes, 'flood plains'; sour gas facilities and areas that may be prone to wildfires. Scientists are attributing the frequency and intensity of flooding and wildfires to Climate Change.

As part of this evaluation, environmentally significant areas identified in the Baseline Analysis were overlaid on the three (3) Growth Options to determine where conflicts arose between the two. Growth Options that had fewer conflicts scored higher while those with more conflicts scored lower.

#### 4. Preservation of Agricultural Lands

#### **Aligns with Guiding Principle:**

"Ensure agriculture remains an important economic activity in the County and maintaining the Right to Farm and avoiding premature fragmentation of farm land."

During the stakeholder and community consultation process concern was raised about the loss of productive agricultural land to residential, industrial, and commercial development in the County. Each Growth Options was analyzed to determine which options best reduce the loss of high capability agricultural land (Class 2 and 3 soils), protect from fragmentation for other land uses, and reduce conflicts with existing and planned land uses.



#### 5. Access to Community Services

#### **Aligns with Guiding Principle:**

"Through the provision of social infrastructure (i.e. health, education, recreation and cultural facilities and programming), the County will be a healthy, safe, and inclusive community that provides high quality of life for people of all ages."

The Baseline Analysis Report identified social infrastructure located throughout County including recreational facilities, schools, churches, community halls, seniors housing, and services that meet day-to-day needs and contribute to quality of life for County residents. Community services also include emergency response (EMS, police, fire) and healthcare facilities such as hospitals and clinics. Growth Options that placed new growth in close proximity to existing social infrastructure scored higher as meant fewer costs, travel distance, and infrastructure spending to ensure County residents had access to these services and amenities.

#### 6. Promote Contiguous Development

#### **Aligns with Guiding Principle:**

"To promote land use patterns that provide for the economic and responsible use of infrastructure and avoid land use conflicts."

As previously discussed, compact higher density development usually results in lower capital and operating costs. It is preferable that future development be contiguous with existing development to take advantage of logical extension of transportation and utility infrastructure, reduce land use conflicts, and reduce the fragmentation of agricultural land. Of particular importance is that country residential development should cluster and aim to be contiguous with existing country residential subdivisions to maximize infrastructure and protect agricultural land.

#### 7. Building Complete Communities

#### **Aligns with Guiding Principle:**

"Through the provision of social infrastructure (i.e. health, education, recreation and cultural facilities and programming), the County will be a healthy, safe, and inclusive community that provides high quality of life for people of all ages."

Complete communities are ones that provide places to live, work, play, and allow transportation options that can help reduce private automobile trips. Clairmont Heights is envisioned as a complete community. This can be achieved by encouraging residential, commercial and industrial development to locate in existing growth hamlets and urban areas such as the towns and villages in the County. The three (3) Growth Options were evaluated on which best achieves the vision of creating complete communities.



#### 8. Housing Choice

#### **Aligns with Guiding Principle:**

"Through the provision of social infrastructure (i.e. health, education, recreation and cultural facilities and programming), the County will be a healthy, safe, and inclusive community that provides high quality of life for people of all ages."

A greater range of housing options criteria looks at the ability of each Growth Option to accommodate different housing typologies such as country residential, single family, walk up apartments, and midrise condominiums as well as economic diversity through providing affordable housing and seniors housing that meets the needs of everyone in the community. Housing options will provide a higher quality of life and attract a wider range of people to reside in the County.

#### 9. Minimize Land Use Conflicts

#### **Aligns with Guiding Principle:**

"Through the provision of social infrastructure (i.e. health, education, recreation and cultural facilities and programming), the County will be a healthy, safe, and inclusive community that provides high quality of life for people of all ages."

Some of the most prevalent land use conflicts are between residential, industrial, and agricultural uses where separation distances and buffers are important to reduce noise, dust, and harmful substances. This is particularly true of heavy industrial uses where safety and nuisance effects need to be considered, such as explosions, toxic gas, noise, and vibrations. Growth options were evaluated to determine which best avoid land use conflicts by separating different land use types. Those that separated land uses or could include distance buffers scored higher than those that didn't.

#### 10. Support Quality of Life Options

#### **Aligns with Guiding Principle:**

"Through the provision of social infrastructure (i.e. health, education, recreation and cultural facilities and programming), the County will be a healthy, safe, and inclusive community that provides high quality of life for people of all ages."

One of the important issues identified during the community and stakeholder consultations was the importance of maintaining the viability of smaller hamlets and town and particularly the schools in these communities. Growth Options were evaluated and scored based on whether or not they supported population maintenance or growth that would allow these communities to survive and grow. A greater number of communities resulted in a higher score while fewer communities supported resulted in a lower score.



#### 11. Support Business Development

#### **Aligns with Guiding Principle:**

"Grow and diversify the County's economy through innovation, use of technology, and entrepreneurship."

One of the prerequisites for facilitating economic development is to have a supply of well-located "shovel ready" land available for commercial and industrial development at a competitive price. Growth Options with more land that could be easily zoned and serviced score higher.

#### 12. Diversity of Land for Commercial and Industrial Expansion

#### **Aligns with Guiding Principle:**

"Grow and diversify the County's economy through innovation, use of technology, and entrepreneurship."

Having a diversity in the location, size, zoning, and servicing levels of land available for commercial and industrial creates a favorable business environment for a wide range of companies and industries that may need special characteristics for their operations. Growth Options that had a greater diversity in land scored higher while those with fewer locations and servicing levels scored lower.

#### 13. Community and Political Acceptance

#### **Aligns with Guiding Principle:**

"County Council and staff will endeavor to facilitate responsible, transparent and well-informed decision making based upon on-going public engagement to better understand the needs of County residents and ratepayers."

Where new growth is located, the form and typologies that are included, and what new amenities and services are provided all influence the public perception and political acceptance of the Growth Options. Residents that feel left out or projects that are politically sensitive will decrease the buy in from these groups. Growth Options that were seen to have a lower acceptance by residents scored lower while those that would have a higher acceptance rate were scored higher.

#### 14. Ease of Implementation

This criterion looks at how easy implementation of the growth areas will be. Factors that influence this include where residential, commercial, agricultural, and industrial uses already exist or have been prezoned and where infrastructure is available to adequately service various uses. Growth Options that locate growth near existing transportation and utility infrastructure, community services, and promote contiguous development score higher. Growth Options that require additional roadways, utility servicing lines, or community amenities to be built or significantly upgraded scored lower.



#### **5.3.2 Scoring of Evaluation Criteria**

The Project Team recommended a three (3) point scale in scoring the three (3) Growth Options:

- 1 Good
- 2 Better
- 3 Best

In evaluating the Growth Options, each criterion was allowed to have a good, better, and best (a one, two, and three) given to one of the Growth Options, no duplication was permitted. This ranked the options against one another to help determine which best met the criterion description and better distinguished one from another. A total score was tallied up and the Growth Option with the highest overall score became the Preferred Growth Option

After scoring, the Balanced Growth Option had the highest overall score and was determined to be the preferred Growth Option for the County of Grande Prairie.





# 6.0 BALANCED GROWTH OPTION

Moving forward, the Balanced Growth Option will guide the location of residential, commercial, and industrial growth in the County of Grande Prairie and the required physical and social infrastructure needed to support the population in each growth area.

Based on the expected increase of 27,785 people over the 50 year timeframe to a total population of 50,287, "Table 10: Population in New Growth Areas" outlines the approximate population that will be directed to each of the growth areas. Based on these numbers, the following sections address the environmental considerations and physical infrastructure gaps for the projected growth in each area.

Table 10: Population in New Growth Areas

		Population Increase	New Dwelling Units (2.4 persons/DU)	
County Residential		15,452	6,438	56%
	Area A: North of Sexsmith	2,835	1,181	10%
	Area B: City of Grande Prairie Fringe	8,506	3,544	31%
	Area C: Saskatoon Mountain	2,835	1,181	10%
Farms	All Farms	1,276	532	5%
Urban Style Residential		12,333	5,139	44%
	Clairmont	8,506	3,544	31%
III l. I E da A	Bezanson	454	189	2%
Hamlet Fringe Areas	La Glace	284	118	1%
	All other hamlets	113	47	0.4%
	Hythe	142	59	1%
Town Fringe Areas	Sexsmith	1,276	532	5%
	Beaverlodge	1,276	532	5%
	Wembley	284	118	1%
	TOTAL	27,785	23,154	100%

# **6.1 Environmental Implementation Strategies**

The key environmental considerations for the Balanced Growth Option in the County of Grande Prairie include

- 1. Trumpeter swans and Important Bird Area (IBA)
- 2. Wildlife and Biodiversity Zones;
- 3. Surface water features (lakes, rivers, creeks, tributaries, and wetlands);
- 4. Agricultural lands and high productivity soils (Class 2 and 3).



Implementation strategies include provincial and federal policy, municipal bylaws, best management practices and recommendations to manage for the conservation and preservation of important natural features. "Map 7: Environmental Conflicts" and "Map 8: Agricultural Land Conflicts" identify the Environmental and Agriculture Conflicts, and "Table 11: Summary of Environmental Considerations" below summarizes the natural features for each growth area.

Table 11: Summary of Environmental Considerations

Trumpeter Swan habitat – Ferguson a     Clairmont Lake within designated Imp     Bird Area      Residential and     Several surface water features (lakes,	
Residential and • Several surface water features (lakes.	
Clairmont Industrial/Commercial • Several surface water features (lakes, rivers, creeks, tributaries)	wetlands,
Kleskun Hills Natural area	
• > 40% Class 2 Soil	
Growth Hamlet  - Residential and  - Residential and  - Residential and  - Several surface water features (mostly wetlands, creeks, tributaries)	У
Industrial/Commercial > 40% Class 2 and 3 Soils	
Within designated Important Bird Are	a
La Glace Growth Hamlet – • Several surface water features (lakes, rivers, creeks, tributaries)	wetlands,
• > 40% Class 2 Soils	
<ul> <li>Several surface water features (lakes wetlands, rivers, creeks, tributaries)</li> </ul>	,
• Key Wildlife and Biodiversity Zone to a calong Kleskun Creek and the Smoky	
• > 40% Class 2 Soils	
Primarily agriculture land	
Within designated Important Bird Are	a
Valhalla Centre  • Several surface water features (lakes, rivers, creeks, tributaries) including Bo	-
• > 40% Class 2 Soils	



<b>Growth Area</b>	<b>Proposed Growth</b>		Summary of Sensitivities
		•	Trumpeter Swan habitat –Dimsdale Lake Within designated Important Bird Area
Dimsdale	Industrial/Commercial	•	Several surface water features (lakes, wetlands, rivers, creeks, tributaries)
		•	> 40% Class 2 and 3 Soils
		•	Borders designated Important Bird Area
Huallen	Residential	•	Several surface water features (mostly wetlands, creeks, tributaries)
		•	> 40% Class 3 Soils
		•	Primarily agriculture land
		•	Several surface water features (mostly wetlands, creeks, tributaries)
Saskatoon Mountain "C"	Residential	•	Surround/borders Saskatoon Mountain Park – provincial park
		•	> 40% Class 2 and 3 Soils
		•	Primarily agriculture land
North of Sexsmith and Sexsmith Fringe "B"	Residential and Industrial/Commercial		
		•	Several surface water features (lakes, wetlands, rivers, creeks, tributaries)
Hythe Fringe	Residential and Industrial/Commercial	•	Residential and Industrial/Commercial development proposed along Beaverlodge Creek
		•	> 40% Class 2 and 3 Soils

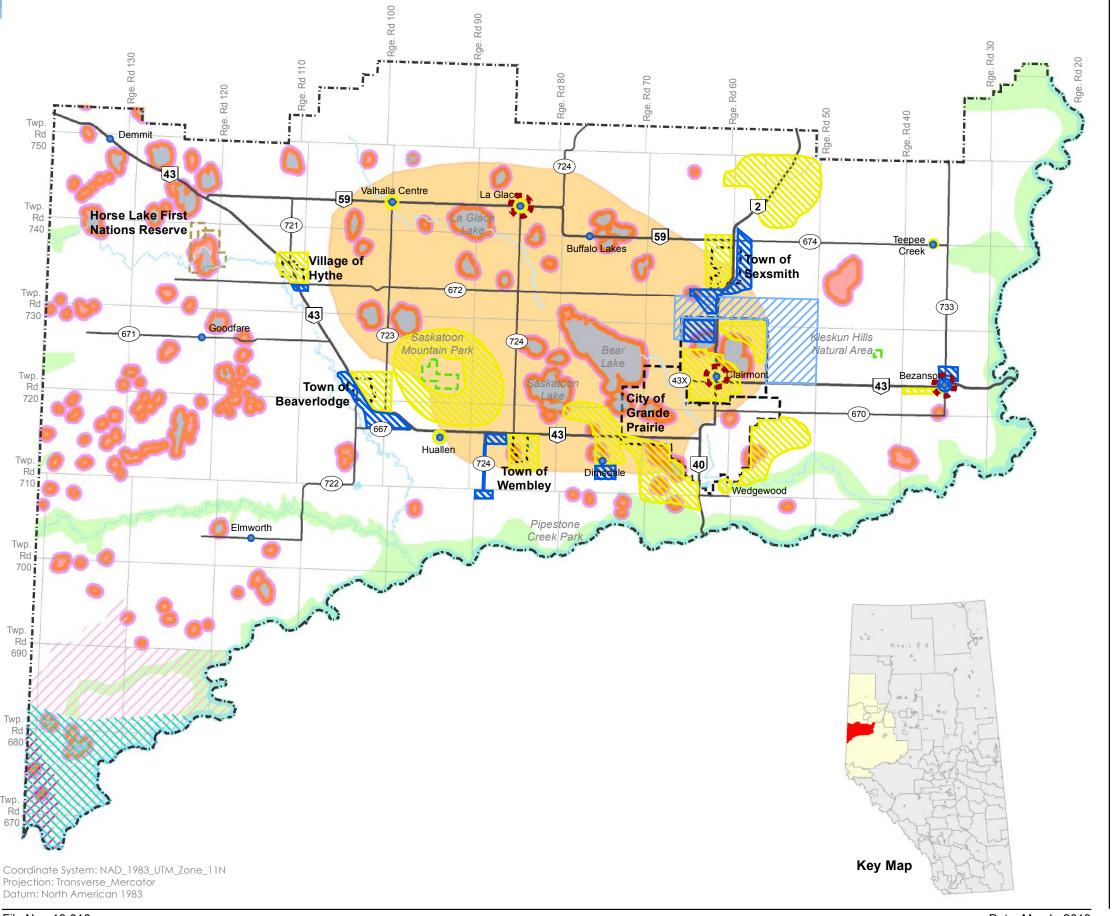


<b>Growth Area</b>	<b>Proposed Growth</b>	Summary of Sensitivities
Beaverlodge Fringe	Residential and Industrial/Commercial	<ul> <li>Residential area borders designated Important Bird Area Several surface water features (lakes, wetlands, rivers, creeks, tributaries) Residential and Industrial/Commercial development proposed along Beaverlodge Creek</li> <li>40% Class 2 Soils</li> </ul>
Wembley Fringe	Residential and Industrial/Commercial	<ul> <li>Trumpeter Swan habitat –unamaed lake within designated Important Bird Area Several surface water features (mostly wetlands, creeks, tributaries)</li> <li>40% Class 2 Soils</li> </ul>
Grande Prairie Fringe "B"	<b>e</b> Residential	<ul> <li>Trumpeter Swan habitat – Flying Shot,         Saskatoon and Bear Lake         within designated Important Bird Area         Key Wildlife and Biodiversity Zone to the south         (along Waipiti River and the Bear River)         Several surface water features (lakes, wetlands, rivers, creeks, tributaries)         &gt; 40% Class 2 and 3 Soils</li> </ul>









File No.: 16-018 Date: March, 2018

# Growth & Economic Development Strategy

County of Grande Prairie No.1, Alberta



# Legend

- 46,
- **Growth Hamlet**
- Stable Hamlet

Horse Lake First Nations Reserve

Urban Municipality

**Balanced Growth Option** 

Industrial/Commercial Growth Area

Residential Growth Area

Clairmont Growth Area

Caribou Range

//// Grizzly Bear (Core)

Grizzly Bear (Secondary)

Trumpeter Swan Waterbodies

Trumpeter Swan (Development Review Boundary)

Trumpeter Swan (Monitoring Boundary)

Key Wildlife and Biodiversity Zones

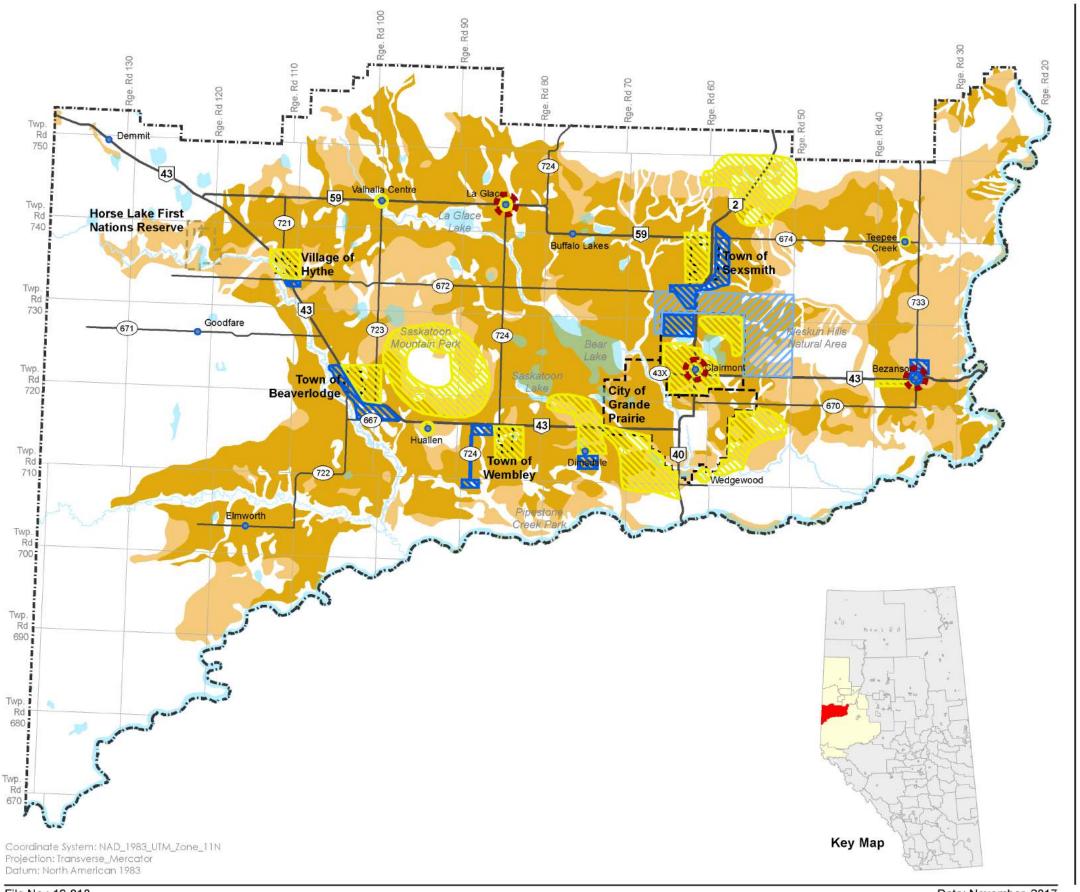
Important Bird Area

Provincial Natural Area

# **Map 7: Environmental Conflicts**

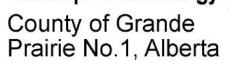






File No.: 16-018 Date: November, 2017

# **Growth & Economic Development Strategy**





# Legend



Stable Hamlet

Horse Lake First Nations Reserve Urban Municipality

Balanced Growth Option

Industrial/Commercial Growth Area

Residential Growth Area

Clairmont Growth Area

Soil Class

≥40% Class 2 Soil (Prime)

≥40% Class 3 Soil (Prime)

# **Map 8: Agricultural Land** Conflicts







# **6.1.1 Trumpeter Swan and Important Bird Areas**

The varied landscape within the Foothills, Boreal Forest and Parkland Natural Regions provides important habitat for trumpeter swans as described in the *Baseline Report (2017)*. Trumpeter swans (*Cygnus buccinators*) are considered "Threatened" under the *Alberta Wildlife Act* and "At Risk" in the General Status of Alberta Wild Species. The Grande Prairie area is known for important trumpeter swan habitat. They tend to breed on shallow lakes, wetlands, beaver ponds, and marshes throughout the County' ("*Map 7: Environmental Conflicts"*).

Threats to trumpeter swans include:

- single wire power lines that cause mortality
- habitat loss from wetland drainage and shoreline development
- human disturbance during sensitive periods causing nest abandonment and death of young
- illegal hunting when misidentified<sup>2</sup>.

Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) have recommended land use guidelines which are triggered through development applications on Crown Land under the Public Lands Act. The County's Land Use Bylaw (Section 3) further establishes setbacks for watercourse development on private lands located within Trumpeter Swan habitat. While there is no provincial legislation to enforce these setbacks on private land, Trumpeter Swans, like all wildlife in Alberta, are protected under the *Alberta Wildlife Act*.

The parkland and mixwood forests have characteristic lakes that also provides important habitat to other waterfowl such as American Coot, Canvasback, Mallards and geese. Together, these lakes form an Important Bird Area (IBA) and range from small ponds, to large recreational lakes such as Bear Lake. About 1,308 km² of land to the north and west of Grande Prairie is designated as an IBA, which coincides with a high density of Trumpeter Swan habitat³ and future growth areas.

Recommended strategies for conservation and preservation of Trumpeter Swans and IBAs for the County of Grande Prairie include:

- Avoid creating and developing residential and industrial lots in designated Trumpeter Swan habitat areas, as much as possible;
- Minimize new access roads to identified lakes to prevent increased recreational pressures;
- Consider residential and industrial setbacks under Section 3 of the County of Grande Prairie Land Use Bylaw to coincide with the provincial *Recommended Land Use Guidelines for Trumpeter Swan Habitat* (Government of Alberta 2012). This could involve:

<sup>1</sup> Government of Alberta. 2012. Recommended Land Use Guidelines for Trumpeter Swan Habitat. http://aep.alberta.ca/fish-wildlife/wildlife-land-use-guidelines/documents/RecommendedLandUseGuidelines-TrumpeterSwanHabitat-Sep27-2012.pdf

<sup>2</sup> Government of Alberta. No Date. Trumpeter Swans: A Guideline For Landowners. Found at http://aep.alberta.ca/fish-wildlife/wild-species/birds/waterfowl/documents/SARTrumpeterSwan-GuideForLandowners.pdf

<sup>3</sup> Nature Alberta. 2014. Important Bird Area Alberta Guide. Found online at http://naturealberta.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Important-Bird-Areas-of-Alberta-Guide.pdf.



- 1. Considering impact to trumpeter swan habitat for new developments within 500 m of the high water mark of Trumpeter Swan water bodies. The development review process could:
  - a) require review by the County and Council through a development permit variance; and
  - b) require further studies or guidance (at the discretion of the County).
- 2. Requesting monitoring of development activity within 800 m of identified lakes and water bodies between April 1 and September 30 to determine whether any nesting Trumpeter Swans are impacted by equipment activity.
- Avoid vegetation removal during sensitive migratory bird windows for the area (between April 19 and August 29)<sup>4</sup>, or have nest surveys completed by a qualified professional prior to clearing and grubbing;
- Consider protecting highly valuable Trumpeter Swan habitat, particularly Bear, Clairmont, Saskatoon, Valhalla, Gummer, La Glace and Wilken Lakes, through environmental reserves or conservation easements; and
- Consider rehabilitating degraded habitat areas, where appropriate.

# **6.1.2 Key Wildlife and Biodiversity Zones**

Key Wildlife and Biodiversity Zones in the County provide important migratory routes and cover for several wildlife species. These routes are located primarily along the Wapiti River, Bear River, and Pipestone Creek on the southern boundary of the study area and Smoky River, and Kleskun Creek on the east boundary.

Recommended strategies for conservation and preservation of Key Wildlife Biodiversity Zones:

- Avoid fragmenting continuous habitat along river and creek corridors through the creation of new access roads and crossings;
- Minimize removal of mature vegetation and forested areas for residential or industrial/ commercial development;
- Consider noise issues from industrial activities in areas that border the Key Wildlife and Biodiversity Zones; and
- Consider protecting areas adjacent to these sensitive areas through setback, environmental reserves and/or easements.

# 6.1.3 Surface Water (rivers, creeks, tributaries, drainages, and wetlands), Riparian Areas, and Floodways

Surface water features (such as rivers, creeks, tributaries, drainages and wetlands) throughout the County provide several important functions. They provide habitat for fish, amphibians, waterfowl;

4 Government of Canada. 2014. General Nesting Periods of Migratory Birds in Canada. Environment Canada.



migratory routes for birds, mammals and ungulates, water catchment areas, flood retention, drinking water for communities and irrigation for agricultural crops. Wetlands are prevalent along the landscape. Development of wetlands are managed under the *Alberta Water Act* and *Public Lands Act*.

Riparian areas surrounding surface water features provide valuable ecological functions within their basins. These functions include trapping and storing sediments, stabilizing banks and shorelines, slowing flood water, recharging aquifers, reducing the amount of contaminants and nutrients entering waterbodies, reducing water velocity, and maintaining biodiversity across the landscape. Past and future development puts pressure on the riparian and aquatic ecosystems and there is very little legislation that protects riparian removal.

The potential for flooding exists along all rivers and streams in Alberta, including lake and wetland systems. Flood events can cause significant damage to private property, cause hardship, and in extreme events, loss of life. These surface water features and associated riparian vegetation play an important role in floodwater retention. Protecting these areas from development is important in the land use planning process. A flood hazard study was completed for the Grande Prairie – Bear River area but does not include other flood hazards in the proposed growth areas.

Recommended strategies for conservation and preservation of Surface Water, Riparian Areas, and Floodways:

- Complete a flood risk analysis of the study area (except for Bear River which was completed in 2016);
- Consider adopting a minimum of 30 m setback from significant water features, with opportunities to extend setback to accommodate for important wildlife features or protect from certain development activities (i.e. industrial, aggregate mining).
- Limit development within the flood risk area to recreational trails, open space, natural park, or environmental reserve, and the required infrastructure should be designed to accommodate and withstand flood inundation.
- Incorporate wetlands into park systems and environmental reserves;
- Develop detailed wetland inventories with site-specific function analyses and use the information as a tool for land use planning;
- Include wetlands in policy development; consider identifying wetland areas where onsite replacement instead of in-lieu fee payment should take place;
- Consider establishing wetland replacement opportunities within the sub-basin (i.e., a wetland mitigation bank) to help ensure wetlands functions and values are retained on a local-level; and
- Develop regulatory framework to protect wetland and riparian specific buffers.



# **6.1.4 Preservation of Agricultural Lands and Productive Soils**

The *Baseline Analysis* (2017) identified that there are no Class 1 soils, (the highest agriculture capability) but there is a considerable mix of Class 2 and 3 soils throughout the proposed growth areas. Agriculture land is important for crop and livestock production and threatened by urban development. A majority of the land identified for future growth areas will be agriculture land that will require re-zoning to higher density residential or industrial/commercial land use.

Recommended strategies for conservation and preservation of agriculture lands:

- Rank agricultural capability of the growth areas through desktop analysis (based on soil characteristics, stoniness, topography, drainage, access, and size);
- Prioritize conservation of the highest value agricultural land through land use zoning and development permitting;
- Outline acceptable farm use in areas zoned for agricultural use appropriate for the region;
- Establish buffers or guidance on developing buffers to mitigate conflict between non-farm use and farms (livestock generated odours, pesticide/fertilizer spraying and dust are often issues that create conflict between land uses); and
- Promote buying local to support farmers and keep local farmers in production.

# **6.2** Infrastructure Gap Analysis

# **6.2.1 Transportation**

## **Roadway Network**

The County of Grande Prairie is serviced by several major highways, connecting the County as well as City of Grande Prairie to the rest of the province of Alberta and British Columbia. Highway focus is primarily on connections to the City of Grande Prairie, with Highway 40 from the south connecting into Highway 2, which continues north. Highway 43 runs east-west through the County, connecting through the City of Grande Prairie, and then continuing west, eventually passing into British Columbia where it becomes Highway 2, and connects to Dawson Creek to the north.

The growth areas are all serviced by the existing highway network. As development occurs within these areas it will be necessary to provide new accesses or upgrade existing accesses. As the highways in the County are under the jurisdiction of Alberta Transportation the level of access permitted for each highway will reflect Alberta Transportation's classification of the highway - within County of Grande Prairie there are highways that have been classified as a expressway, multi-lane, major two-lane, and minor two-lane highway. These classifications, and proposed future highway bypasses, have been identified on "Map 9: Utility Infrastructure Transportation". A summary of the major highways within the County of Grande Prairie can be found on the following pages.



# Highway 43

Highway 43 is a part of the Canamex Trade Corridor, a North American trade corridor that supports the goals of improving north south access for goods, people and information, increasing transportation productivity and reducing costs, promotion of intermodal transportation systems, and harmonized regulations. Within Canada, the Canamex corridor runs north-south along Highway 2 from Cardston to the City of Edmonton, and then towards British Columbia using Highway 16 and Highway 43.

Within the County of Grande Prairie, the highway is a future expressway, and twinned throughout the County up until south of Beaverlodge. Continuation of the highway twinning to the Alberta/BC border is a priority of the County. A future bypass is planned around the northwest quadrant of the City (Highway 43x), realigning with the current Highway 43 alignment between Range Road 71 and 72. Future plans for the County would include continuation of the bypass with the addition of a SW Bypass and a SE Bypass which would connect Highway 40 to the south and Highway 43 to the east. There is also a future bypass proposed for Highway 43 to the west of Beaverlodge.

As a future expressway, access to Highway 43 will, ultimately, be limited to interchanges only, there will be no at-grade intersections. Development concepts within future growth areas should consider this, developing access strategies that utilize lower classification highways for primary access where possible, provide setbacks for future service roads and/or make use of the existing network of County roads for internal circulation.

#### Highway 2

Highway 2 north of Grande Prairie is twinned from the boundary of the City of Grande Prairie to north of Sexsmith. North of Sexsmith the highway has been classified as a Major Two-Lane Highway and there are no plans to extend the twinned section further north to the County boundary. Within the twinned section there is an existing interchange with Highway 43 in Clairmont. Highway 2 ultimately terminates at Peace River, but connects to Highway 35 which travels north to High River and ultimately into the Northwest Territories.

## Highway 40

Highway 40 is a 2-lane highway that travels south from the City of Grande Prairie, traveling southwest through Grande Cache and eventually to Hinton on Highway 16. Twinning of Highway 40 from the City of Grande Prairie to Norbord is a priority of the County due to high percentage of large truck traffic along this stretch or roadway.

# **Grande Prairie Airport**

The Grande Prairie Airport is located at the west side of the City of Grande Prairie. It is serviced by two major airlines, Westjet and Air Canada. The airport is a regional airport, with flights services to Edmonton and Calgary.

Year	Total	Annual	Passengers
		<i>,</i>	. assengers

2010 346,800 2011 383,600 2012 415,600



2013 413,100

2014 445,700

2015 434,700

Total passengers peaked in 2014, with a growth of almost 30% between 2010 and 2011. However, total passengers fell by 3% from 2014 to 2015. Between January and August of 2016 total passengers fell almost 10% from the same period in 2015.

Long term plans for the airport include accommodation for expected continued overall growth in passenger trips, with plans including an anticipated expansion to the existing terminal building.

# **Beaverlodge Airport**

The Beaverlodge Aerodrome is located approximately 3 km south of the Town of Beaverlodge off of secondary highway 772, and is a single airstrip. There are no commercial flights out of this airport.

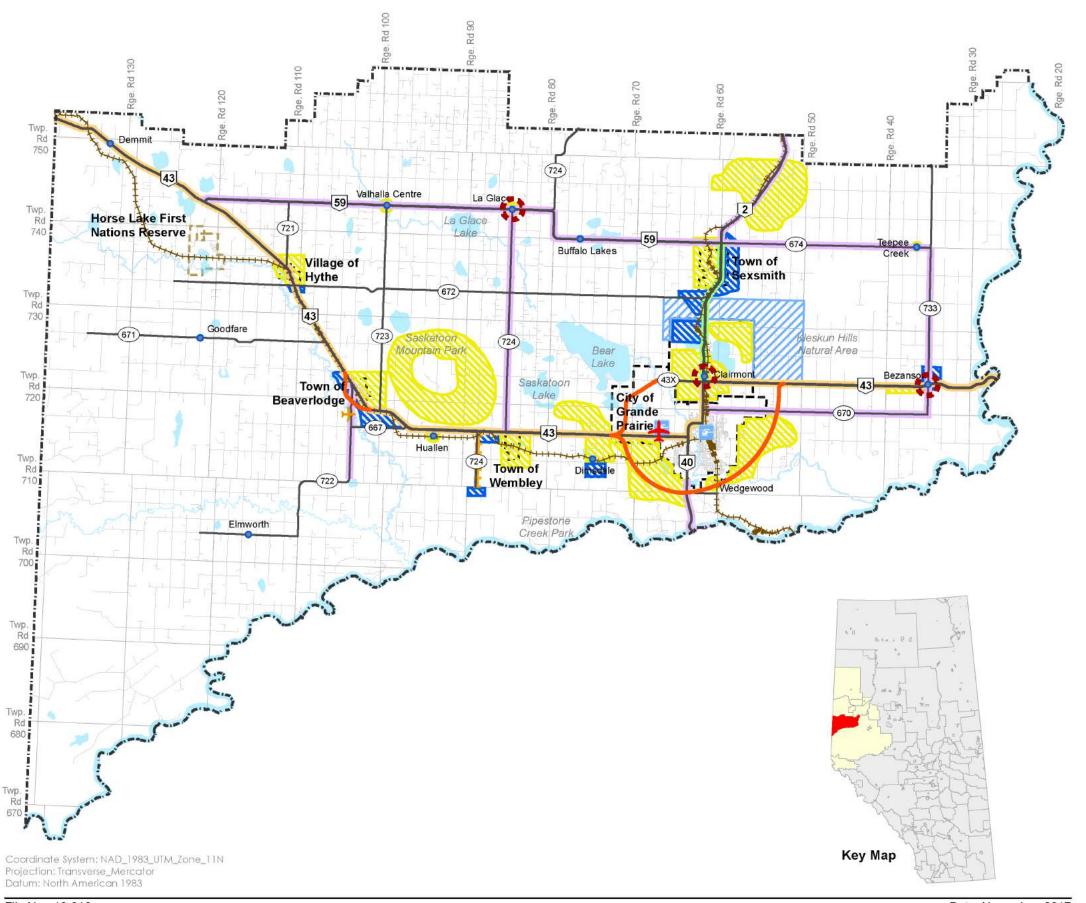
#### Rail

According to the 2008 County Transportation Master Plan, there are several rail subdivisions serving the region through the Canadian National Railway. Lines connect the county to Prince Rupert, BC and Vancouver, as well as connections to Calgary and Edmonton to the south and Spirit River to the north. With the exception of the growth area near the Town of Wembley, the identified industrial/commercial growth areas have access to either existing rail mainlines or spur lines. "Map 9: Utility Infrastructure Transportation" identifies a proposed spur line paralleling Highway 724 which would connect the Wembley industrial/commercial growth area to the rail network.

#### 6.2.2 Water and Wastewater Infrastructure

Water and wastewater infrastructure capacities and future requirements for the communities are discussed below. Existing infrastructure information has been provided by the County of Grande Prairie, available reports, and the County website. "Map 10: Utility Infrastructure Water and Wastewater" presents the Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Requirements Map which identifies the growth communities along with the major infrastructure components and future requirements. "Table 11: Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Requirements" provides a summary of the infrastructure capacities and shortfalls.

Water and Wastewater generations were estimated using 275 l/person/day in accordance with the County of Grande Prairie Design Standards.



Date: November, 2017 File No.: 16-018

# **Growth & Economic Development Strategy**

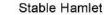
County of Grande Prairie No.1, Alberta



# Legend



**Growth Hamlet** 





Horse Lake First Nations Reserve

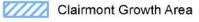


**Urban Municipality** 

**Balanced Growth Option** 

Industrial/Commercial Growth Area

Residential Growth Area



Grande Prairie Airport

Airfield/Runway

Helipad/Heliport

**Proposed Bypass** Future Expressway

Multi-Lane Highway

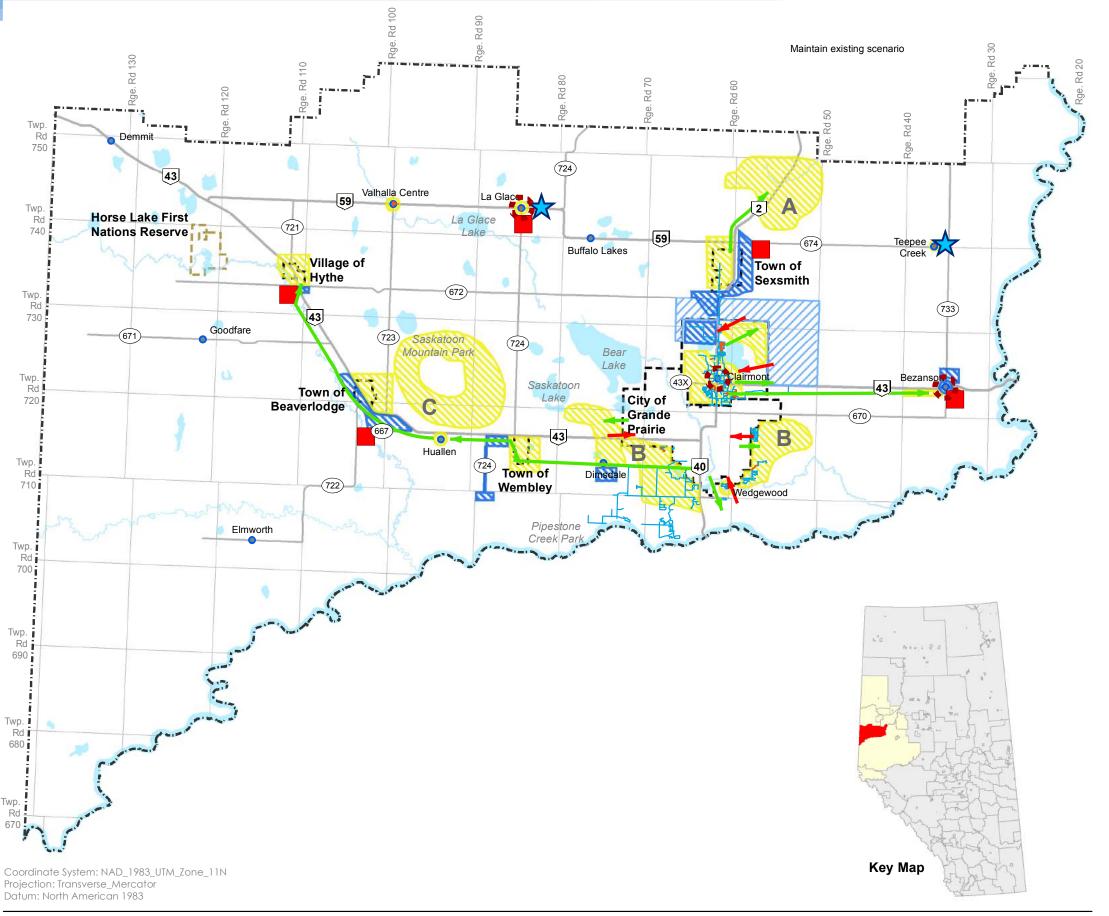
Major Two-Lane Highway

Railway Extension

# **Map 9: Utility Infrastructure Transportation**







File No.: 16-018 Date: March, 2018

# Growth & Economic Development Strategy

County of Grande Prairie No.1, Alberta



# Legend

- 46,
- **Growth Hamlet**
- Stable Hamlet
- Horse Lake First Nations Reserve
- Urban Municipality

## **Balanced Growth Option**

- Industrial/Commercial Growth Area
- Residential Growth Area
- Clairmont Growth Area
- Existing Water Line
- Existing Sewer Line
- WTP Upgrade
- Lagoon Upgrade
- ── Water Line Upgrade
- Sewer Line Upgrade

# Map 10: Utility Infrastructure Water and Wastewater







#### Clairmont

The Hamlet of Clairmont is anticipated to grow by approximately 8,506 people to a population of approximately 11,473.

#### Water

Water service in the Hamlet of Clairmont is provided by Aquatera. Water is provided from the City of Grande Prairie to the Clairmont Reservoir and Pumphouse via a 450 mm diameter transmission waterline.

The Water Distribution and Wastewater Collection System Master Plan 2013 – Servicing Strategy for the City of Grande Prairie and Hamlet of Clairmont, Morrison Hershfield, December 2016 (Aquatera Master Plan) assessed the servicing requirements for Clairmont and future growth. The Aquatera Master Plan, however, did not account for the growth area east of the hamlet.

Water usage is expected to increase from 1,200 m<sub>3</sub>/day to 4,760 m<sub>3</sub>/day. To service the Clairmont growth area we expect the following infrastructure will be required;

- Capacity upgrades to Aquatera's raw water supply and treatment system to service growth within the County and City during the 50-year period.
- Construction of the proposed Mercer Hill Reservoir and Pumphouse which is currently under design. Expansion of the reservoir to the planned 17,000,000 m3, per Aquatera Master Plan.
- Construction of a new water transmission main from Grande Prairie to the Mercer Hill Reservoir.
- Construction of a transmission line and reservoir and pumphouse east of Clairmont Lake.

#### Wastewater

Wastewater service in the Hamlet of Clairmont is provided by Aquatera. Wastewater is directed toward the Clairmont Lagoon via gravity mains and 5 lift station/forcemains. It is understood that upgrades are being designed which will include a lift station and forcemain to convey wastewater from the Clairmont Lagoon to the Grande Prairie wastewater system.

The Aquatera Master Plan assessed the servicing requirements for Clairmont and future growth. The Aquatera Master Plan, however, did not account for some of the growth area west of the hamlet.

The future wastewater generation contributed in the Clairmont Area is estimated at 3,942 m3/day (at 275 L/c/d). The following upgrades will be required to service the Clairmont growth area:

- Upgrades to Aquatera's wastewater treatment and effluent disposal to service growth within the County and City during the 50 year period.
- Clairmont Lagoon and Regional lift station and forcemains to send wastewater south to the City of Grande Prairie.
- Two lift stations and forcemains to service the current municipal boundary.



• Ground elevations are generally rising to the north and west but we expect additional lift stations and forcemains will be required to service those areas west of the municipal boundary.

#### **Bezanson**

The Hamlet of Bezanson is anticipated to grow by 454 people to 560 people.

#### Water

There is an existing water treatment plant (WTP) in the Hamlet of Bezanson which is supplied via groundwater wells. An upgrade to the WTP is planned to service an estimated population of 294 people (design flow of 162 m3/day). A truckfill will also be constructed to facilitate water hauling to rural properties within the area.

The hamlet is anticipated to grow to 870 people (design flow of 479 m3/day). The existing wells and local water treatment plant (WTP) are expected to service growth up to 294 people. Water supply beyond 294 people will be provided by a regional waterline from the City of Grande Prairie, which would be consistent with Alberta Environment, Waterworks Facility Assessment Summary Report, 2014 by Associated Engineering.

#### Wastewater

Bezanson is serviced by a sewage lagoon and a wastewater collection system. The County is investigating expanding the lagoon as it has reached its full capacity of approximately 164 people based on 275 L/c/d sewage generation (45 m3/day). Ultimately, it is anticipated that the lagoon will require a significant expansion of approximately 194 m3/day to 239 m3/day to accommodate the projected future population in the area.

#### La Glace

The Hamlet of La Glace is expected to grow by 284 people to 495 people.

#### Water

A small number of homes within the Hamlet of La Glace are serviced by centralized wells and distribution system which were recently taken over by the County. Other homes and businesses within the hamlet are serviced through private wells or water hauling.

It is anticipated that a water system that services the entire hamlet and meets Alberta Environment and Parks drinking water standards will be required to service the anticipated growth. The following infrastructure will be required to service 689 people (design flow of 379 m3/day):

- New groundwater wells and pumps.
- Water treatment plant, reservoir and pumping system.
- Municipal distribution system.



#### Wastewater

La Glace is serviced by a sewage lagoon and a wastewater collection system. The lagoon is being rehabilitated and has capacity for 150 people (15,000 m<sub>3</sub>). The lagoon will require expansion of approximately 54,000 m<sub>3</sub>/day to accommodate the projected future population in the area.

#### **6.2.3 Teepee Creek**

Teepee Creek is not expected to experience significant growth within the next 50 years. Infrastructure requirements are identified below.

#### Water

A new water treatment plant is being constructed in Teepee Creek and is understood will service approximately 68 people (37.4 m3/day). There is also a piped distribution system within the existing community.

It is anticipated that the existing level of service will be maintained in the area. Future residential growth within the Hamlet will be accommodated by the WTP and distribution system where practical, with private wells or water hauling utilized where necessary.

#### Wastewater

There is an existing wastewater lagoon in Teepee Creek with a service capacity of approximately 57 people (5,730 m3). There is also an existing wastewater collection system within the hamlet.

It is anticipated that the existing level of service will be maintained in the area. Growth within the hamlet will be accommodated by the existing lagoon and collection system where practical, with on-site or hauled sewage disposal where necessary.

#### Valhalla Centre

Valhalla Centre is not expected to experience significant growth within the next 50 years. Infrastructure requirements are identified below.

#### Water

County water service is not currently supplied within Valhalla Centre, Water is believed to be hauled or acquired through private wells. In terms of future residential growth, it is anticipated that the current level of service will be maintained within the community.

#### Wastewater

There is an existing wastewater lagoon in Valhalla Centre with a service capacity of approximately 200 people (23,800 m3). There is also an existing wastewater collection system within the hamlet. It is anticipated that the existing level of service will be maintained in the area. Future residential growth within the hamlet will be accommodated by the existing lagoon and collection system where practical, with on-site or hauled sewage disposal where necessary.



#### **Dimsdale**

The Hamlet of Dimsdale is not expected to encounter significant residential growth, however, nearby commercial and industrial growth is anticipated. Infrastructure requirements within the community are described below.

#### Water

County water service is not currently supplied within Dimsdale. Water is believed to be hauled or acquired through private wells.

The Dimsdale ASP was approved in March 2015 and identifies future water servicing for the ASP area, including a future Reservoir and Pumphouse, as well as a distribution system. Water will be supplied to the community via the West Corridor Water Transmission Line, to be constructed from the City of Grande Prairie. A reservoir and truckfill will be constructed along Twp Rd. 712 to provide water to business and residences within the community.

#### Wastewater

Wastewater is believed to be dealt with using private on-site sewage disposal, but could potentially be hauled off-site. The ASP did not discuss wastewater servicing to the area and it may have been assumed that the current level of service will be maintained within the community. This may be reasonable as lots will be zoned for country residential and industrial uses. For the purpose of this report, it is anticipated that the current level of service will be maintained (private on-site sewage disposal or hauled off-site).

## Huallen

Huallen is not expected to experience significant growth within the next 50 years. Infrastructure requirements are identified below.

#### Water

County water service is not currently supplied within Huallen, Water is believed to be hauled or acquired through private wells. It is anticipated that the current level of service will be maintained in the hamlet, however, it may be possible to obtain water from the future West Corridor Water Transmission Line, should it be constructed nearby.

#### Wastewater

Wastewater is believed to be dealt with using private on-site sewage disposal, but could potentially be hauled off-site. It is anticipated that the current level of service will be maintained within the community.

## **Hythe Fringe**

The Hythe Fringe area is expected to add 239 people. Infrastructure required to service this area is described below.



#### Water

The Village of Hythe is serviced by a WTP and groundwater wells, however, water is only distributed to approximately 20% of the residents. The *Aquatera - West Corridor Transmission Line Study* by Associated Engineering, March 2015 identified that there are challenges with the existing water supply in terms of both quantity and quality. Consumption may be exceeding the annual diversion limit for the village, and poor source water quality has been identified. Based on these findings, it was recommended that Hythe be serviced from the proposed West Corridor Transmission Line.

Future water demand within the fringe area is estimated at 131 m3/day and is to be serviced from Hythe, via the future regional watermain. Water transmission lines will need to be extended from the distribution system to the fringe areas.

#### Wastewater

The Village of Hythe is serviced by a wastewater lagoon, however, the capacity of the lagoon is unknown at this time.

It is anticipated that future residential development located in the Hythe Fringe area will be serviced from the Village of Hythe, and that the lagoon will require upgrading to accommodate the additional load of 24,000 m3/year. Lift stations and forcemains may be required to transmit wastewater from the fringe areas to the lagoon.

## **Beaverlodge Fringe**

The Beaverlodge Fringe area is expected to add 1,276 people during the 50-year growth period.

#### Water

The Beaverlodge WTP has recently undergone upgrades to increase its capacity to accommodate a design population of 2,914 (2,543 m3/day), as well as to achieve treatment objectives. The *Aquatera* - *West Corridor Transmission Line Study* by Associated Engineering, March 2015 recommended that the Beaverlodge WTP be upgraded to meet the short-term growth projections. Once growth exceeds the design capacity of the upgraded WTP, the proposed West Corridor Transmission Line will be required. Future water demand within the fringe area is estimated at 1,183 m3/day. It is anticipated the future residential development located in the Beaverlodge Fringe area will be serviced from Beaverlodge, via the WTP and/or future regional watermain. A transmission line extending to a reservoir and pumphouse will be required to service the fringe area to the north.

#### Wastewater

The Town of Beaverlodge is serviced by a wastewater lagoon. Discussions with the Town's operations staff suggest the lagoon may be nearing its capacity.

It is anticipated that future development located in the Beaverlodge Fringe area will be serviced from the Town of Beaverlodge, and that the lagoon will require an upgrade of 215,000 m3 to accommodate the additional population. Lift stations and forcemains will be required to service the fringe areas to the south. Lift Stations and forcemains or an upgrade to the Town's collection system will be required to service the growth area to the south.



# **Wembley Fringe**

The Wembley Fringe area is anticipated to add 284 people during the 50 year growth period.

#### Water

The Town of Wembley is serviced by a WTP and groundwater wells. The *Aquatera - West Corridor Transmission Line Study* by Associated Engineering, March 2015 identified that there are some challenges with the existing water supply in terms of both quantity and quality. The diversion licence is not anticipated to meet the long term needs of the community, and the source water requires treatment upgrades to meet Alberta Environment approval requirement. The Wembley Regional Water Pipeline is currently being designed which will convey potable water from the City of Grande Prairie to the Town of Wembley.

It is anticipated the future residential and non-residential fringe development will require a design flow approximately 263 m3/day of water. This development will be serviced from the Town's distribution system requiring storage and pumping upgrades to the existing reservoir.

#### Wastewater

The Town of Wembley is serviced by a wastewater lagoon. The lagoon is currently permitted to discharge twice per year, but it is anticipated Alberta Environment will require once per year discharge in the future. In order to comply, the Town will be requiring a lagoon expansion.

It is anticipated that future development located in the Wembley Fringe area will be serviced from the Town of Wembley, and that the lagoon will require an expansion to accommodate the additional load of 48,000 m<sub>3</sub>.

# **Sexsmith Fringe**

The Sexsmith Fringe area is anticipated to add 1,276 people during the 50 year growth period.

#### Water

The Town of Sexsmith is serviced by the City of Grande Prairie from a 350 mm waterline extending from the Hamlet of Clairmont. A storage reservoir and pumpstation supplies the municipal distribution system. It is anticipated the future residential and non residential development located in the Sexsmith Fringe area will be serviced from Sexsmith. The Water Distribution and Wastewater Collection System Master Plan 2013 – Servicing Strategy for the City of Grande Prairie and Hamlet of Clairmont, Morrison Hershfield, December 2016, indicates that additional boosting will be required to service the ultimate population for Sexsmith but the pipeline is expected to have sufficient capacity.

#### Wastewater

The Town of Sexsmith is serviced by a wastewater lagoon operated by Aquatera. The Town of Sexsmith 2007 Water and Wastewater Master Plan, Morrison Hershfield, April 2009, identified that the wastewater lagoon would be at capacity in 2012. The report recommended converting to aeration with twice yearly discharge to meet the short/medium term growth, and recommended a regional pipeline to Grande Prairie as a long term servicing solution.



We have not been able to confirm if the lagoon has been expanded as of the writing of this report. It is anticipated that future development located in the Sexsmith Fringe area will be serviced from the Town of Sexsmith, and that the lagoon will require further upgrades to accommodate the additional load of 215,000 m<sub>3</sub>.

## North of Sexsmith (Area A)

Area A is anticipated to add approximately 2,835 people in the next 50 years.

#### Water

Existing development within the area is unserviced, with residences relying on private wells or truck haul. It is anticipated that future residential development located north of Sexsmith (Area A) will be serviced from the Town of Sexsmith, via a future watermain extending north from the town. Based upon the *Aquatera Master Plan* the existing pipeline has sufficient capacity to accommodate the growth but a booster station in Clairmont is required. A storage reservoir and pumpstation is expected to be required to service the Area A.

Water can be hauled or acquired through private wells until such time as a waterline is constructed.

#### Wastewater

Wastewater service for the future residential land within Area A is anticipated to be provided by on-site or hauled sewage disposal.

#### **City of Grande Prairie Fringe (Area B)**

Area B (south of Grande Prairie) is expected to add approximately 8,506 people.

#### Water

The existing area is serviced with trickle fill water by Aquatera's water distribution system or the Aquawest system.

Water service for the future residential land in the Grande Prairie Fringe (Area B) has been accounted for in the Aquatera Master Plan. The Master Plan identifies that the area will be trickle fill and supplied by the existing distribution system and Aquawest system. Future water demand within Area B is estimated at 7,883 m3/day.

Capacity upgrades to Aquatera's raw water supply and treatment system will be required to service growth within the County and City during the 50 year period.

#### Wastewater

Pockets of residential development within Area B are serviced throughout Aquatera's collection



system but most areas rely on private sewer systems or truck haul. The future wastewater generation contributed within Area B is estimated at 3942 m3/day.

Approximately half of the future service area for the Grande Prairie Fringe (Area B) has been accounted for (in terms of wastewater servicing) by the Aquatera Master Plan. The Master Plan identifies that two lift stations and a forcemain are proposed to service the westerly portion of the service area. Additional lift stations and forcemains will be required to service the development to the south. It is expected that the bulk of development to the west will remain unserviced.

Low pressure sewer service may be an option in keeping with the future trickle fill water service which is identified for the easterly development lands.

Capacity upgrades to the Aquatera Wastewater Treatment Plant will be required to service growth within the County and City of Grande Prairie.

# **Saskatoon Mountain (Area C)**

Area C is anticipated to add approximately 2,835 people of the next 50 years.

#### Water

It is anticipated that the proposed residential growth identified for Saskatoon Mountain (Area C) will be accommodated through water hauling or acquired through private wells, consistent with rural residential development.

#### Wastewater

Wastewater servicing in the proposed development area will be dealt with using private on-site sewage disposal, but could potentially be hauled off-site.



Table 12: Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Requirements			
Avon	Water Hageadee	Course Ungrados	
Area	Water Upgrades	Sewer Upgrades	
Clairmont*	Water supply and Treatment Upgrades, Mercer Hill Reservoir, New transmission line from Grande Prairie, Extension to east.	Wastewater Treatment Upgrades, Regional Liftstation and Forcemain to GP	
Sexsmith Fringe*	Booster station upgrade, Reservoir and Pumphouse Expansion	Lagoon Expansion	
North of Sexsmith (Area A)*	Water Pipeline from Sexsmith, Reservoir and Pumphouse	No municipal service	
Bezanson	Waterline from Grande Prairie	Lagoon Expansion	
Grande Prairie Fringe (Area B)*	Water supply from Grande Prairie	Sewer Service from Grande Prairie	
Dimsdale	Water pipeline from Grande Prairie, Reservoir and Pumphouse	No municipal service	
Wembley Fringe*	Water pipeline from Grande Prairie, Reservoir and Pumphouse	Lagoon Expansion	
Beaverlodge Fringe*	Water pipeline from Grande Prairie, Reservoir and Pumphouse	Lagoon Expansion	
Hythe Fringe*	Water pipeline from Grande Prairie, Reservoir and Pumphouse	Lagoon Expansion	
Saskatoon Mountain (Area C)	No municipal service	No municipal service	
LaGlace	Water Treatment Plant and Distribution System	Lagoon Expansion	
Teepee Creek, Valhalla Centre, Huallen	Maintain Existing service	Maintain Existing service	
Farms	No municipal service	No municipal service	

<sup>\*</sup>Note: Deficits in these areas are based on population increase <u>not</u> capacity of existing infrastructure or Village/Town future needs



# **6.2.4 Stormwater Management**

Alberta Environment's stormwater management guidelines (March 2013) require control of water quality in urban stormwater. The minimum requirements are to remove at least 85% of the suspended sediments larger than 75 microns (0.75 mm) in size.

According to Alberta Environment Guidelines, wet ponds and stormwater wetlands typically remove 80-90% of the suspended solids and 40-60% of the suspended and dissolved nutrients in urban stormwater. Therefore, best management practice implies that wet facilities be used whenever possible.

The construction of houses, commercial buildings, paved roads, parking lots, and industrial areas increases the imperviousness of a watershed and reduces the infiltration of rainwater, increasing the volume and rate of surface runoff. In order to minimize the impact to the environment, stormwater management facilities are used to control the rate of flow to the rates expected prior to development of the land (pre-development release rates).

Any future ponds are to be designed to accommodate the 1:100 year storm according to the County Minimum Design Standards Adopted 2003. The standards also provide a pre-development flow guideline of 0.55 – 0.70 m3/s/km² for raw land. The allowable flows for a particular development may be increased if it can be proven that the actual pre-development flow was greater based on a study by a qualified hydrologist which includes an analysis of downstream constraints if any exist.

Best management practices with regards to stormwater ponds include the following summarized from the County Minimum Design Standards:

- Emergency overflow present for storms greater than the 1:100 year storm event draining to a receiving stream if possible
- Maximum water level fluctuation in residential areas during a 1:100 year storm event 1.5 m
- Wet pond minimum surface area 2 ha, with maximum and minimum permanent pool depths of 3 and 2 m, respectively
- Wet pond inlets and outlets should be submerged at least 1.0 m below the normal water level

It is recommended that the County update their Design Standards to reflect AEP Standards and Guidelines regarding water quality

## **6.2.5 Telecommunications**

There are a number of wireless internet and cellular towers within the County of Grande Prairie as presented on "Map 11: Utility Infrastructure Communication and Internet".

In terms of wireless internet, the Alberta Broadband Study completed in 2011 by ViTel Consulting Inc. investigated the wireless internet coverage throughout much of Alberta. The report concluded that 87% of the townships and 11 hamlets with the County had wireless internet coverage, however, indicated that



wireless internet towers could not provide adequate broadband coverage due to hilly terrain and current tree density. To resolve this, the County provides capital funding for subscriber towers to rural residents and has sponsored the installation of approximately 300 towers throughout the county.

North East Alberta Information Hub commissioned a study Northern Alberta Broadband Preparedness Project (Broadband Project), September 2017 by Taylor Warwick Consulting. The study was initiated to quantitatively evaluate the option available to enhance broadband infrastructure within the Northern Alberta.

In terms of cellular coverage, Rogers and Telus have cell towers in the County which are primarily located along provincial highway corridors and at high points. The Broadband Project indicated that broadband coverage was available throughout most of the County but LTE service had gaps west of Beaverlodge.

The study indicated that the County's investment in 300+ towers has provided wireless internet coverage to almost the entire County. Investment is required to improved broadband speed and improve redundancy in the system. The broadband goals for the County were defined as follows:

- To achieve fibre based broadband speeds to 90% of the County in 3 years.
- Improve redundancy of the network through more service providers.

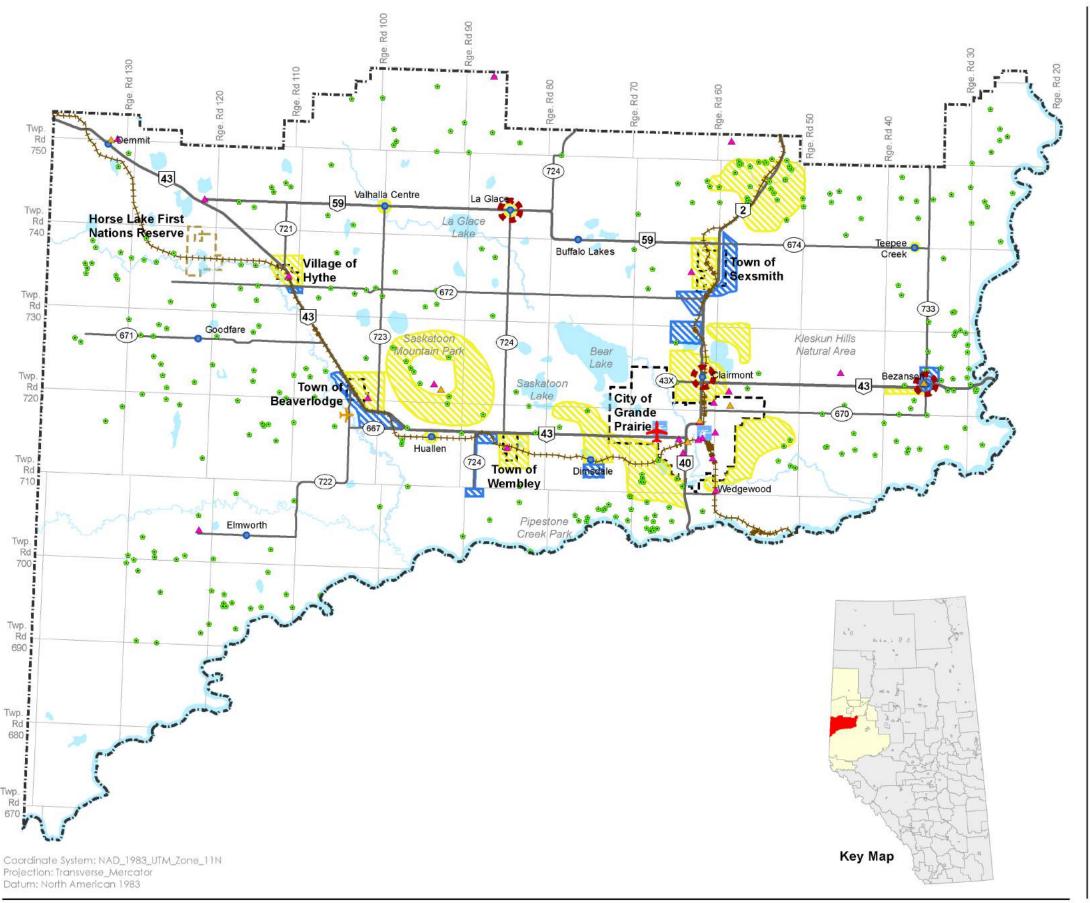




The Northern Alberta Broadband Preparedness Project identified the following opportunities to improving broadband speed and redundancy:

- Investigate opportunities to work with carriers to seek investment in the region.
- Subsidize a private partner to improve broadband speed. This may result in one service provider with a de-facto monopoly of service in the region, however.
- Establish a Regional Fibre Network to extend fibre-based service to strategic locations within the County.





File No.: 16-018 Date: September 27, 2016

# Growth & Economic Development Strategy

County of Grande Prairie No.1, Alberta

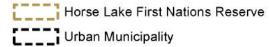


# Legend



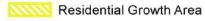
**Growth Hamlet** 

Stable Hamlet



**Balanced Growth Option** 

Industrial/Commercial Growth Area



Cell Tower - Rogers

Cell Tower - TELUS

Internet Tower

Grande Prairie Airport

Airfield/Runway

Helipad/Heliport

Railway (CN Rail)

----- Primary Highway

——— Secondary Highway

# Map 11: Utility Infrastructure Communication and Internet







# 7.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Economic Development refers to a range of activities intended to attract, create, or retain private sector jobs and investment in a given geographical area. These activities may involve the use of public and private funds for area infrastructure investments, business financing assistance, the analysis of regional assets and attributes in the establishment of economic plans and strategies (Grant and Hall, 1988).

Balancing the development of a strong regional economy and the unintended consequences of growth requires the County make decisions affecting its partnerships and collaborations with other agencies and municipalities, policies affecting various industries growth prospects and their impacts on land use and the environment, and the fiscal and operational decisions regarding taxes and levies, infrastructure improvements and licensing and permitting activities.

The County's Economic Development team has formed several partnerships with surrounding communities and agencies critical to the success of its regional growth objectives. These partnerships will remain critical to realizing the County's growth vision.

This strategy is designed for implementation over the next 5 years (2018-2023) and beyond. Appropriate monitoring and governance of the strategy will ensure adjustments will be made as required.

# 7.1 Strategic Directions

A series of interviews, surveys, community input sessions, and a symposium provided perspectives from a broad cross section of the County. Together with extensive economic analysis outlined in this Strategy's background reports, several critical opportunities for the County's future economic growth have been identified.

Though agriculture, energy and forestry will remain critical drivers of the regional economy, emerging opportunities in value added agriculture, bio-industry, tourism, commercial and retail development will play an increasingly important role in the region's development. The ability to provide high quality education and training and leverage important public investments such as the new regional hospital will be important enablers to capturing these new growth opportunities.









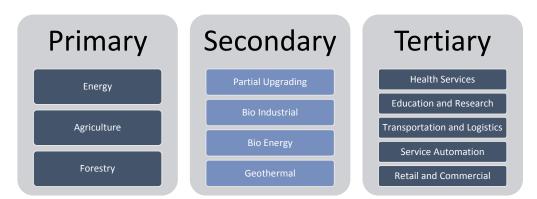


Figure 13: County of Grande Prairie Strategic Economic Development Opportunities

The lessons from these consultations and industry analysis resulted in some critical insights that informed our employment and population projections in three scenarios outlined in Section 4.0.

In the Conservative Growth Scenario, regional growth is driven by continued expansion of primary industries of energy, agriculture and forestry. Tertiary industries such as regional health services, business services and retail expansion will drive additional employment and population growth.

The Moderate Growth Scenario assumes the County builds on the foundations of the Conservative Scenario and capitalizes on clean energy production through renewable energy (e.g., geothermal) and bio-energy opportunities over the medium- to long-term. Existing primary industries are also able to attract investment to develop value- added opportunities in petro-chemicals, partial upgrading and bio-industrial opportunities leveraging feedstocks from all three primary industries.

The Optimistic Growth Scenario further builds out opportunities derived from regional health service expansion, expanded education and applied research opportunities, integrated and expanded tourism, growing production capacity in primary industries through service automation and the follow-on effects in transportation, logistics, retail and commercial development.

# 7.1.1 Economic Development Principles

To capture the many opportunities identified in the community, several guiding economic development principles were developed based on community input.

1. **Support Collaboration.** Facilitating community dialogue to balance and align interests is critical to unlocking effective, and mutually beneficial partnerships. These collaborations can concern integrated land uses, joint marketing and sector initiatives with neighbouring communities and the development of infrastructure critical to attracting investment, diversifying economic activities and fostering a resilient economy and sustainable region.



- 2. **Foster Entrepreneurship.** The County of Grande Prairie is an entrepreneurial and driven community that has an economic impact greater than its population might lead others to expect. Continuing to foster this entrepreneurial approach will be critical to identifying and capturing new opportunities in shifting commodity markets of energy, agriculture and forestry and developing new capabilities in the region related to health and education.
- **3. Develop Local Leadership.** Holding and advancing the growth vision for the County requires a strong and diverse team of local leaders. This team will understand their opportunity to advance the community and regional economy through effective stewardship of the communities natural and human resources through dynamic market conditions.
- **4. Foster Market Access.** Developing initiatives that balance agricultural, industrial, commercial and residential land uses with regional environmental sustainability requires the prudent development of infrastructure to access regional and global markets. Continued focus on the Regional Trading Area and Global requires strong marketing and strong transportation and logistics infrastructure.
- **5. Leverage Natural Advantages.** Natural resource reserves in the County have driven historical growth. Over the planning period, the ongoing ingenuity and inventiveness of County residents will be critical to developing new value-add opportunities in evolving bio-economy and energy markets.
- **6. Focus on Impacts.** Economic Development and Growth initiatives need to target and achieve a clear set of impacts. Emergent resilient community standards point the way for the County to monitor a resilient economy and critical quality of life factors that will continue to attract the talent and capital to sustain the region's long term growth.

## 7.1.2 Economic Development Strategy Summary

The Economic Development Strategy for the County of Grande Prairie is summarized in "Figure 14: Economic Development Strategy Summary".



# Figure 14: Economic Development Strategy Summary

#### **Investment Attraction**

- •Leverage Strengths by attracting investments for regional productivity
- •Strengthen retail and services investment attraction

## Diversification

- Focus on value-added resource development
- Develop a Petrochemical sector strategy
- Develop a Clean Technology and Bio-Industrial sector strategy
- Develop a Tourism strategy
- Develop a Workforce strategy
- •Strengthen business mentorship
- •Identify economic resiliency lessons

# Sustainability

- •Lead on the low carbon economy
- encourage business investment in productivity and competitiveness
- Strengthen access to markets

#### Collaboration

- Provide strong regional leadership
- •Strengthen relationships with cities, hamlets and surrounding counties
- Partner for growth

## Marketing

- •Sustain and build on the strong County brand
- Increase Tourism marketing

## **Monitoring Progress**

- Policy
- •Establish Economic Development strategy governance
- Monitor progress



# 7.2 Investment Attraction

# 7.2.1 Leverage Strengths by Attracting Investments for Regional Productivity

Agriculture, Forestry and Energy sectors have several opportunities to drive greater regional productivity and competitiveness through innovation. Attracting new types of service providers to the region will ensure local access to expertise, technologies and processes that will accelerate impacts on performance.

TIMEFRAME	ACTIONS
2018	Build awareness of the opportunities for service automation and productivity solutions for service companies and regional industry
2019	Conduct a regional productivity benchmarking study to determine critical opportunities for regional industries to improve their productivity.
2020	Conduct a targeted investment attraction campaign in areas of high priority to local industry.
2023	Repeat the regional benchmarking study to see impacts and identify the next priority areas for investment attraction.

# 7.2.2 Strengthen Retail and Services Investment Attraction

Regional growth resulting from the scheduled opening of the new Grande Prairie Regional Hospital presents significant retail and services opportunities. Growth in traditional sectors and their value-added opportunities will create even stronger regional demand. Expanded efforts in investment attraction will be needed to maximize the regional benefits for County residents.

TIMEFRAME	ACTIONS
2018	Update the Retail and Commercial attraction package with a longer view of opportunities in the region.
Annually	Select and target high priority retail and commercial opportunities for development in the County.



# 7.3 Diversification

# 7.3.1 Focus on Value-Added Resource Development

Energy, forestry and agricultural sectors have prospered in the County. All of these sectors face continued growth, but also face new challenges. Facing uncertain prices for energy products projected over the next 15 years by the National Energy Board and other industry experts, the County's energy opportunity needs to find additional opportunities to add value to the resource. Forestry, too, faced with market access challenges, can see waste streams converted to new sources of value. Agriculture, also faces new opportunities to increase on-farm value through yield increasing crops, to new opportunities in bioenergy or bio-products.

Maximizing opportunities to create new products and businesses in these value chain in the County present important new industrial development opportunities. Many are capital intensive opportunities requiring ready access to industrial parcels and highly skilled labour. Attracting and developing these new opportunities will enhance the value and volumes of regional exports and increasing the demand for knowledge-based companies focused on information and communications technology, imaging, automation and analytics solutions.

TIMEFRAME	ACTIONS
2018	Develop a Petrochemical Sector strategy.
21018	Develop a Cleantech and Bio-Industrial Sector strategy that addresses power generation from geothermal and wind sources, and value-added opportunities in forestry and agriculture sectors.
2019	Refine an investment attraction program targeting appropriate opportunities for leveraging regional biomass feedstocks and gas and liquids resources.
2019	Define and leverage regional business needs to develop effective, collaborative relationships with regional research and educational institutions, such as Grande Prairie Regional College and Lakeland College and the Regional Innovation Network to support the development of needed innovations and a skilled workforce.
2020	Link industry and regional research partners to collaborate to identify, develop, and translate innovations into business opportunities.

# 7.3.2 Develop a Tourism Strategy

The County of Grande Prairie plays host to many natural attractions. Today, tourism sector development requires carefully planning a series of regional tourism experiences exposing international visitors to natural wonders and anchor amenities, such as the recently opened Currie Dinosaur Museum.



TIMEFRAME	ACTIONS
2018	Support the Regional Tourism Association develop a new Tourism Strategy that capitalizes on leading practices in tourism experience design.
2019	Encourage and monitor the identification and development of new regional tourism operator capacity.
2020	Increase international tourism marketing.
2022	Review tourism sector growth and support the update of the Tourism strategy.

# 7.3.3 Develop a Workforce Strategy

A skilled and available workforce is critical to the supporting business growth, innovation and prosperity. Business cycles place undue pressure on the availability of skilled labour in the County. A broad availability of training and educational opportunities in the region is also critical to developing and retaining talent in the region.

TIMEFRAME	ACTIONS
2018	Partner with Alberta Health Services and regional communities to attract workers for the new regional hospital.
ONGOING	Identify workforce gaps with employers and develop partnerships with regional educators to provide needed trades and skilled workforce training.
2018-2023	Join with the Grande Prairie Regional College to encourage greater post-secondary programs delivery options (including degree granting) to retain more youth in the region.

# 7.3.4 Strengthen Business Mentorship

Beyond developing the workforce, the region's ability to leverage the expertise of local business leaders by strengthening mentor networks expands the speed by which County companies can leverage leading and next practices to be more productive and competitive.

TIMEFRAME	ACTIONS
2018	Encourage the Chamber to leverage the support of the Alberta Venture Mentor Service as a province-wide network of business leaders to provide mentorship to business leaders and enhance regional capacity through their mentorship training programs.
2019	Leverage regional consultations to encourage the Chamber to develop a mentor network.



# 7.3.5 Identify Economic Resiliency Lessons

Learning how successful companies have managed through economic turbulence can aid in developing successful value-added approaches to diversification. Gather information and share practices to increase the success rates of current and emerging companies in the region.

TIMEFRAME	ACTIONS
2018	Harvest key learnings and insights on resilience from the sector strategy development efforts.
2019	Share best practices with local industry through community events and programs. Share insights with the mentor program efforts too.
2019	Identify a community sponsor to sustain this effort and integrate it with community organizations.

# 7.4 Sustainability

# 7.4.1 Lead on the Low Carbon Economy

Improving productivity in the County's primary resource sectors presents opportunities for low carbon innovation. The increasing price on carbon in Alberta and Canada will impact investment behaviour and opportunities. It also presents a market for new carbon innovation. Alberta's energy sector has already recognized Canada could be global leader in low carbon production technologies and create new products with sequestered carbon.

The County of Grande Prairie can provide leadership by developing new green infrastructure initiatives that can leverage carbon levy reinvestment while also showing local industry new markets for low carbon innovations and products.

TIMEFRAME	ACTIONS
2018	Identify high potential low carbon investment opportunities in the County, highlighting them through the sector strategies.
2018	Identify funding sources that can support de-risking and piloting new low carbon innovations for local firms.
2018	Identify green infrastructure initiatives relevant to long term capital planning in the County, such as geothermal power generation, or opportunities to integrate innovations into water and waste management systems.
ONGOING	Provide ongoing reporting of green infrastructure initiatives in any capital planning and published County emissions reporting.
ONGOING	Identify potential County pilot opportunities with innovators that can see demonstration projects in established industrial parks.



# 7.4.2 Encourage Business Investment in Productivity and Competitiveness

All major firms in each primary industry communicated their need for greater investment in broadband infrastructure across the County. This common need is critical to achieving greater productivity gains from investments in better data-driven decision making and service automation. Regional firms can also improve their competitiveness with similar investment.

TIMEFRAME	ACTIONS
2018	Develop a regional broadband strategy with neighbouring hamlets, cities and counties.
2018	Work with the Chamber of Commerce to highlight new productivity solutions for regional firms in upcoming trade fairs and conferences in areas such as remote monitoring, preventative maintenance, and other common industrial efficiency use cases.

# 7.4.3 Strengthen Access to Markets

Commodities produced in the County have adequate market access today. However, growing output results from greater productivity, expanded industrial development, the creation of more value-added goods and any development of the tourism sector requires better market access.

TIMEFRAME	ACTIONS
2019	Integrate transportation findings identified in value-added sector strategies into multi-modal and inter-regional transportation requirements for rail and highway into transportation planning assumptions.
2020	Develop market access strategies for petrochemical, bio-economy value-added products.
2022	Review changing air transportation needs resulting from the Tourism activities.

# 7.5 Collaboration

# 7.5.1 Strong Regional Leadership

Building a strong regional economy requires effective and meaningful collaboration. Recent examples of County collaboration include the Tri-Municipal Partnership announced in December 2016 to develop a new industrial park the City of Grande Prairie and County of Greenview. These partnerships will be critical to the development and effective execution of regional sector strategies and market access initiatives and may warrant refinement or redevelopment of intermunicipal development plans (IDP).



TIMEFRAME	ACTIONS
2018	Explore economic development partnerships with regional communities such as the City of Grande Prairie, Sexsmith, Beaverlodge, Hythe, Wembley, the County of Greenview, Horse Lake First Nations.
2018	Update regional Inter-municipal Development Plans (IDP) to reflect a new relationship.
ONGOING	Monitor the performance and validity of the Inter-municipal Development Plans (IDPs) on an annual basis.

#### 7.5.2 Partner for Growth

Continue and expand collaboration with other economic drivers and those that create barriers to economic growth. Cultivating a strong network of partner organizations that can advance a shared agenda in the County will be important to cultivate. These partners include trade associations, chambers of commerce, educational institutions, large regional employers and transportation firms, provincial and federal agencies.

TIMEFRAME	ACTIONS
ONGOING	Integrate regional economic development partnerships into regional innovation and business networks with partners to advance sector strategies and regional growth opportunities.

# 7.6 Marketing

Continuing to develop the reputation of the County of Grande Prairie as a growth oriented community focused on opportunities in agriculture, forestry, energy and related value-added development is important to attract businesses, employees and the additional services and amenities. The County should continue is aggressive marketing of the "Middle of Everywhere" brand and extend it to serve the needs of new growth opportunities.

# 7.6.1 Sustain and Build on Strong County Brand

The current Middle of Everywhere Brand has been a strong representation of the County's growth ambitions. This brand can be strengthened to project a strong, positive and inviting image for investment and talent attraction.

TIMEFRAME	ACTIONS
2018	Develop a branding strategy for specific industrial parks and integrate this into the marketing strategy for "Middle of Everywhere".
2019	Develop marketing plans, campaigns and assets for the specific needs of the sector strategies as they are implemented.



# 7.6.2 Tourism Marketing

The opportunity to develop tourism opportunities presents the need for greater emphasis on tourism product development, positioning and promotions. Identifying and targeting specific markets to increase tourism activity will require County campaigns to identify and develop regional tourism operators and national and international campaigns to attract specific targeted demographics to the tourism experiences available in the County

TIMEFRAME	ACTIONS
2018	Foster the development of additional local tourism operators through the Grande Prairie Regional Tourism Association.
2019	Support the Grande Prairie Regional Tourism Association identify additional expertise and resources to increase targeted tourism activity.

# 7.7 Key Performance Indicators

# **7.7.1 Policy**

Policy and regulatory decisions of the County can influence the attractiveness of the community to attracting investment and capitalizing on appropriately balancing growth opportunities and improvements to quality of life. Strong governance and monitoring of the strategy will provide all stakeholders including residents, businesses, elected officials, and staff are informed and able to navigate the many important decisions successfully.

# 7.7.2 Establish Economic Development Strategy Governance

Develop a County-wide monitoring team to provide insight and advice on the establishment and monitoring of benchmarks or economic, socio-economic, land use and environmental performance. Monitoring plans provide the quantitative and qualitative data to assess effectiveness and enable and increased opportunity for success.

TIMEFRAME	ACTIONS
2018	Obtain Council approval to create terms of reference and establish a monitoring team.
2018	Identify regional collaboration opportunities with surrounding communities to define joint initiatives with the County for cost effectiveness of monitoring activities.
2018	Establish a monitoring framework and benchmarks to support effective monitoring.
SEMI-ANNUAL	Report progress to Council
ANNUALLY	Scan benchmark communities to monitor property prices and tax assessments to maintain the County's competitive position.
ONGOING	Gather data for monitoring program.



### 7.7.3 Monitor Progress

The County should set and monitor progress against explicit growth targets for key sector opportunities. The Economic Development team can leverage the economic development and growth strategy to support the direction needed to enhance target investment attraction, business expansion and retention efforts for the County.

TIMEFRAME	ACTIONS
2018	Investigate a cost neutral Business Permit System to assist in tracking County business and economic patterns and trends.
2019	Establish tools to monitor the performance of this strategy against targets including satisfaction of the business community with efforts of the County and its partners.
ANNUALLY	Provide a yearly update on business activities, trends and metrics in the key sectors for growth (Agricultural, Forestry, Energy, Value-Added, Services, Retail, Commercial).

#### 7.7.4 Monitor Business Environment

Develop and implement a system to track businesses and increase understanding of business trends. A significant step in advancing this capacity is a cost neutral business permit system. It will increase the ability of the County to reach out to targeted businesses, understand their needs, include them in key growth opportunities and assist them in their development efforts.

TIMEFRAME	ACTIONS
2018	Study the feasibility and design of a cost neutral Business Permit System to assist in tracking local business and economic patterns and trends.
2019	If approved, implement the Business Permit System. Bring semi-annual updates about the system to Council.





# 8.0 SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

# 8.1 Growth Management

## 8.1.1 Key Findings

- 1. The population and employment projections were prepared for the County of Grande Prairie to the year 2066, based on annual growth rates of 1.2%, 1.6%, and 2.2%.
- 2. For planning purposes, the moderate population forecast was used to find land demand for the additional 27,785 people.
- 3. Assuming an average household size of 2.4, an additional 13,194 dwelling units will be required over the next 50 years to accommodate the additional 27,785 residents.
- 4. Although currently, most County residents live in large lot County Residential subdivisions. The trend for the future is the future is for more compact smaller lot, urban style subdivisions with Clairmont Heights coming on stream.
- 5. Currently there are 5,673 hectares of land zoned for industrial use. Based on the moderate employment projection, the County of Grande Prairie will require 3,075 hectares (7,598 acres) of industrial land, leaving a surplus of 216 hectares (533 acres) in the year 2066.
- 6. Currently there are 137 hectares of land zoned for commercial use. Based on the moderate population projection, the County of Grande Prairie will have a surplus of 92 hectares (227 acres) of commercial land given the current supply of zoned land and vacancy rates.
- 7. Currently there are 18, 514 hectares of land zoned for residential use. Based on the moderate population projection, the County of Grande Prairie will have a surplus of 1,243 hectares (3,071 acres) of industrial land given the current supply of zoned land and vacancy rates in the year 2066.
- 8. *"Table 13: Summary of Land Requirements"* summarizes the supply, demand, and surplus for residential, commercial, and industrial land in the next 50 years.
- 9. Three Growth Options for growth in the County were developed: Balanced, Nodal, and Concentrated. It was concluded that the Balanced Growth Option was the best choice for the following reasons:
- Supporting continuous growth and development of the urban municipalities of Sexsmith, Beaverlodge, Hythe, and Wembley. Intermunicipal Development Plans are being prepared to manage growth and development in the urban fringe areas.
- Directing future residential and industrial development and growth to the growth hamlets of Clairmont, La Glace, and Bezanson.
- Revitalizing and maintaining service in the stable hamlets of Huallen, Dimsdale, Wedgewood, Teepee Creek, and Valhalla Centre.
- Clustering country residential development to maintain efficient and cost effective provision of municipal services including water, wastewater, and roadways.



- Directs, whenever possible, industrial and commercial development away from high productivity farmland to promote agriculture in the County.
- Ensures that existing community services and amenities such as schools, hospitals, community halls, and arenas remain viable and accessible to the greatest number of residents. It provides opportunities to create new services in these communities as they are needed.
- Creates complete communities that are healthy, safe, and inclusive that provide a high quality
  of life for residents by preserving the existing community fabric while providing housing choices
  from country residential or country estate, to single family, to apartment style housing along
  with recreational and community amenities.
- Protects environmentally sensitive areas around the Wapiti River Corridor, the Smoky River, Saskatoon Mountain Park and the many streams, creeks, ponds, and lakes throughout the County. Wildlife habitat and movement corridors are protected.
- Supports the County's guiding principles of growing and diversifying the economy and providing ample "shovel ready" land for commercial and industrial development by creating a variety of locations and servicing levels for industrial and commercial development that cater to a range of industry sectors and commercial typologies.

Table 13: Summary of Land Requirements

	Land Forecast					
	Residential		Commercial		Industrial	
Vaau	New Land	Surplus/Deficit	New Land	Surplus/Deficit	New Land	Surplus/Deficit
Year	(ha)	(ha)	(ha)	(ha)	(ha)	(ha)
2016	0	11,019	0	-	0	-
2021	175	10,844	0	109	49	2,414
2026	500	10,344	1	108	66	2,348
2031	760	9,584	1	107	90	2,257
2036	894	8,690	1	106	107	2,150
2041	985	7,705	2	105	118	2,033
2046	431	7,274	2	103	129	1,903
2051	608	6,667	2	101	142	1,761
2056	620	6,046	2	98	156	1,605
2061	628	5,419	3	96	172	1,432
2066	639	4,780	3	92	189	1,243



#### 8.2.3 Recommendations

- 1. That Council approve in principle the Balanced Growth Option as the preferred growth option to serve as the foundation for the review and update to the County of Grande Prairie's Municipal Development Plan that is underway.
- 2. Consistent with the requirements of the new Modernized Municipal Government Act, the County will work co-operatively with the City of Grande Prairie, Towns of Beaverlodge; Wembley; and Sexsmith, and Village of Hythe in completing Intermunicipal Development Plans (IDPs) and to determine future land use patterns and supporting infrastructure, both physical and social, to support the building of complete communities.
- 3. That the County of Grande Prairie initiate or complete Area Structure Plans and Master Servicing Plans for the growth hamlets of La Glace and Bezanson.
- 4. That Area Structure Plans be prepared for the three (3) future Country Residential growth areas (A, B, C) shown on "Map 5: Balanced Growth Option" to provide a framework for future subdivision, development, and provision of municipal services. Given the sensitivity of the environment in Saskatoon Mountain Natural Area an Area Structure Plan for this area should take a cluster development approach to subdivisions to protect the sensitive features.
- 5. Continue to work co-operatively with Aquatera to implement the required upgrades to the sewer and water infrastructure needed to accommodate an additional 15,000 to 20,000 people in Clairmont.
- 6. Continue to make representation to the Government of Alberta to twin Highway 40 to Grande Cache to support the potential for economic development in partnership with the MD of Greenview and the City of Grande Prairie.
- 7. Continue to call for the twinning of Highway 43 to British Columbia given its importance as a major transportation route to the Yukon and Alaska.
- 8. That the County of Grande Prairie explore alternative organizational and governance models to provide a co-operative regional approach to economic development (marketing).
- 9. Institute a Hamlet revitalization program for the stable hamlets of Teepee Creek, Valhalla Centre, Goodfare, Elmsworth, Hueallen, and Dimsdale.

# 8.2 Infrastructure Gap Analysis

#### 8.2.1 Key Findings

- 1. The County contains important wildlife and biodiversity zones which provide migratory routes and cover for several wildlife species. These routes are primarily along the Wapiti River, Bear River, and Pipestone Creek.
- 2. The County contains important bird areas, particularly trumpeter swan habitat. Trumpeter swans are considered a threatened species by the Alberta Wildlife Act.



- 3. The County contains several surface water features which provide habitat for fish, amphibians, water fowl; migratory routes for birds, and mammals. The riparian area along these water features also provide valuable ecological functions within a water basin including trapping sediment, recharging aquifers, and slowing flood waters.
- 4. Water features within the County pose a potential flood risk for areas located along the water body. A flood risk analysis study have been completed for the Bear River.
- 5. The County contains large swaths of Class 2 and Class 3 (high quality) soils which will be impacted by development within the area.
- 6. The County is serviced by through a transportation network including several primary and secondary highways, an airport, and rail. The existing infrastructure positions the County well to grow, however, the following infrastructure is anticipated within the 50 year growth period:
  - Highway 43 twinning to the BC border.
- Grande Prairie and Beaverlodge by-passes.
- Highway 40 twinning.
- Grande Prairie Airport Expansion.
- 7. Significant upgrades to water and wastewater infrastructure are expected to service growth expectations, particularly outside of the Grande Prairie service area. New infrastructure, upgrades, or regionalization from Grande Prairie will be required to service growth in rural areas and hamlets, and around existing Towns and Villages.
- 8. The County has partnered with industry to improve wireless internet coverage with its boundaries. Investment is required to improve broadband speed and redundancy in the system.

#### 8.2.2 Recommendations

- 1. Initiate planning for water/wastewater upgrades to service growth plans with their hamlets and rural subdivisions.
- 2. Work with the urban municipalities within the region to investigate regional opportunities to service urban fringe growth.
- 3. Investigate opportunities to work with broadband carriers to seek investment in the region. Investigate a regional fibre network to extend fibre-based service to strategic locations within the County.
- 4. Complete flood risk studies for the rivers (less Bear River) within the County.
- 5. Consider conservation of wildlife zones, and trumpeter swan habitat in land use planning bylaws.
- 6. Develop regulatory framework to protect wetland and riparian buffers.
- 7. Prioritize conservation of highest value agricultural land through land use zoning and development permitting.



# 8.3 Economic Development

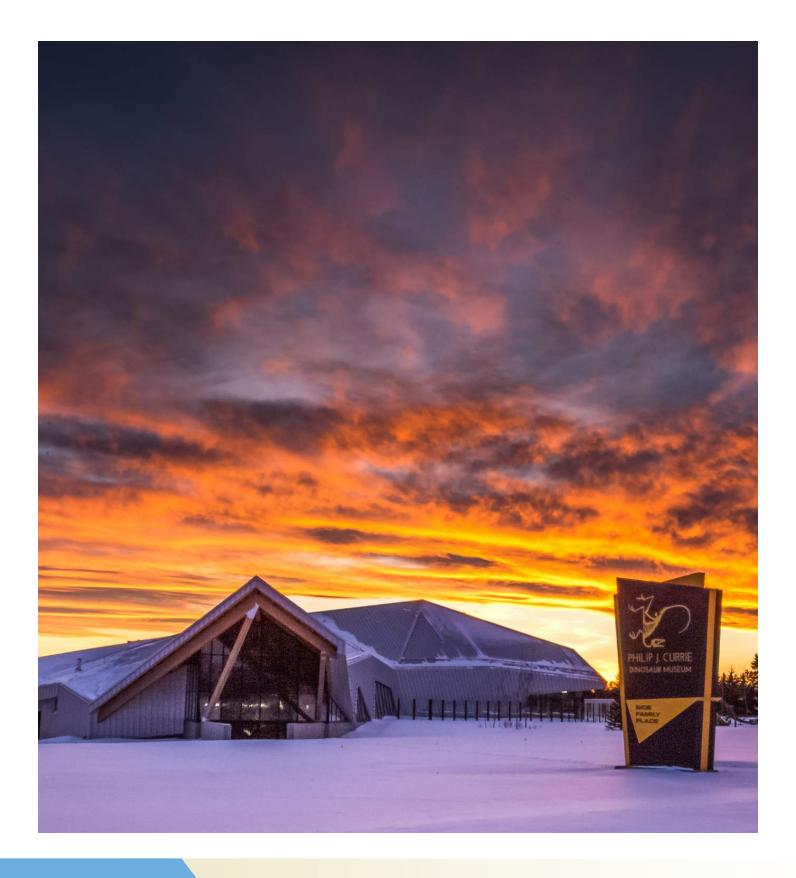
#### 8.3.1 Key Findings

- 1. Energy, Agriculture and Forestry will continue to be the primary economic drivers in the Region.
- 2. Partial upgrading, petrochemicals, cleantech and bio-industrial opportunities present attractive growth opportunities.
- 3. Capitalizing on regional service expansion in healthcare will create added housing and retail demand.
- 4. Strengthening regional efforts to enhance the productivity and competitiveness of industry through applied R&D opportunities will contribute to workforce development and retention while improving the ability of local industry to see continued regional growth.
- 5. There are several critical partnerships in place to make progress on growth opportunities, such as the Tri-Municipal Partnership, that serve as models for future efforts.

#### 8.3.2 Recommendations

- 1. Investment Attraction. Leverage Strengths by attracting investments to improve regional productivity in established industries while expanding retail and services opportunities.
- 2. Diversify the regional economy by focusing on value-added resource development, cleantech and bio-industrial development.
- 3. Develop a Tourism and workforce strategy that builds regional capacity and increases awareness of the amenities and lifestyle available in the County.
- 4. Strengthen the region's companies through added capacity for business mentorship and shared learnings from other regions on developing economic resiliency.
- 5. Improve the County's sustainability opportunities by leading on the low carbon economy.
- 6. Encourage business investment in productivity and competitiveness.
- 7. Improve access to markets through greater regional collaboration with industry and stronger relationships with surrounding cities, hamlets and surrounding counties
- 8. Build on current marketing programs to sustain and build on the strong County brand and extending its scope into tourism marketing.
- 9. Monitor progress on the strategy with strengthened governance and regular reporting on success.







# 9.0 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

This section of the report outlines twenty-two (22) important actions that could be taken in the next five (5) years to advance the recommendations in Section 8.2 and to begin implementation of the Growth Management Strategy, addressing the infrastructure gaps identified, and working on growing and diversifying the County's economy. Some of these actions are already underway. Implementing the *Growth and Economic Development Strategy* will require leadership, co-operation with neighbouring municipalities, collaboration between public and private sectors, and the adoption of new economic strategies. The following table outlines actions that can accomplish these, the type of action, who is responsible, and some potential funding sources:

Table 14: Five Year Action Plans for Implementation of the Strategy

Actions 2018-2023							
Action	Type of Action Responsibility		Potential Funding Sources				
	Growth Management						
<ol> <li>Review and update the County's Municipal Development Plan</li> </ol>	Policy Development	Planning &     Development Services	County Operating     Budget				
2. Complete Intermunicipal Development Plans (IDPs) and Intermunicipal Collaboration Frameworks (ICFs) with neighbouring municipalities	Policy Development	<ul> <li>Planning &amp; Development Services</li> <li>Town of Beaverlodge</li> <li>Town of Sexsmith</li> <li>Town of Wembley</li> <li>Village of Hythe</li> <li>City of Grande Prairie</li> <li>MD of Greenview</li> <li>Birch Hills County</li> <li>Saddle Hills County</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>County Operating Budget</li> <li>Alberta Community Partnership Grant</li> </ul>				
3. Complete Area Structure Plans (ASPs) and Master Servicing Plans for the growth hamlets of La Glace and Bezanson.	Policy Development	<ul> <li>Planning &amp;         Development Services     </li> <li>Public Works</li> </ul>	County Operating     Budget				
4. Prepare Area Structure Plans (ASPs) for the three (3) Country Residential growth areas identified in the Balanced Growth Option	Policy Development	<ul> <li>Planning &amp; Development Services</li> <li>Alberta Environment and Parks</li> </ul>	Provincial Funding				



Actions 2018-2023					
Action	Type of Action	Responsibility	Potential Funding Sources		
5. Participate in the creation of the Upper Peace Regional Plan with the Government of Alberta	Policy Development	<ul> <li>Planning &amp; Development Services</li> <li>Public Works</li> </ul>	<ul><li>County Operating Budget</li><li>Provincial Grants</li></ul>		
	Provision o	of Infrastructure			
6. Work with Aquatera to implement the required upgrades to sewer and water infrastructure in Clairmont, Mercer Hill Reservoir, and a Regional Lift Station to Grande Prairie	Infrastructure Project	<ul> <li>Aquatera</li> <li>Planning &amp; Development Services</li> <li>Public Works</li> </ul>	<ul><li>Utility Charges</li><li>Offsite Levies</li><li>County Capital Budget</li></ul>		
7. Make representation to the Province of Alberta to twin Highway 40 to Grande Cache.	Advocacy	<ul><li>Reeve and Council</li><li>Alberta Infrastructure</li><li>Alberta Transportation</li></ul>	Alberta     Transportation's     Capital Budget		
8. Make representation to the Province of Alberta and the Government of Canada to twin Highway 43 to British Columbia	Advocacy	<ul> <li>Reeve and Council</li> <li>Alberta Infrastructure</li> <li>Alberta Transportation</li> <li>Infrastructure Canada</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Canada Strategic Infrastructure Fund</li> <li>Alberta Transportation's Capital Budget</li> </ul>		
9. Make representation to the Province of Alberta and the Government of Canada to construct the Grande Prairie Highway 43 Bypass, Southwest Resources Road, and Southeast Bypass	Advocacy	<ul> <li>Reeve and Council</li> <li>Alberta Infrastructure</li> <li>Alberta Transportation</li> <li>Infrastructure Canada</li> </ul>	Canada Strategic     Infrastructure Fund		



Actions 2018-2023					
Action	Type of Action Responsibility		Potential Funding Sources		
10. Design and construct upgrades to the Bezanson lagoon	Infrastructure Project	Engineering and Public Works	Alberta Municipal     Water/Wastewater     Partnership		
			Off-site Levies		
			Utility Charges		
			County Capital     Budget		
11. Investigate municipal water systems for La Glace	Infrastructure Project	Engineering and Public Works	Alberta Municipal     Water/Wastewater     Partnership		
			County Capital     Budget		
12. Investigate implementation of municipal water system in Dimsdale after regional line to Wembley is constructed	Infrastructure Project	Engineering and Public Works	County Operating     Budget		
13. Update County Design Standards to reflect Alberta Environment and Parks Standards and Guidelines regarding stormwater quality	Policy Development	Planning &     Development Services	County Operating     Budget		
14. Adopt Infrastructure Resiliency Practices with County Design Standards	Policy Development	<ul> <li>Planning &amp; Development Services</li> <li>Public Works</li> </ul>	County Operating     Budget		
15. Investigate Opportunities to improve broadband speed or wireless internet system within County	Advocacy	<ul> <li>Reeve and Council</li> <li>Planning &amp; Development Services</li> </ul>	County Operating     Budget		



Actions 2018-2023					
Action	Type of Action	Responsibility	Potential Funding Sources		
16. Include wetlands in policy development; consider identifying wetland areas where onsite replacement instead of in-lieu fee payment should take place	Policy Development	Planning &     Development Services	<ul> <li>Watershed         Resiliency and         Restoration         Program</li> <li>County Operating         Budget</li> </ul>		
17. Investigate the development of a intermunicipal bus system with the County and surrounding Municipalities	Infrastructure	<ul> <li>Planning &amp; Development Services</li> <li>Public Works</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>County Operating Budget</li> <li>Government of Canada and Alberta Transportation GreenTRIP program</li> </ul>		
18. Rank agricultural capability of the growth areas and prioritize conservation of the highest value agricultural land through land use zoning and development permitting as part of the MDP review and update	Policy Development	Planning &     Development Services	County Operating     Budget		
	Economic	Development			
19. Strengthen Economic Development Governance to engage key community leaders in the growth strategy	Policy Development	Economic Development	County Operating     Budget		
20. Develop a measurement and reporting framework to share with County stakeholders the impacts of the Economic Development Strategy	Policy Development	• Economic Development •	Private Industry     Funding		



Actions 2018-2023						
Action	Type of Action	Responsibility	Potential Funding Sources			
21. Create an integrated advocacy plan to leverage key stakeholders and partners in a common effort to influence local, regional, provincial and national partners around the Strategy and its initiatives.	Advocacy	Economic Development	<ul> <li>County Operating Budget</li> <li>Provincial Investment Attraction Project Funding Programs</li> </ul>			
22. Develop strategic initiatives that align with the Strategies objectives to attract investment, improve productivity and develop regional capacity to support growth.	Program Development	<ul> <li>Economic Development</li> <li>Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>Regional Economic Development Partnerships</li> <li>Alberta Innovates</li> <li>Grande Prairie Regional Tourism Association</li> <li>Town of Beaverlodge</li> <li>Town of Sexsmith</li> <li>Town of Wembley</li> <li>Village of Hythe</li> <li>City of Grande Prairie</li> <li>MD of Greenview</li> <li>Birch Hills County</li> <li>Saddle Hills County</li> <li>Regional Colleges and Innovation Networks</li> <li>Alberta Health Services</li> <li>Go Productivity</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>County Operating Funds</li> <li>Government of Alberta</li> <li>Climate Leadership Secretariat and Emissions Reduction Alberta</li> <li>Municipal Affairs</li> <li>Tourism Alberta</li> <li>NRCan</li> <li>Sustainable Technology Development Canada</li> <li>Western Economic Diversification</li> <li>Alberta Municipal Water/Waste Water Partnership (AMWWP)</li> </ul>			



# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Plan

**Area Structure** means a framework for subdivision and development of an area of land that describes the sequence of development, proposed land uses, the population density for the area, and the location of major transportation routes and utilities (see Municipal Government Act, RSA 2000, c M-26 s 633).

**Bio-Mass** 

means the total mass of biological material in a given area or volume.

**Broadband** 

means high-speed, continuous access to the internet, with a bandwidth greater than what is provided by a telephone line.

Commercial

means the use of land, building, or structure for the purpose of buying and selling of commodities and supplying services.

**Dwelling Unit** 

means a complete building or self-contained portion of a building used by a household, containing sleeping, cooking and sanitary facilities intended as a permanent residence and having an independent entrance either directly from the outside of the building or through a common area inside the building.

#### **Economic** Diversification

means increasing the range of economic outputs in a region.

#### Industrial

**Light** - means industrial developments that operate in such a manner that no nuisance factor is created or apparent outside an enclosed building. Limited outdoor activities (loading, service, storage, etc.) that are accessory to a principal Use.

**Medium** - means industrial development for manufacturing, processing, assembly, distribution, service and repair Uses that carry out a portion of their operation outdoors or require outdoor storage areas. Any nuisance associated with such Uses should not generally extend beyond the boundaries of the Site.

**Heavy** – means industrial development that, due to their appearance, noise, odour, risk of toxic emissions, or fire and explosion hazards are incompatible with residential, commercial, and other land Uses. These developments should normally be located on the interior of industrial or agricultural areas, such that it does not interfere with the safety, Use, amenity or enjoyment of any surrounding Zones

**Infrastructure** means the urban facilities that are required to service land for its subsequent development and use, usually referring to roads, bridges and utilities.



Land Use Bylaw

means a bylaw passed by a municipality that regulates and controls the use and development of land and buildings in a municipality (see Municipal Government Act, RSA 2000, c M-26 Div 5)

Mixed use

means development that contains three-dimensional, pedestrian-oriented places that layer compatible land uses, public amenities, and utilities together at various scales and intensities. This variety of uses allows for people to live, work, play and shop in one place, which then becomes a destination for people from other areas.

Municipal Development Plan a county/municipality-wide statutory policy plan pursuant to the MGA, which when used with the Land Use Bylaw forms the foundation of land use and development policies.

**Office** means a room, set of rooms, or building used as a place for commercial, professional, or bureaucratic work.

**Off-Site Levies** means fees established through municipal bylaw. The charge is imposed as a condition of subdivision or development approval. The Muncipal Government Act deems it just and reasonable that subdivisions, developments and redevelopments should bear a fair

portion of the cost of constructing or expanding certain municipal infrastructure facilities

such as roads, water lines/treatment/storage and sewage facilities/ lines, etc.

**Residential** means the use of land, building, or structure as a dwelling for human habitation.

**Retail** means the sale or offering of goods, wares, merchandise, substances, articles, or things

including storage of limited quantities of the above.

Servicing (utility)

means any line, wire, cable, or pipe used to distribute, transmit, or deliver a utility

service from a feeder or main line to an end user of the utility.

**Shovel ready** means land that is zoned under Land Use Bylaw #2680, is serviced up to the property

line, has access conforming with engineering and servicing standards, and is ready for

development within a six-month timeframe.



# **REFERENCES**

Alberta Environment and Parks. (n.d.). Trumpeter Swans A Guide for Landowners. Retrieved from Wildlife Species: http://aep.alberta.ca/fish-wildlife/wild-species/birds/waterfowl/documents/SARTrumpeterSwan-GuideForLandowners.pdf

Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development. (2012, September 27). Recommended Land Use Guidelines for Trumpeter Swan Habitat. Retrieved from Wildlife Land Use Guidelines: http://aep.alberta.ca/fish-wildlife/wildlife-land-use-guidelines/documents/RecommendedLandUseGuidelines-TrumpeterSwanHabitat-Sep27-2012.pdf

Government of Canada. (2017, May 25). General Nesting Periods of Migratory Birds. Retrieved from Migratory Birds: https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/avoiding-harm-migratory-birds/general-nesting-periods.html

Nature Alberta. (2014). Important Bird Area Alberta Guide. Retrieved from Nature Alberta: http://naturealberta.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Important-Bird-Areas-of-Alberta-Guide.pdf

Statistics Canada. (2017, January 27). Average Household Expenditure, by Province (Alberta). Retrieved August 10, 2017, from http://www.statcan.gc.ca/tables-tableaux/sum-som/lo1/cst01/famil130j-eng.htm

Statistics Canada. (2017, August 2). Census Profile, 2016 Census Grande Prairie County No. 1 Municipal District [Census Subdivision], Alberta and Alberta [Province]. Retrieved August 10, 2017, from http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.

Statistics Canada. (2017, 03 03). The Shift to Smaller Households Over the Past Century. Retrieved August 8, 2017, from http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-630-x/11-630-x2015008-eng.m#def4?B1=All&Code1=481900 6&Code2=48&Data=Count&Geo1=CSD&Geo2=PR&Lang=E&SearchPR=01&SearchText=Grande+Prairie+County+No.+1&SearchType=Begins&TABID=1

Statistics Canada. (2017, 03 03). The Shift to Smaller Households Over the Past Century. Retrieved August 8, 2017, from http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-630-x/11-630-x2015008-eng.htm#def4

# **Image Credits**

- Page 27 https://www.middleofeverywhere.ca/gallery\_category/commerce/
- Page 72 https://www.middleofeverywhere.ca/energy/
- Page 72 http://www.countygp.ab.ca/EN/main/community/photo-contest/2014-contest-winners/phase-2-summer-theme.html
- Page 72 http://animalia-life.club/other/trumpeter-swan.html
- Page 98 https://twitter.com/gov\_procurement
- Page 101 http://www.countygp.ab.ca/EN/main/community/photo-contest/2015-contest-winners/phase-4-winter-theme.html
- Page 101 http://www.countygp.ab.ca/EN/main/community/photo-contest/2015-contest-winners/phase-1-spring-theme.html
- Page 112 http://www.countygp.ab.ca/EN/main/community/photo-contest/2015-contest-winners/phase-1-spring-theme.html
- Page 118 http://nuvomagazine.com/culture/dinosaurs-in-alberta



# PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS

The following people were consulted during the preparation of the *Grande Prairie Growth and Economic Development Strategy:* 

# **City of Grande Prairie**

Bill Given, Mayor Greg Scerbak, City Manager Brian Glavin, Manager, Economic Development David Olinger, Manager, Communications & City Engagement

#### **County of Grande Prairie**

Harold Bulford, County Councillor, Division 1 Daryl Beeston, County Councillor, Division 2 Leanne Beaupre, County Councillor, Division 3 Ross Sutherland, County Councillor, Division 4 Bob Marshall, County Councillor, Division 5 Peter Harris, County Councillor, Division 6 Brock Smith, County Councillor, Division 7 Karen Rosvold, County Councillor, Division 8 Corey Beck, County Councillor, Division 9 Bill Rogan, County Administrator Chris King, Manager, Economic Development Lesley Nielson Bierke, Communications Manager Matthew Konowalchuk, Senior Planner Nick Lapp, Director, Planning and Economic Development Pamela Nordin, Project Manager, Planning and **Economic Development** 

## **Town of Wembley**

Chris Turnmire, Mayor Lori Parker, CAO

#### **Town of Beaverlodge**

Leona Hanson, Mayor Town of Sexsmith Claude Legrace, Mayor

#### **Town of Beaverlodge**

Bill Mckennan, CAO

#### **Town of Sexsmith**

Rachel Wueschner, CAO

#### **Village of Hythe**

Greg Gayton, CAO

#### **Horse Lake First Nation**

Darwin Eckstrom, CAO

#### **MD of Greenview**

Mike Haugen, CAO

#### **Saddle Hills County**

Ula Knelson, Community Development Coordinator Shayne Steffen, Director of Economic Development/Assistant CAO,

## **Grande Prairie Chamber of Commerce**

Dennis Bell, Chair, Northstar
Tom Pura, Marketing and Communications
Manager
Chris Seppola, Vice-Chair
Dan Peavy, Grande Prairie Chamber of Commerce
Cody Bearisto, Grande Prairie Chamber of
Commerce

### **Community Stakeholders**

Rob Petrone, President, Grande Prairie Petroleum Association

Glenn Kjemhus, Operator, Homesteader Bison Terri Tattrie, CFO, Grande Prairie Regional Airport Doug Mark, Manager of Operations, Grande Prairie Regional Airport

Dr. David Bressler, Professor, University of Alberta Don Gnatiuk, President and CEO, Grande Prairie Regional College



#### **Tessellate Inc.**

Tom Ogarako, Principal

# **Associated Engineering Alberta Ltd.**

Chad Maki, Municipal Infrastructure Lead Jeff O'Driscoll, Division Manager, Infrastructure

#### ParioPlan Inc.

Armin Preiksaitis, Principal, Marcelo Figueira, Senior Planner Belinda Smith, Senior Planner Nathan Arthur, Planner Jonathan Lawrence, Planner Evan Joyes, Planner Naomi Roy, Planner



# **APPENDIX A**

**Community and Stakeholder Engagement Materials** 



# GROWTH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

#### BACKGROUNDER

Since 2005, the County of Grande Prairie has seen a 30 per cent rise in population, resulting in an increase of over 5,200 new residents (2011 Federal Census). More recently, the economic landscape of Alberta has also changed, and many Albertan's now view diversifying the economy as essential. In response to these changes, the County is preparing a *Growth and Economic Development Strategy* (the "Strategy") that will guide growth in the area and ensure the County's economy is sustainable, socially responsible, and diversified.

### What is a Growth and Economic Development Strategy?

A Growth and Economic Development Strategy is a plan that can be approved and adopted by Council that provides a roadmap for attracting new investment and ensures long-term and sustainable growth. The Growth and Economic Development Strategy also provides a framework for how land in the County can best be utilized to create additional economic opportunities for the area. The primary objectives of the County of Grande Prairie's *Growth and Economic Development Strategy* include:

- Understanding the current status of the County with respect to land usage and infrastructure.
- Understanding the prevailing economic and social considerations.
- Understanding the current drivers and inhibitors of growth within the County and neighbouring communities.
- Identifying actions that will provide greater opportunity for the development of existing communities within the County.
- Gathering input and feedback in conjunction with other County initiatives including the Upper Peace Regional Plan under the Provincial Land Use Framework.
- Developing an implementation plan that includes a list of actions required to lead the County towards greater economic sustainability.

# Why is the County of Grande Prairie creating a Growth and Economic Development Strategy?

The Alberta economy is experiencing significant and widespread challenges, requiring many municipalities to evaluate and assess their long-term strategic goals. Because of these challenges, the County of Grande Prairie is proactively defining current and future economic opportunities that can supplement its rich agricultural, resource and tourism-based economy.



By gaining a comprehensive understanding of the social, economic, and environmental factors at play in the County, the Growth and Economic Development Strategy will establish a 50-year vision that shows how to best accommodate future growth, and how to strengthen economic development in a sustainable, responsible way.

# Who will provide input into the Growth and Economic Development Strategy?

The Growth and Economic Development Strategy will play a role in how everyone in the County lives, works, and plays over the next 50 years. All residents and interested parties will have the opportunity to provide their input into this once-in-a-generation plan.

#### How can I get involved with the Growth and Economic Development Strategy?

Throughout the project, there will be several opportunities to provide input into the Growth and Economic Development Strategy. Many different forms of engagement will be conducted so that all interested parties can voice their opinions on the direction in which the County grows. Some of the ways to get involved include:

- Attending an Open House
- Participating in stakeholder surveys
- Watching or attending a symposium
- Participating in an online engagement forum

#### What is the timeline for the Growth and Economic Development Strategy?

The County of Grande Prairie Growth and Economic Development Strategy project will begin in the Fall of 2016. Community engagement and input gathering will begin shortly after the launch, and interested parties will be able to participate and provide feedback throughout the course of the project. New concepts, updates, and other information will be developed throughout the Winter of 2016 and Spring of 2017. County Council will consider adopting the Growth and Economic Development Strategy at the end of 2017.

For more information, contact:

Pamela Nordin
Project Manager
Planning and Development Services
Email: pnordin@countygp.ab.ca

Phone: 780-532-9722 ext. 1280

Mailing address: 10001 - 84 Avenue, Clairmont, AB T0H 0W0

Website: <a href="https://www.countygp.ab.ca/mycountygp">www.countygp.ab.ca/mycountygp</a>



# STEERING COMMITTEE WORKSHOP #1 SEPTEMBER 27, 2016 SUMMARY REPORT

# 1.0 Introduction/Purpose

On September 27, 2016, ParioPlan Inc., Tessellate Inc., and Associated Engineering presented to the Steering Committee the proposal for the County of Grande Prairie No.1 Growth and Economic Development Strategy (the "Strategy"). Part of the presentation was to conduct a Visioning Building Workshop/SWOT Analysis. The following participants were present for the Visioning Building Workshop/SWOT Analysis:

- Councillor Cory Beck
- Councillor Daryl Beeston
- Councillor Harold Bulford
- Councillor Ross Sutherland
- Nick Lapp, Director of Planning and Development
- Lesley Nielson-Bjerke, Communications Manager
- Matthew Konowalchuk, Senior Planner
- Hetti Huls, Economic Development Coordinator
- Jennifer Rubuliak, Communications Officer

During the workshop portion of the meeting, participants were asked to provide their thoughts on what what were the the Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats for the County respecting economic growth and development. Participants could work in groups or on their own. The following was presented to the participants as examples:

#### **EXAMPLES PRESENTED FOR STRENGTHS**

- A diverse existing economic base agriculture, oil and gas, forestry and tourism
- Large trade and service area
- Excellent transportation infrastructure
- Airport access to international destinations
- Rail
- Major highway corridors Highway 2 Canamex Corridor
- Addition of Phillip J. Currie Dinosaur Museum new regional tourist attraction

• (2) Major post-secondary institutions – Grande Prairie Regional College and Peace River Bible Institute

#### **EXAMPLES PRESENTED FOR WEAKNESS**

- Distance from markets
- Lack of Inter-municipal Co-operation

#### **EXAMPLES PRESENTED FOR OPPORTUNITIES**

- Using technology to diversify the economy
- New regional hospital
- Promoting development of Clairmont urban areas as both an employment centre and place to live

#### **EXAMPLES PRESENTED FOR THREATS**

- Continued depressed oil and gas prices
- High Crime Rate perceived or real

Following the portion of the workshop on the SWOT Analysis, the participants were asked to answer a series questions that pertained their vision for the County of Grande Prairie in the year 2067. Again, participants could answer these questions in groups, or on their own. The following are the questions the participants were asked to answer:

- 1. What size population will we have in 50 years?
- 2. What will drive the County's economy?
- 3. What things do you value and want to preserve? (e.g. agricultural land base, winter resources, family orientation, quality of life factors, historical and cultural assets)?
- 4. What things would you like to change? (e.g. more diverse economy, technological advances, more sustainable forms of development etc....)?
- 5. What will commercial be like? The industrial areas? Residential subdivisions?
- 6. How will we treat and address the needs of our seniors and young people?
- 7. What will we have accomplished as a County?
- 8. What will the Clairmont Urban Area look like once it is built out?
- 9. What do we expect of our civic leaders?
- 10. What image do we wish to convey to the rest of the world?
- 11. What tourist, recreation facilities and activities will exist?
- 12. What new partnerships will we have created?

Section 2.0 of this report summarizes, and/or recaps, the results of the workshop.

# 2.0 Workshop Summary

#### 2.1 SWOT ANALYSIS

#### 2.1.1 Strengths

The participants in the workshop indicated that the The County of Grande Prairie has a financially stable and diverse economic base with the average household income higher than the province of Alberta. The abundant resources in the region allow for a dominance of oil/gas, farming and forestry industries. These natural resources also support a growing tourism industry, as they provide exquisite landscapes and outdoor recreational opportunities. The participants identified the County's philosophy on being 'open for business', as well as their competitive tax base, young population and investments in transportation, education and other public amenities as strengths.

The participant's comments have been grouped together and the following themes identified as strengths:

- County Council/County Services (8)
- Economics (6)
- Recreation/Entertainment (4)
- Education (4)
- Geographical Landscape (3)
- Population (3)
- Quality of Life (2)

The number beside each theme depicts the frequency this theme appeared as a strength. Below are the comprehensive, verbatim participant's responses, grouped under each theme:

#### **STRENGTHS**

#### **COUNTY COUNCIL/COUNTY SERVICES (8)**

- Responsive council
- Progressive council
- Council of day open to new industries
- Professional services
- Strong relationships with neighboring municipalities
- Timeline planning process (turn around time)
- Transportation network
- Established service center

## **ECONOMICS (6)**

- Economic Diversity
- Willingness to create an alternative environment to do business
- Economy
  - o Oil/gas

- o Farming
- o Forestry
- Financially stable/prudent
- Above average household income
- Competitive taxes

#### **RECREATION/ENTERTAINMENT (4)**

- Diversified recreational opportunities
- Growing cross-section of cultural ops
- Hub shopping Media Dinosaur Museum

#### **EDUCATION (4)**

- GPRC/post secondary
- Very community-minded
- education
- Education in partnership with hospital
  - More doctors and nurses

#### **GEOGRAPHICAL LANDSCAPE (3)**

- Diverse geography
- Beautiful landscapes with recreational opportunities
- Great view of farmland and mountains Rural living

#### POPULATION (3)

- Innovative people
- Young population
- Very high percentage of entrepreneurs

#### QUALITY OF LIFE (2)

- Quality of life
- Good balance of urban and rural life

#### 2.1.2 Weaknesses

Currently, the County supports an energy/resource intensive economy making it highly susceptible to fluctuating oil prices. Connectivity to different market centers bolsters this type of economy but the County of Grande Prairie has been deemed isolated by other markets. Along with this the County also faces a number of political barriers. For example, participants believed that the County's priorities did not align with many of the provincial government's investment strategies. Urban Sprawl, and City-County relationships have pose hardships to the County.

The participant's comments have been grouped together and the following themes identified as weaknesses:

- Governance (6)
- Transportation + Infrastructure (3)
- Population/Demographics (2)
- Access to Amenities + Services (2)
- Economy (2)

The number beside each theme depicts the frequency this theme appeared as a weakness. Below are the comprehensive, verbatim participant's responses, grouped under each theme:

#### **WEAKNESSES**

#### **GOVERNANCE (6)**

- Close/strong relationships with neighboring municipalities
- City-county relations (distracting and time consuming)
- NDP government
- Only 1 regional provincial minister
- Ignored by the rest of AB politically
- The development process can lead to future land use conflicts

#### TRANSPORTATION + INFRASTRUCTURE (3)

- Only domestic flights
- The transportation corridors (roads+ rail)
- Strain on physical infrastructure

#### POPULATION/DEMOGRAPHICS (2)

- Population sprawl
- Lack of sufficient demographic data to use to attract business

#### **ACCESS TO AMENITIES + SERVICES (2)**

- Internet access
- Reliance of amenities in the city

#### ECONOMY (2)

- Energy driven economy
- Deemed isolated by larger markets (Edmonton Cal)
  - Location is isolated from larger markets
- Distance to larger centers

#### 2.1.3 Opportunities

The County's location and amenities provide excellent tourism opportunities. The natural environment/geography include passive trail networks to support this growing industry as well. All this can lead to the County booming into the northern 'heartland' of the Province of Alberta. Geothermal energy is an untapped resource in the area that can be another economic opportunity. Participants also felt that were opportunities to strengthen land use planning and set sustainable and achievable policies to "get it right" with infrastructure, tax rates, land use, etc. Furthermore, participants also felt that there are opportunities to collaborate with the Regional hospital and the educational institutions and felt that if done strategically, it can lead to multiple off-shoot industries in the future.

The participant's comments have been grouped together and the following themes identified as opportunities:

- Access to Amenities + Services (6)
- Business Development (5)
- Planning +Government Relations (5)
- Transportation + Infrastructure (2)
- Tourism (2)

The number beside each theme depicts the frequency this theme appeared as an opportunity. Below are the comprehensive, verbatim participant's responses, grouped under each theme:

#### **OPPORTUNITIES**

#### **ACCESS TO AMENITIES + SERVICES (6)**

- New industries
- Internet access
- Internet connectivity
- More recreational
- Regional hospital + off shoot industries
- Working together with hospital and college

#### **BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT (5)**

- Proximity to natural resources
- Geothermal business chances
- Proactive planning
- Space and geography
- Entrepreneurial spirit

#### **PLANNING +GOVERNMENT RELATIONS (5)**

- County of GP+ area perceived by many as stable in comparison to many communities
- City of GP
- To get it right (planning, land use, infrastructure, tax rate).
- To keep government involvement/guidance. Not to stifle industries
- Become part of northern 'heartland'

#### TRANSPORTATION + INFRASTRUCTURE (2)

- Strong transport links/network plan
- Passive trail network coupled with tourism

#### TOURISM (2)

- Grow tourism even more than now
- Passive trail network coupled with tourism

#### 2.1.4 Threats

As long as the economy is dependent on energy, unsteady or falling oil prices will always present a threat to the County of Grande Prairie's economy. Oil and gas industries are also big contributors to climate

change - another looming threat in the County's horizon. In order to break the self perpetuating cycle, the federal and provincial government have voiced future changes in the tax structures and some participants felt this did not reflect the County's "open for business" philosophy. The changes to the Municipal Government Act (MGA) also present an uncertainty which could provide further political roadblocks to the review process. Participants also felt that City of Grande Prairie's desire for regionalization poses a threat to the County. Lastly, the decrease in groundwater is a threat as the County would want an affordable clean water supply that can adequately support a growing population.

The participant's comments have been grouped together and the following themes identified as threats:

- Environment (4)
- City Concerns (4)
- Governance (2)
- Economy (2)
- Education (2)

The number beside each theme depicts the frequency this theme appeared as threat. Below are the comprehensive, verbatim participant's responses, grouped under each theme:

#### **THREATS**

#### **ENVIRONMENT (4)**

- Climate change continues
- Ground water dropping
- Softwood lumber dispute
- Unknown clean water supply

#### **CITY CONCERNS (4)**

- City of Grande Prairie
- City's desire for regionalization
- City-county relationship: government structure distractions
- Threat of regionalization

#### **GOVERNANCE (2)**

- Changes in provincial + federal governance/ policies
  - New MGA +other government policies
  - Unsure MGA review process
  - Provincial politics
  - NDP provincial government
  - Federal politics
     Rising taxes
- Aquatera- 3 muni's

#### ECONOMY (2)

- Price of oil
- Increasing operational costs

#### **EDUCATION (2)**

- The term "Regional"
- Knowledge of and about the area outside of local area

#### 2.2 VISION BUILDING

AS previously mentioned, during the workshop, participants were asked to answer a series of questions that related to their vision for the County of Grande Prairie in the year 2067. The following are the comprehensive, verbatim participant's responses to each question:

#### 1. What size population will we have in 50 years?

- 65 K
- Double to triple in size around 75,000
- 100% population
- 65,000+
- Double population

#### 2. What will drive the County's Economy?

- 1.Energy
- 2.Forestry
- 3.Agriculture
- 4.Commerce
- 5.Tourism
- Diversification; above average environmental, industry standards; innovations and competitiveness
- Current industry also includes tourism rec.
- Agriculture, forestry, tourism, oils and gas, commercial, value added AG, forestry, tech, retail
- Maintain four pillars- progressive council, competitive taxes, create agricultural opportunities for corridor near populations
- Does hydroponics/ marijuana grow-ups go in zoned areas?
- Value added agricultural industry

# 3. What things do you value and want to preserve? (e.g. agriculture land base, water resources, family orientation, quality of life factors, historical and cultural assets)

- Household income, economic opportunities
- Quality of life factors, environment
- Advanced tech, value farming
- Nature, good quality, of life, safety (good policing, lower crime) self sustaininghospital/college, Ag, Forestry
- Agricultural land
- Historical landmark

# 4. What things would you like to change? (e.g. more diverse economy, technological advances, more sustainable forms of development etc.)

- More value added agriculture, industry, services
- More diverse, more innovative. More independence from City, more service amenities; more open-mindedness; adaptiveness; sustainability
- More diversity- preserve historical buildings, Kleskun hills
- More/better technology, sustainable growth, quality of life opportunities
- Fiber optic

#### 5. What will commercial be like? The industrial areas? Residential subdivisions?

- Re-purpose/re-use of industrial areas with eventual decline of oil and gas (non-renewable resources)
- Being more proactive, anticipating needs of our population, more education, engagement
   + awareness to our population; continually enhancing services; streaming processes;
   more partnership with neighbors and businesses;
- Balance of Commercial, industrial, and residential
- Commercial multiple nodes, residential- multiple nodes with retail, industrial- multiple industrial parks- mixed in corridors along highways
- Balance County quality of life with development and competitive taxes

#### 6. How will we treat and address the needs of our seniors and young people?

- Age in place
- focus on health, innovation and business
  - More activeness
  - Passive trails
  - Address land use issues differently in each region of the County
- Housing, medical programs, etc. that are affo0rdable. Youth programs -educational, sports, affordable various level job opportunities
- Continue opportunities for them to be active
- Contribute to build homes (develop pods)/put schools in ASPs
- Competitive taxes treat each division uniquely with different plans

#### 7. What will have accomplished as a County?

- Grow Clairmont value added industries increased quality of life
- More growth, services and amenities, community staying ahead and keeping up with the needs of the community, more urban, more technology
- Meet the entire criteria (1-6)
  - "Node"- work live and play in a region
  - Economic residency
  - Great quality of life
- Positive growth, desirable quality of life, tourism, destination
- Keep up with technological advance/ internet connectivity
- Investment friendly
- Quality of life perhaps develop a water area

#### 8. What will the Clairmont Urban Area look like once it is built out?

- See map (image attached)
- More balanced in-terms of services, business, opportunity, residential, recreation areas; more community-mindedness
- Like Clairmont height vision
- Trendy, mix of residential, retail and a destination place. Festival site
- No 10 story buildings- threat of becoming a town

#### 9. What do we expect of our civic leaders?

- Responsiveness; proactiveness; reliability; sensitivity; inclusive; understand community needs; visionary +forward thinking; cooperative
- Proactive thinking planning, transparency, honesty, commitment
- Forward thinking → visionaries

#### 10. What image do we wish to convey to the rest of the world?

- "Middle of everywhere"
- Open, innovative, welcoming, balanced/well-rounded, lots of <u>opportunity</u>, dedication to quality of life, technologically behind, prosperous, stable, consistent great place to build a life, business safe.
- World known or tourism
- Vibrant lifestyles for all, great place to live work and play
- Affordable to raise a family
- Sense of community
- Entrepreneurial forward thinking community

#### 11. What tourist, recreation facilities and activities will exist?

- Dino tourism- ecotourism
- Lots of outdoor trails, recreational facilities, advanced sports training facilities, higher profile events, more water sports recreation, more programs + affordability
- Outdoor specialty niches- starry nights, lightening storms, dino museum, geocoding marathons
- Reference to regional Recreational Area Master Plan
- Continue to support non-profits to support recreational facilities, etc.

#### 12. What new partnerships will we have created?

- Closer, more streamlined and cooperative partnerships, with neighboring municipalities incl. the City of GP
- Similar facilities, smaller nodes
- Multiple collaborations, business and community

The Participants were provided with an area map to mark up items they could express in words or are better visualized. The following are excerpts of the maps with respective markups:

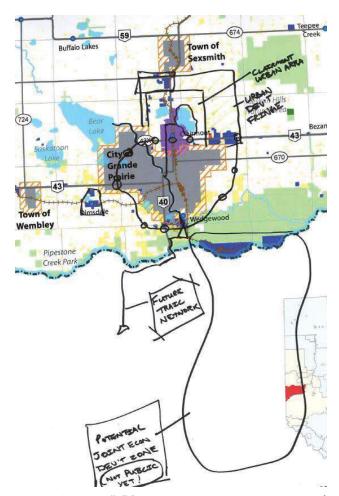


Figure 1: Marked Up Map "A" form Steering Committee Workshop 1 (September 27, 2016)

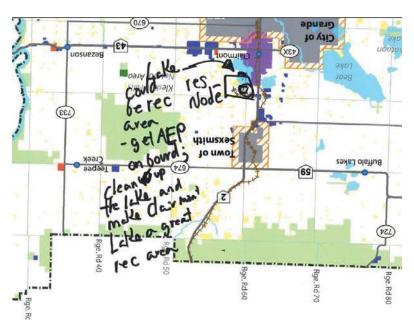


Figure 2: Marked Up Map "B" form Steering Committee Workshop 1 (September 27, 2016)

**COUNTY OF GRANDE PRAIRIE NO.1** 

# GROWTH & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS NOVEMBER, 2016 - FEBRUARY, 2017 SUMMARY REPORT



# Prepared for the County of Grande Prairie No.1 by



ParioPlan Inc.

#### **Contents**

1.0	Intr	oduction/ Purpose	1
2.0	Workshop Summary		4
	2.1	SWOT Analysis	4
		2.1.1 Strengths	4
		2.1.2 Weaknesses	7
		2.1.3 Opportunities	8
		2.1.4 Threats	9
	2.2	Vision Building	11
	Figure 1: Marked up Map A		14
	Figure 2: Marked up Map B		15

### 1.0 Introduction/ Purpose

Between November 8th 2016 and February 7th 2017, ParioPlan Inc., and Tessellate Inc., held a series of workshops and interviews with key stakeholders for the County of Grande Prairie No.1 Growth and Development Strategy (the "strategy"). Participants included representatives from Grande Prairie Regional College, Horse Lake First Nation Reserve, Mayors and CAO's of the surrounding Urban Municipalities, The Chamber of Commerce, Petroleum Association, agricultural sector, Grande Prairie Regional Airport and the bio-industrial sector. The purpose of the interviews was to solicit input on the County of Grande Prairie's Growth and Economic Development Strategy. Subsequent to the interviews, participants answers were compiled and formulated into a SWOT analysis. The following participated in either the workshops or interviews:

- Leona Hanson Mayor, Town of Beaverlodge
- Claude Legace Mayor, Town of Sexsmith
- Chris Turnmire Mayor, Town of Wembley
- Lori Parker CAO, Town of Wembley
- Bill Mckennan CAO, Town of Beaverlodge
- Rachel Wueschner CAO, Town of Sexsmith
- Greg Gayton CAO, Village of Hythe
- Darwin Eckstrom CAO, Horse Lake First Nations Reserve
- Dennis Bell Northstar/Chamber of Commerce
- Tom Pura Chamber of Commerce
- Chris Seppola Nine10/Chamber of Commerce
- Dan Peavey Chamber of Commerce
- Cody Bearisto Beairsto & Associates/ Chamber of Commerce
- Ula Knelson Community Dev. Coordinator / Saddle Hills County
- Shayne Steffen Director of Economic Development / Assistant CAO / Saddle Hills County
- Don Gnatiuk President and CEO / Grande Prairie Regional College
- Rob Petrone Petroleum Association / Energy Sector
- Glenn Kjemhus Homesteader Bison / Agriculture Sector
- Terri Tattrie CAO, Grande Prarie Regional Airport / Transportation Sector

- Doug Mark COO, Grande Prarie Regional Airport / Transportation Sector
- Dr. David Bressler University of Alberta / Bio-Industrial Sector
- Belinda Smith Senior Planner / ParioPlan
- Nathan Arthur Project Planner, ParioPlan Inc.
- Naomi Roy Assistant Planner, ParioPlan Inc.
- Jonathan Lawrence Planner / ParioPlan
- Tom Orgaranko Tesselate Inc.

During the interviews, participants were asked a series of questions that solicited their opinions on what are the Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats for the County respecting economic growth and development. Responses reflected a diversity of opinions.

Following the portion of the workshop on the SWOT Analysis, the participants were asked to answer a series questions that pertained their vision for the County of Grande Prairie in the year 2067. Again, participants could answer these questions in groups, or on their own. Workshop/interview formats varied however the following are some of the questions the participants were asked to answer:

- 1. What Steps need to be taken to diversify the economy?
- 2. What is your vision of how the County of Grand Prairie should and could develop by the year 2057?
- 3. What key questions do you think the County needs to answer with its Growth and Economic Development Strategy to help your firm grow?
- 4. What key questions do you think the County needs to answer with its Growth and Economic Development Strategy to help your firm grow?

### 2.0 Workshop Summary

Section 2.0 of this report summarizes, and/or recaps, the results of the workshop.

#### 2.1 Workshop Summary

Objectives: Inform Stakeholders about project launch and engagement process.

#### 2.1.1 Strengths

The participants in the workshop indicated that the The County of Grande Prairie has a financially stable and diverse economic base with the average household income higher than the province of Alberta. The abundant resources in the region allow for a dominance of oil/gas, farming and forestry industries. These natural resources also support a growing tourism industry, as they provide exquisite landscapes and outdoor recreational opportunities. The participants identified the County's philosophy on being 'open for business', as well as their competitive tax base, young population and investments in transportation, education and other public amenities as strengths.

The participant's comments have been grouped together and the following themes identified as strengths:

- County Council/County Services (8)
- Economics (6)
- Recreation/Entertainment (4)
- Education (4)
- Geographical Landscape (3)
- Population (3)
- Quality of Life (2)

The number beside each theme depicts the frequency this theme appeared as a strength. Below are the comprehensive, verbatim participant's responses, grouped under each theme:

STRENGTHS				
COUNTY COUNCIL/ COUNTY SERVICES (8)				
	<ul> <li>Responsive council</li> <li>Progressive council</li> <li>Council of day open to new industries</li> <li>Professional services</li> <li>Strong relationships with neighboring municipalities</li> <li>Timeline planning process (turn around time)</li> <li>Transportation network</li> </ul>			
	Established service center			
ECONOMICS (6)				
	<ul> <li>Economic Diversity</li> <li>Willingness to create an alternative environment to do business</li> <li>Economy <ul> <li>Oil/gas</li> <li>Farming</li> </ul> </li> <li>Forestry</li> <li>Financially stable/prudent</li> <li>Above average household income</li> <li>Competitive taxes</li> </ul>			

RECREATION/ENTERTAINMENT (4)						
	Diversified recreational opportunities					
	Growing cross-section of cultural ops					
	Hub shopping Media					
	Dinosaur Museum					
EDUCATION (4)						
	GPRC/post secondary					
	Very community-minded					
	Education					
	Education in partnership with hospital					
	More doctors and nurses					
GEOGRAPHIC LANDSCAPE (3)						
	Diverse geography					
	Beautiful landscapes with recreational opportunities					
	Great view of farmland and mountains Rural living					
POPULATION (3)						
	Innovative people					
	Young population					
	Very high percentage of entrepreneurs					
QUALITY OF LIFE (2)	Quality of life					
	Good balance of urban and rural life					

#### 2.1.2 WEAKNESSES

Currently, the County supports an energy/resource intensive economy making it highly susceptible to fluctuating oil prices. Connectivity to different market centers bolsters this type of economy but the County of Grande Prairie has been deemed isolated by other markets. Along with this the County also faces a number of political challenges. For example, participants believed that the County's priorities did not align with many of the provincial government's investment strategies. Urban Expansion, and City-County relationships have pose hardships to the County.

The participant's comments have been grouped together and the following themes identified as weaknesses:

- Governance (6)
- Transportation + Infrastructure (3)
- Population/Demographics (2)
- Access to Amenities + Services (2)
- Economy (2)

The number beside each theme depicts the frequency this theme appeared as a weakness. Below are the comprehensive, verbatim participant's responses, grouped under each theme:

WEAKNESSES				
GOVERNANCE (6)				
	<ul> <li>Close/strong relationships with neighboring municipalities</li> <li>City-county relations (distracting and time consuming)</li> <li>NDP government</li> <li>Only 1 regional provincial minister</li> <li>Ignored by the rest of AB politically</li> <li>The development process can lead to future land use conflicts</li> </ul>			
TRANSPORTATION + INFRASTRU	CTURE (3)			
	<ul> <li>Only domestic flights</li> <li>The transportation corridors (roads+ rail)</li> <li>Strain on physical infrastructure</li> </ul>			
POPULATION + DEMOGRAPHICS (2)				
	Population sprawl     Lack of sufficient demographic data to use to attract business			
ACCESS TO AMENITIES + SERVICES (2)				
	<ul> <li>Internet access</li> <li>Reliance of amenities in the city</li> </ul>			

ECONOMY (3)				
	Energy driven economy			
	Deemed isolated by larger markets (Edmonton Cal)			
	Location is isolated from larger markets			
	Distance to larger centers			

#### 2.1.3 OPPORTUNITIES

The County's location and amenities provide excellent tourism opportunities. The natural environment/geography include passive trail networks to support this growing industry as well. All this can lead to the County booming into the northern 'heartland' of the Province of Alberta. Geothermal energy is an untapped resource in the area that can be another economic opportunity. Participants also felt that were opportunities to strengthen land use planning and set sustainable and achievable policies to "get it right" with infrastructure, tax rates, land use, etc. Furthermore, participants also felt that there are opportunities to collaborate with the Regional hospital and the educational institutions and felt that if done strategically, it can lead to multiple off-shoot industries in the future.

The participant's comments have been grouped together and the following themes identified as opportunities:

- Access to Amenities + Services (6)
- Business Development (5)
- Planning +Government Relations (5)
- Transportation + Infrastructure (2)
- Tourism (2)

The number beside each theme depicts the frequency this theme appeared as an opportunity. Below are the comprehensive, verbatim participant's responses, grouped under each theme:

OPPORTUNITIES			
ACCESS TO AMENITIES + SERVICES (6)			
	<ul> <li>New industries</li> <li>Internet access</li> <li>Internet connectivity</li> <li>More recreational</li> <li>Regional hospital + off shoot industries</li> <li>Working together with hospital and college</li> </ul>		

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT (5)					
	Proximity to natural resources				
	Geothermal business chances				
	Proactive planning				
	Space and geography				
	Entrepreneurial spirit				
PLANNING + GOVRNMENT RELATIONS (5)					
	County of GP+ area perceived by many as stable in comparison to many communities				
	City of GP				
	To get it right (planning, land use, infrastructure, tax rate).				
	To keep government involvement/guidance. Not to stifle industries				
	Become part of northern 'heartland'				
TRANSPORTATION + INFRASTRU	TRANSPORTATION + INFRASTRUCTURE (2)				
	Strong transport links/network plan				
	Passive trail network coupled with tourism				
TOURISM (2)					
	Grow tourism even more than now				
	Passive trail network coupled with tourism				

#### **2.1.4 THREATS**

As long as the economy is dependent on energy, unsteady or falling oil prices will always present a threat to the County of Grande Prairie's economy. Oil and gas industries are also big contributors to climate change - another looming threat in the County's horizon. In order to break the self perpetuating cycle, the federal and provincial government have voiced future changes in the tax structures and some participants felt this did not reflect the County's "open for business" philosophy. The changes to the Municipal Government Act (MGA) also present an uncertainty which could provide further political roadblocks to the review process. Participants also felt that City of Grande Prairie's desire for regionalization poses a threat to the County. Lastly, the decrease in groundwater is a threat as the County would want an affordable clean water supply that can adequately support a growing population.

The participant's comments have been grouped together and the following themes identified as threats:

- Environment (4)
- City Concerns (4)
- Governance (2)
- Economy (2)
- Education (2)

THREATS				
ENVIRONMENT (4)				
	Climate change continues			
	Ground water dropping			
	Softwood lumber dispute			
	Unknown clean water supply			
CITY CONCERNS (4)				
	City of Grande Prairie			
	City's desire for regionalization			
	City-county relationship: government structure distractions			
	Threat of regionalization			
GOVERNANCE (2)				
	Changes in provincial + federal governance/ policies			
	New MGA +other government policies			
	Unsure MGA review process			
	Provincial politics			
	NDP provincial government			
	Federal politics			
	Rising taxes			
	Aquatera- 3 muni's			
ECONOMY (2)				
	• Price of oil			
	Increasing operational costs			
EDUCATION (2)				
	The term "Regional"			
	Knowledge of and about the area outside of local area			

#### 2.2 VISION BUILDING

AS previously mentioned, during the workshop, participants were asked to answer a series of questions that related to their vision for the County of Grande Prairie in the year 2067. The following are the comprehensive, verbatim participant's responses to each question:

- 1. What size population will we have in 50 years?
  - 65 K
  - Double to triple in size around 75,000
  - 100% population
  - 65,000+
  - Double population
- 2. What will drive the County's Economy?
  - 1.Energy
  - 2.Forestry
  - 3.Agriculture
  - 4.Commerce
  - 5.Tourism
  - Diversification; above average environmental, industry standards; innovations and competitiveness
  - Current industry also includes tourism rec.
  - · Agriculture, forestry, tourism, oils and gas, commercial, value added AG, forestry, tech, retail
  - Maintain four pillars- progressive council, competitive taxes, create agricultural opportunities for corridor near populations
  - Does hydroponics/ marijuana grow-ups go in zoned areas?
  - Value added agricultural industry
- 3. What things do you value and want to preserve? (e.g. agriculture land base, water resources, family orientation, quality of life factors, historical and cultural assets)
  - · Household income, economic opportunities
  - Quality of life factors, environment
  - Advanced tech, value farming
  - Nature, good quality, of life, safety (good policing, lower crime) self sustaining- hospital/college, Ag, Forestry
  - Agricultural land
  - Historical landmark
- 4. What things would you like to change? (e.g. more diverse economy, technological advances, more sustainable forms of development etc.)
  - More value added agriculture, industry, services
  - More diverse, more innovative. More independence from City, more service amenities; more openmindedness; adaptiveness; sustainability
  - More diversity- preserve historical buildings, Kleskun hills

- More/better technology, sustainable growth, quality of life opportunities
- Fiber optic
- 5. What will commercial be like? The industrial areas? Residential subdivisions?
  - Re-purpose/re-use of industrial areas with eventual decline of oil and gas (non-renewable resources)
  - Being more proactive, anticipating needs of our population, more education, engagement + awareness
    to our population; continually enhancing services; streaming processes; more partnership with neighbors
    and businesses;
  - Balance of Commercial, industrial, and residential
  - Commercial multiple nodes, residential- multiple nodes with retail, industrial- multiple industrial parksmixed in corridors along highways
  - Balance County quality of life with development and competitive taxes
- 6. How will we treat and address the needs of our seniors and young people?
  - Age in place
  - focus on health, innovation and business
  - More activeness
  - Passive trails
  - Address land use issues differently in each region of the County
  - Housing, medical programs, etc. that are affo0rdable. Youth programs -educational, sports, affordable various level job opportunities
  - Continue opportunities for them to be active
  - Contribute to build homes (develop pods)/put schools in ASPs
  - Competitive taxes treat each division uniquely with different plans
- 7. What will have accomplished as a County?
  - Grow Clairmont value added industries increased quality of life
  - More growth, services and amenities, community staying ahead and keeping up with the needs of the community, more urban, more technology
  - Meet the entire criteria (1-6)
    - "Node"- work live and play in a region
    - Economic residency
    - Great quality of life
  - Positive growth, desirable quality of life, tourism, destination
  - · Keep up with technological advance/ internet connectivity
  - Investment friendly
  - Quality of life perhaps develop a water area
- 8. What will the Clairmont Urban Area look like once it is built out?
  - See map (image attached)
  - More balanced in-terms of services, business, opportunity, residential, recreation areas; more community-mindedness

- · Like Clairmont height vision
- Trendy, mix of residential, retail and a destination place. Festival site
- No 10 story buildings- threat of becoming a town
- 9. What do we expect of our civic leaders?
  - Responsiveness; proactiveness; reliability; sensitivity; inclusive; understand community needs; visionary +forward thinking; cooperative
  - · Proactive thinking planning, transparency, honesty, commitment
  - Forward thinking visionaries
- 10. What image do we wish to convey to the rest of the world?
  - "Middle of everywhere"
  - Open, innovative, welcoming, balanced/well-rounded, lots of opportunity, dedication to quality of life, technologically behind, prosperous, stable, consistent great place to build a life, business safe.
  - World known or tourism
  - Vibrant lifestyles for all, great place to live work and play
  - Affordable to raise a family
  - Sense of community
  - · Entrepreneurial forward thinking community
- 11 What tourist, recreation facilities and activities will exist?
  - · Dino tourism- ecotourism
  - Lots of outdoor trails, recreational facilities, advanced sports training facilities, higher profile events, more water sports recreation, more programs + affordability
  - Outdoor specialty niches- starry nights, lightening storms, dino museum, geocoding marathons
  - Reference to regional Recreational Area Master Plan
  - Continue to support non-profits to support recreational facilities, etc.
- 12. What new partnerships will we have created?
  - Closer, more streamlined and cooperative partnerships, with neighboring municipalities incl. the City of GP
  - Similar facilities, smaller nodes
  - Multiple collaborations, business and community

The Participants were provided with an area map to mark up items they could express in words or are better visualized. The following are excerpts of the maps with respective markups:

Figure 1: Marked Up Map "A" form Steering Committee Workshop# 1 (September 27, 2016)

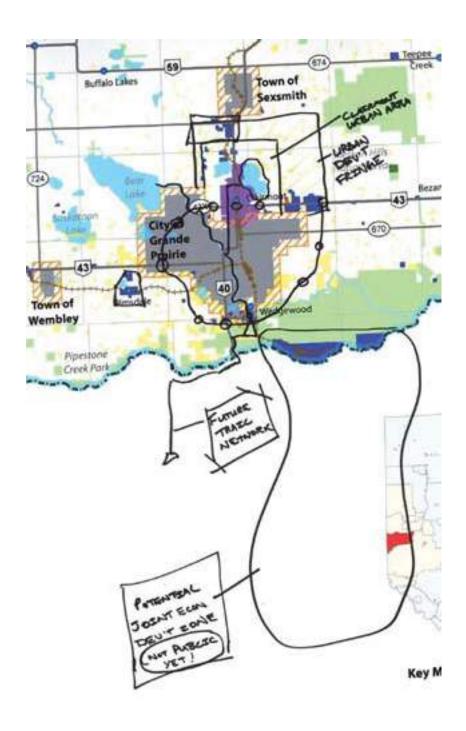


Figure 2: Marked Up Map "B" form Steering Committee Workshop# 1 (September 27, 2016)



**COUNTY OF GRANDE PRAIRIE NO.1** 

# GROWTH & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

COMMUNITY INPUT SESSIONS SUMMARY REPORT



1

Prepared for the County of Grande Prairie No.1 by



ParioPlan Inc.

#### CONTENTS

1.0	INT	RODUCTION AND PURPOSE	1
2.0	FOF	RMAT FOR SESSIONS	2
3.0	WH	AT WE HEARD	3
	3.1	SWOT ANALYSIS	3
	3.2	VISION BUILDING	7
	3.3	INPUT SESSIONS EVALUATION	10
4.0	SUM	IMARY OF THEMES	12
5.0	APP	ENDICES	14

#### 1.0 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The County of Grande Prairie No.1 engaged ParioPlan Inc. in association with Tessellate Inc. and Associated Engineering Alberta Ltd. to prepare a Growth and Economic Development Strategy. The purpose and primary objectives of the Strategy are as follows:

To affectively plan to integrate growth management and economic development in a manner that provides the necessary infrastructure and services to attract business.

- a. To understand the current status of the County with respect to land uses, infrastructure, economic, and social considerations.
- b. To understand the current drivers and inhibitors of growth within the County and neighbouring communities, to better enable economic growth.
- c. To identify actions that could provide greater opportunity for the development of existing communities within the County.
- d. To form the basis for input and feedback in conjunction with other County documentation on the forthcoming Upper Peace Regional Plan under the Provincial Land Use Framework.
- e. To develop an implementation plan on actions required to lead the County towards greater economic sustainability.

As part of *Phase 3: Scenarios for the Future,* in the work plan, three (3) Community Input Sessions were held from 6:00 – 8:30 p.m. at the following locations:

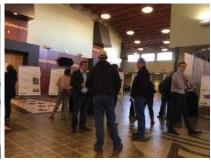
- April 25th, 2017 Grande Prairie Alliance Church, Clairmont
- April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2017 Teepee Creek Hall, Teepee Creek
- April 27th, 2017 Philip J. Currie Dinosaur Museum, Wembley

The Community Input Sessions were advertised using the following methods:

- Article in the County Connections Newsletter (Spring 2017 Edition);
- Handouts distributed at locations throughout the county;
- Radio advertisement; and
- Facebook.







#### 2.0 FORMAT FOR SESSIONS

The agenda for the 2.5 hour Community Input Sessions was as follows:

6:00 – 6:30 p.m. Registration / Open House 6:30 – 7:00 p.m. Overview Presentation

7:00 – 8:00 p.m. Small Group Working Sessions

8:00 – 8:30 p.m. Reporting Out / Next Steps

Copies of the Presentation Boards used for the Open House portion of the sessions are included in **Appendix 1**.

An overview presentation was made by Chris King (Economic Development Officer, County of Grande Prairie No.1) and Armin Preiksaitis (Principal, ParioPlan Inc.). A copy of the PowerPoint is included in **Appendix 2**.

A Community Input Sessions Workbook was used to guide discussions during the small group working sessions that were facilitated by ParioPlan Inc. and County staff. A copy of the workbook is attached in **Appendix 3**.

Based on the sign-in sheets, the number of participants at each location were as follows:

April 25, 2017 – Grande Prairie Alliance Church, Clairmont	
April 26, 2017 – Teepee Creek Hall, Teepee Creek	9
April 27, 2017 – Philip J. Currie Dinosaur Museum, Wembley	
Total	43



#### 3.0 WHAT WE HEARD

#### 3.1 SWOT ANALYSIS

During the workshop portion of the Community Input Sessions, participants were provided with a table of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for the County respecting economic growth and development. The participants were asked to identify additional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

Red text indicates strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that were reiterated in the Community Input Sessions.

#### **STRENGTHS**

- Large land base (23% Crown Land)
- Low taxes / Industrial assessment
- Pro-development / Open for business / Easy to deal with
- Diversified economy (oil and gas, forestry, tourism, and agriculture)
- Grande Prairie College (future degree granting polytechnic)
- Positive environmental and social impact of new Queen Elizabeth II hospital
- Existing railway infrastructure
- Adequate highway infrastructure
- High-quality agricultural land
- Large retail and service trade area
- Diverse and large biomass industry
- Existing Grande Prairie Airport

#### What other strengths should be identified?

- Sense of community
- Pristine natural environment
- County sportsplex (Crosslink Centre)
- Local schools and the intimate nature of the education
- Clairmont's image is improving
- Proximity to the City of Grande Prairie enables country living with access to work and big city services in Grande Prairie
- Ranching History in Teepee Creek that dates back to approximately 1918
- Teepee Creek's annual Rodeo is celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- Endless resources and an abundant supply of water
- Young demographic seen as valuable

#### **WEAKNESSES**

- People are resistant to change/innovation
- Need to improve the image of Grande Prairie Region, currently imagined as a rough and tussle, oil and gas centre rather than an attractive community with a good quality of life and amenities

#### What other weaknesses should be identified?

- Lack of recognition for pristine or unaltered natural areas
- Lack of cooperation by County with Neighboring cities and towns
- Need for improved communication with County Council
- Poor condition/quality of roadway infrastructure
- Lack of access to and limited number of recreational facilities
- · Access roads to new subdivisions are not updated to accommodate the increased traffic flow
- Lack of water infrastructure
- Lack of public transit
- Increased crime rate as a result of the shortage of law enforcement resources
- Spread out village development (sprawl)
- Poor ground water (quality)
- Lack of sense of community
- Disapproval of County spending
- Local beef has to be sent to central or southern Alberta for processing
- Interprovincial barriers to food distribution

#### **OPPORTUNITIES**

- Hamlet revitalization initiative
- · Opportunity to develop Clairmont as a model sustainable development community
- Twinning of Highway 40 to Grande Prairie
- Twinning Highway 43 to British Columbia Tourism route to Yukon, Alaska, and Highway 40 to Grande Cache
- Value added agricultural, biomass, and food processing opportunities
- Petrochemical industrial cluster with Greenview
- Implementation of the Grande Prairie Area Joint Recreation Master Plan
- Work with Provincial Government in implementing the Wapiti Corridor Multi-Use Plan
- Provide facilities and services for aging population
- Opportunities for the County and municipalities to work together on economic development/ tourism initiatives
- Development of Regional Transit System (Federal funding available)
- Tri-party agreement with the M.D. of Greenview, City of Grande Prairie and County to develop the petrochemical cluster in Greenview

#### What other opportunities should be identified?

- Encourage use of renewable and green energy
- Self-sustained food industry with the opportunity to establish agricultural processing plants, community gardens, and agriculture intensification - this would demand a reduction of red tape for local food production and distribution
- More recreation facilities (eg: swimming pool)
- Utilizing existing industrial areas before expanding into agricultural land
- Opportunities available for the young demographic
- More commercial development in the County
- Co-operation between adjacent towns, communities, and municipalities
- Development of a niche capitalize on the strengths specific to each community, for example: rodeo, equestrian, etc.
- Better advertising for local events
- A watershed that if maintained properly can accommodate the run off in an environmentally friendly way

#### **THREATS**

- Ability to have Aquatera proceed in upgrading sewer and water services to Clairmont \*
- Aquatera is an independent corporation with an independent board County of Grande Prairie's influence on priorities for coordinating water and sanitary services is limited \*
- Impact of depressed oil and gas industry
- Current NDP government perceived to have policies that do not support economic development
- Impact of Bill 21, new modernized Municipal Government Act.
- Conversion of prime agricultural land for industrial and residential uses
- Impact of Carbon Levy

#### What other threats should be identified?

- Overspending of municipal resources
- Keeping up with infrastructure needs as the County grows (social and physical)
- Loss of small town character
- Protection of water and air resources
- Crime in rural areas
- Regionalization
- Threat of school closures
- Foreign investment displacing smaller businesses
- County model of centralization, neglecting smaller hamlets
- Another oil boom taking emphasis off renewable resources
- Consolidation of energy companies (creating uncertainty)
- Lack of good planning

<sup>\*</sup> The comments made here reflect the opinions of individuals who provided them at the time they were collected. Since the time of our open houses and community input sessions, Aquatera has made significant commitments and efforts towards working more closely with the communities to which they provide service.

#### 3.2 VISION BUILDING

During the workshop, participants were asked to answer a series of questions related to their vision for the County of Grande Prairie in the year 2067. The following are the comprehensive, verbatim participant's responses to each question:

# 1. Do you agree with the vision that the County's economy will continue to be driven by energy, forestry and agriculture while developing new value-added opportunities in these sectors? Why or why not?

- Energy will continue to drive the economy but there will be a shift to alternative sustainable energy programs (solar power, geothermal energy, bio thermal energy, petrochemical clusters, etc.) and therefore a green economy
- Forestry is vulnerable to international policies and the unrenewable nature of the resource
- Tariffs are an issue
- Agricultural intensification
- Opportunity for petrochemical cluster in Greenview
- The County could be more conducive to value added agriculture
- There should be a push for niche farming, this would allow farmers who don't want to be part of factory farming to contribute to the agriculture sector

# 2. How can the County foster investment in the emerging opportunities for energy, biomass and bio- industrial development?

- Rebates, promotions, and grants for renewable energy development
- Education on alternative energy sources (GPRC)
- Re-using cow manure liquid manure
- Geothermal wells could be used to support greenhouses
- Cluster developments
- Invest in industry and manufacturing rather than services
- Encourage better transportation network development
- Be more involved in industry, find out what they need or what their problems are
- Open mindedness

## 3. How best can the County leverage its large (260,000 people) trading area to build stronger commercial and retail opportunities?

- Self-sustaining community (greenhouses, food processing plants, and services to support the community)
- · Keep taxes low in the County
- Create more attractive retail and commercial areas
- Encourage a variety of retail businesses (including box stores) that will attract customers from within the area as well as those from out of the region
- Promote Grande Prairie County as a regional center
- Educate and promotion of local food production
- Leverage sporting/event opportunities (facilities)

# 4. What barriers to the future growth and development need to be addressed in the short, medium and long term?

- Competition with the City and other municipalities in the region
- Transportation within the County and accessibility of amenities (public transit)
- Road infrastructure quality and maintenance to support growth
- Developer pays for infrastructure rather than the County

- Size of County (cost of travel and living)
- Cost of living
- Retention of health care staff (quality)
- Crime and drug issues
- Education (post-secondary) opportunities
- Broadband Internet and cell phone service
- Economic downturn

### 5. Are there any economic development models the County can learn from to ensure a successful and resilient future?

- Fort McMurray area three separate self-sustaining communities
- Teepee Creek
- Greenview petrochemical cluster
- Leduc and Edmonton infrastructure partnership
- Tax incentives in Saskatchewan
- Learn from mistakes made in the planning of the Clairmont Landfill

#### 6. What size population will we have in 50 years?

- 50.000
- 40,000
  - o "We went through our major boom already, be careful of the bust"
  - With several highs and lows, the population will average out and continue at the current rate
  - We should direct growth to more concentrated areas

#### 7. What will drive the County's economy?

- Renewable energy
- Agriculture will continue to be one of the County's main economic drivers
- Industry demand
- Tourism
- Small local retail, not big box (the future in online shopping killing the box store)
- Industries replacing the forestry industry and oil production
- Kids moving home to raise families

# 8. What things do you value and want to preserve? (e.g. agricultural land base, water resources, family orientation, quality of life factors, historical and cultural assets)

- Agriculture and environment (wetlands, open land, water resources, natural areas, agricultural land)
- Small family businesses and a small town feel
- Quality of life
- Farm and acreage way of life
- Honoring County history
- Recreation
- Beef industry
- Niche and mixed farming
- Schools and sense of community

## 9. What things would you like to change? (e.g. more diverse economy, technological advances, more sustainable forms of development etc....)

Densification of residential development

- Access to resources throughout the County "not just in the City"
- Crime rates and community safety
- Stop using excessive amounts of land for ditches
- Continued development of the local university and hospital
- Improved road construction that is capable of coping with heavier equipment and increased traffic (Highway 43 needs to be updated)

## 10. What will commercial be like? The industrial areas? Residential subdivisions? Where should these be located in the County? Please draw on the map provided.

- Concentrated along Hwy 43 Corridor, the City and Sexsmith
- Residential will be in Sexsmith, La Glace, and Teepee Creek
- Denser residential areas (smaller acreages) in areas with limited farming capabilities to conserve agricultural lands
- Avoid subdivision of agricultural land
- Become an industrial node but keep industry out of residential areas
- Smaller, local retail shops
- Encourage industry that compliments the area and has minimal environmental damage
- These areas will look similar to what we have now, and be in similar locations
- Creation of more services to draw people to the towns
  - o Eg., restaurant, pub, etc.
- Development should build off strengths specific to each community:
  - o Eg: Teepee Creek food and agriculture cluster
  - o Eg: Teepee Creek rodeo and equestrian specialization

#### 11. How will we treat and address the needs of our seniors and young people?

- Opportunities for aging in place and offering seniors amenities
- Accessible and affordable recreation opportunities
- Accessibility to medical centres
- Listen to and involve them
- Affordable seniors complex
- Federal funding for regional transit system (ability to age in place)
- Small residential communities of care (condominium style)
- Cluster developments

#### 12. What will we have accomplished as a County?

- A well-planned area
- Concentrated residential growth
- Preservation of agricultural land
- Opportunity for the next generation to both work and stay in the area

#### 13. What will the Clairmont Urban Area look like once it is built out?

- Well organized growth
- Plenty of walking and green spaces
- Attractive retail areas and big box stores
- Compatible uses
- Utilization of the lake
- Coherent vision for the County

#### 14. What do we expect of our civic leaders?

- City and County cooperation
- Cohesive vision and accountability
- Honesty, integrity, and openness
- Looking at the County as a whole not just their representative area

#### 15. What image do we wish to convey to the rest of the world?

- Show Grande Prairie's attributes better
- We are a great place for families
- We cooperate as a region
- The County of Grand Prairie is open for business
- We are a safe and welcoming community
- Balanced and diversified economy
- A good quality of life

#### 16. What tourist, recreation facilities and activities will exist?

- Affordable and accessible recreation options in the County
  - o Swimming pool
  - Hockey rink
- Walking, biking trail from Clairmont-Grande Prairie-Wapti river

#### 17. What new partnerships will we have created?

- Better relationship and partnership with the City
- Inter-regional partnership

#### 3.3 INPUT SESSIONS EVALUATION

At the end of the Workbook, participants were asked to evaluate the Community Input Session. The following table depicts the questions given and summarizes the feedback received:

	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
The Community Input Session was well organized and appropriately paced.	3	5	1		
The Information presented was useful and clear.	2	6	1		
Opportunities to ask questions were good.	2	4	3		

#### What aspects of Community Input Sessions were done well?

Asked opinions and input from participants

- Brought useful information
- Good opportunities to agree and disagree on ideas
- Well educated presentation
- Good food
- Presentation was okay

#### What are your suggestions for improvement

- Need to get more people out
- More inputs to the planning people
- No attempt to draw out quieter people at the table
- Honesty within the County, taking all parties into consideration when developing areas
- Better advertised on what it is about
- Would like to see more

#### **Additional Comments**

• Glad to hear the plans of the County

#### 4.0 SUMMARY OF THEMES

The main objective of the Community Input Sessions was to engage with residents of the County of Grande Prairie who are impacted by the Growth and Economic Development Strategy and are important to its success. Over the course of the three (3) Community Input Sessions common themes arose that are summarized below.

#### 4.1 Smart Growth and Compact Development

Participants had a good understanding of the need to pursue more compact development in the interests of sustainability and reducing land use conflicts, particularly with agricultural operations. They were prepared to have the County promote higher densities and direct the majority of growth to existing towns villages and hamlets. Lot sizes should be smaller than two acres particularity where piped sewer, and water is available. At the same time, there was concern about maintaining and increasing densities in existing hamlets, particularly those that may be threatened with school closures resulting from the lack of student enrollment. Also, participants felt that residential and industrial growth should be directed away from higher capability agricultural lands. Concentrating residential growth also provides better opportunities to attract and support commercial enterprises.

#### 4.2 Preservation of High Quality Agricultural Lands

A reoccurring theme amongst participants was the need to preserve and protect high quality agricultural lands from residential and industrial development. They lamented the fact that in the past industrial development in particular led to the loss of high quality farmland. As previously discussed, the preservation of agricultural land can best be achieved by concentrating residential and development in established urban centres and hamlets or clustering country residential development in areas that already have pre-existing country residential subdivisions.

#### 4.3 Diversification of The Agricultural Industry

Historically agriculture has been a mainstay of the County's economy. Over the years there has been a trend towards large scale farming operations. Some participants expressed that there should also be opportunities to return to smaller scale mixed farming operations with specialty crops (berry farms, greenhouses, etc.) combined with cottage industries. We need to recognize the trend towards local food security and locally grown agricultural products. One of the reoccurring themes was that there is a lack of food processing facilities, particularly when it comes to meat products and farmers have to ship their livestock to central or southern Alberta for processing. The suggestion was that the County of Grande Prairie should look at the feasibility of establishing a local food hub for the processing and distribution of agricultural products. Agricultural operations also provide a source of biomass that can be repurposed for other products and be used as a source for the production of renewable energy.

#### 4.4 Alternative Renewable Energy

Although participants felt that the oil and gas industry will continue to be an important driver of the local economy, the County should be looking to the future and look at alternative renewable energy sources. A recent study by the University of Alberta confirmed that parts of the County have significant geothermal potential that can be harnessed as an alternative renewable energy source. Not only could the geothermal energy be used as an energy source for residential and industrial development but also be used to support intensified agricultural operations (eg. Greenhouses). Currently, both the federal and provincial governments are providing policy direction and incentives to move into a green economy. The

development of Clairmont Heights provides an opportunity to build a model sustainable community. It was also believed that education and incentives are important in altering consumer behavior to promote and encourage sustainable development practices.

#### 4.5 Poor Condition of Roadway Infrastructure

Participants indicated that one of the priorities in the County is the improvement of the roadway infrastructure, recognizing that a number of the highways in the County fall under provincial jurisdiction. The County has been lobbying Alberta Transportation to make improvements to the provincial highway system, particularly twinning highway 43 (Alaska highway) and highway 40 south to Grande Cache. Having a safe and efficient roadway system is integral to developing an intermodal/logistics hub with rail and air service.

#### 4.6 Maintaining Viability of Hamlets

The Teepee Creek Community Input Session underscored the importance of maintaining the viability of hamlets and mitigating the threat of potential school closures. One of the key drivers of population growth would be providing local employment opportunities. Work has to be done to explore community economic development opportunities based on niche markets. The suggestion was that Teepee Creek might be a good location for a food hub or equestrian centre capitalizing on its ranching heritage. A number of hamlets in the County such as Clairmont, Bezanson, and La Glace are growth hamlets that have piped, sewer and water that can accommodate additional development. The cost of creating additional lots in some of the smaller hamlets presents a challenge and makes it difficult to attract developers to a small market.

Given the County's rich history, a number of hamlets provide opportunities for placemaking, this is particularly true for hamlets such as Valhalla Centre and Teepee Creek. Placemaking is defined by Project for Public Spaces as a multi-faceted approach to the planning, design and management of public spaces. placemaking capitalizes on a local community's assets, inspiration, and potential, with the intention of creating public spaces that promote people's health, happiness, and well being. This approach can be used as a foundation for a hamlet revitalization initiative.

#### 4.7 Pursuing Regional Partnerships

County residents felt that intermunicipal cooperation is going to be an important success factor in developing and implementing the County's Growth and Economic Development Strategy. Moving forward, efforts need to be made to improve relationships between the City and the County. "Regions that learn to work together and govern together will emerge as the most desirable place to raise a family and open a business in the 21st Century", William R. Dodge, *Regional Excellence Governing Together to Complete Globally and Flourish Locally*.

#### 4.8 Need for More Recreation Facilities

The City and County recently prepared and approved a Joint Recreation Master Plan. Residents feel that existing recreational facilities are expensive and are not located in the most easily accessible areas. A majority of residents indicated that a swimming pool is a top priority. Participants also felt the County could better utilize its natural assets for outdoor recreation and tourism.

APPENDIX 1: PRESENTATION BOARDS

### **Community Input Sessions**

Welcome to the Growth and Economic Development Strategy Community Input Sessions

#### Purpose and Primary Objectives of the Strategy

To effectively plan to integrate growth management and economic development in a manner that provides the necessary infrastructure and services to attract business.

- To understand the current status of the County with respect to land uses, infrastructure, economic, and social considerations.
- To understand the current drivers and inhibitors of growth within the County and neighbouring communities to better enable economic growth.
- · To identify actions that could provide greater opportunity for the development of existing communities within the County.
- · To form the basis for input and feedback in conjunction with other County documentation on the forthcoming Upper Peace Regional Plan under the Provincial Land Use Framework.
- To develop an implementation plan for actions required to lead the County towards greater economic sustainability.

#### Where We Are in the Study Process



#### Instructions

- · Please view the displays, speak to project representatives and participate in small group working sessions.
- · Please remember to complete your workbook.

#### **Share Your Ideas**

It is easy to get involved! A series of public engagement activities are planned including this open house, symposiums, social media tools, online forums, information sessions, workshops, interviews and surveys.

We are listening at - #mycountygp

Visit the Project website at: www.countygp.ab.ca/mycountygp Feedback document: www.surveymonkey.com/r/cgpecdevstrat



#### **Our Team**



Land Use Planning

Project Management

Public Engagement and

GIS Mapping and Drafting



Economic Development



Infrastructure

Climate Change

Environment



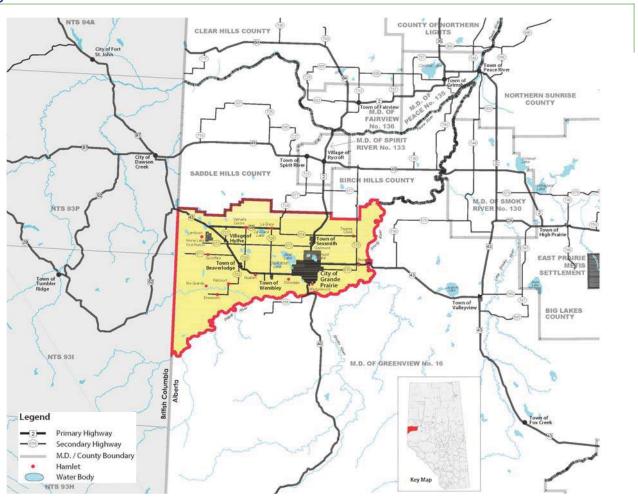
Online Engagement







#### **Regional Context**



Grande Prairie's economy and growth have been driven by energy, forestry, agriculture and commercial opportunities. The growth over the next fifty years will see these industries continue to drive regional growth but also create opportunities to attract value-added activities into the region to build on these strengths.



36.8

County of Grande
Prairie Median Age

260,000

Estimated Total
Trade Area
Population within
200 km

\$91,233

County of Grande
Prairie's Median
Annual Income after
Tax

\$3.5B

Total Trade Area
Retail Spending in
2013

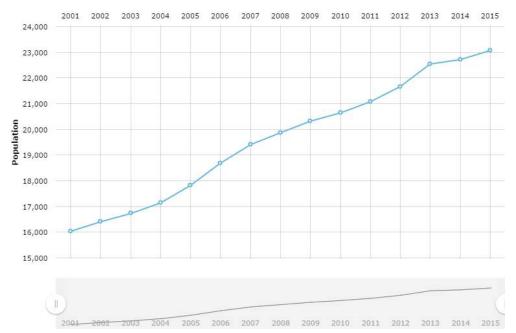
13.5% County of Grande Prairie Population Growth Over 5 Years





### Population Growth and Demographics

#### **Historic Population Growth**



The population for the County of Grande Prairie and its many towns and hamlets have grown dramatically from 2001-2016, the

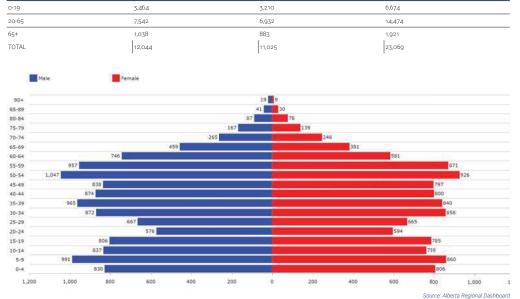
dramatically from 2001-2016, the last year for which Statistics Canada completed a census. The county grew 43% over a 15-year period, from 15,638 in 2001 to 22,303 by 2016.

Wembley, Beaverlodge, LaGlace and Sexsmith also saw double digit growth over the same period. However, Hythe, Bezanson and Valhalla saw declines in their population of -22% and -75% respectively.



Source: Alberta Regional Dashboard

#### 2015 Age Sex Pyramid



The population for the County of Grande Prairie and its many towns have grown dramatically from 2001-2011.

In 2015, 29% of the County of Grande Prairie's population is under the age of 19, 8% over the age of 65, and 63% between the ages of 20-65. The population has experienced a recent natural population increase with children under 10 representing 15% of the population. Other large age demographics include 35-39 year olds and 50-54 year olds, both of whom represent prime working age populations. To be updated when Statistics Canada releases full 2016 data





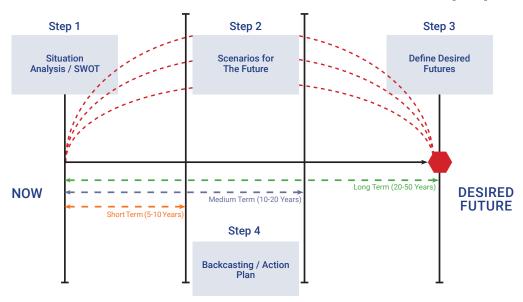


### A Shared Vision for How the County Should Develop and Grow in the Next 50 Years

#### Vision

"A vision is a dynamic combination of values, aspirations and economic possibilities. Consequently, it is much more than just physical land, plan or some magic that reflects something that is visual in nature. In fact, a good vision statement is often a new story that a community has selected to portray itself"

- Source: A Guidebook for Undertaking a Strategic Vision Process- IDA 1991





#### **Community Vision Building**

What is your vision for the County of Grande Prairie in the year 2067?

- 1. What size population will we have in 50 years?
- 2. What will drive the County's economy?
- 3. What things do you value and want to preserve? (e.g. agricultural land base, winter resources, family orientation, quality of life factors, historical and cultural assets)
- 4. What things would you like to change? (e.g. more diverse economy, technological advances, more sustainable forms of development etc)
- 5. What will commercial be like? The industrial areas? Residential subdivisions?
- 6. How will we treat and address the needs of our seniors and young people?
- 7. What will we have accomplished as a County?
- 8. What will the Clairmont Urban Area look like once it is built out?
- 9. What do we expect of our civic leaders?
- 10. What image do we wish to convey to the rest of the world?
- 11. What tourist/recreation facilities and activities will exist?
- 12. What new partnerships will we have created?

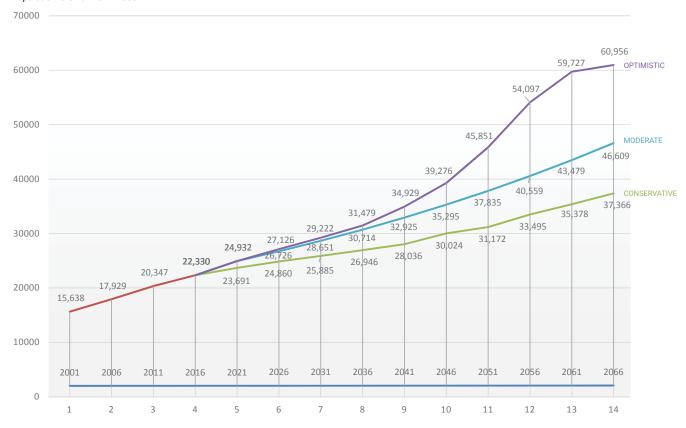




# 50 Year Population and Employment Projections

2011 - 2066

#### Population Growth 2011-2066



#### **Employment and Population Growth Projections Assumptions**

- · Actual data not derived numbers
- Using an employment based calculation rather than provincial and federal projections
- Leveraging current employment based profile and future prospects of driving industries, including increased focus on manufacturing and processing
- Impact of technological change over the next 30 years
- Consideration of quality of life factors in attracting families (minimize leakage)

Population Growth	Actual	Conservative	Moderate	Optimistic
2001	15,638			
2006	17,929			
2011	20,347			
2016	22,330	22,330	22,330	22,330
2021		23,691	24,932	24,932
2026		24,860	26,726	27,126
2031		25,885	28,651	29,222
2036		26,946	30,714	31,479
2041		28,036	32,925	34,929
2046		30,024	35,295	39,276
2051		31,172	37,835	45,851
2056		33,495	40,559	54,097
2061		35,378	43,479	59,727
2066		37,366	46,609	60,956
Growth Rate	43%	67%	109%	173%



Employment Growth Scenarios	Conservative	Moderate	Optimistic
Population Growth:	37,366	46,609	60,956
Average annual population growth rate:	1.03%	1.48%	2.03%
Additional population:	15,036	24,279	38,626
Total employment:	24,138	28,524	39,377
Average employment growth rate:	1.36%	1.70%	2.36%
Additional employment:	11,863	16,249	26,218
Employment Ratio (Persons per job):	1.55	1.63	1.62



Source: Stats Canada 2016



#### Workbook Input Area:

What other Strengths and Weaknesses should be identified?

## **Strengths**

- Large Land Base
- · Low taxes / Industrial assessment
- Pro-development / Open for business / Easy to deal with
- Diversified economy (oil and gas, forestry, tourism, and agriculture)
- Grande Prairie College (future degree granting polytechnic)
- Positive environmental and social impact of new Queen Elizabeth II Hospital
- Adequate highway infrastructure
- High-quality agricultural land
- Large retail and service trade area
- Diverse and large biomass industry
- Railway Infrastructure
- Intermodal and logistics potential with airport, railway and highways

### Weaknesses

- Council does not always make decisions consistent with approved policy
- People are resistant to change/innovation
- Need to improve the image of Grande Prairie Region, currently imagined as a rough and tumble oil and gas town rather than an attractive community with a good quality of life and amenities

**Additional Comments** 







#### Workbook Input Area:

What other Opportunities and Threats should be identified?

## **Opportunities**

- Hamlet revitalization initiative
- Opportunity to develop Clairmont as a model sustainable development community
- Twinning of Highway 40 to Grande Cache
- Twinning Highway 43 to British Columbia Tourism route to Yukon and Alaska
- Biomass and Petrochemical industrial cluster with Greenview
- Implementation of the Grande Prairie Area Joint Recreation Master Plan
- Work with Provincial Government in implementing the Wapti Corridor Multi- Use Plan
- Provide facilities and services for aging population
- Opportunities for the county and municipalities to work together on economic development/tourism initiatives
- Development of Regional Transit System (Federal funding available)
- Value added agriculture and food processing opportunities
- Tri-party agreement with the M.D. of Greenview City of Grande Prairie and County to develop the petrochemical cluster in Greenview

#### **Threats**

- · Strained relations with the City of Grande Prairie
- Ability to have Aquatera proceed in upgrading sewer and water services to Clairmont\*
- Impact of depressed oil and gas industry
- Current NDP Government perceived to have policies that do not support economic development
- Impact of Bill 21, new modernized Municipal Government Act.
- Conversion of prime agricultural land for industrial uses
- Aquatera is an independent corporation with an independent board - County of Grande Prainfe's uence on priorities for coordinating water and sanitary services is limited\*
- Impact of Carbon Levy
- \* The comments made here reflect the opinions of individuals who provided them at the time they were collected. Since the time of our open houses and community input sessions, Aquatera has made significant commitments and efforts towards working more closely with the communities to which they provide service.

**Additional Comments** 

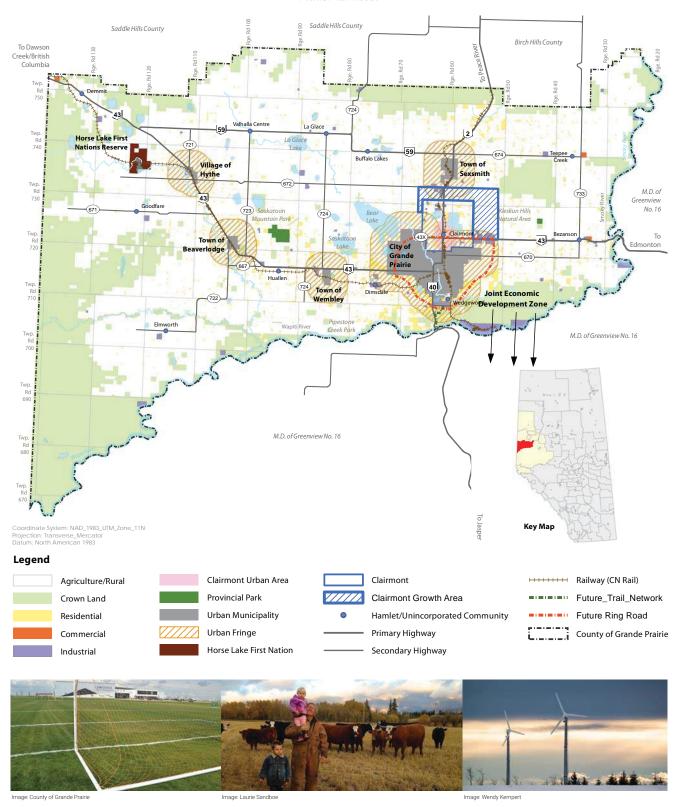
Comments





## Generalized Existing Land Use

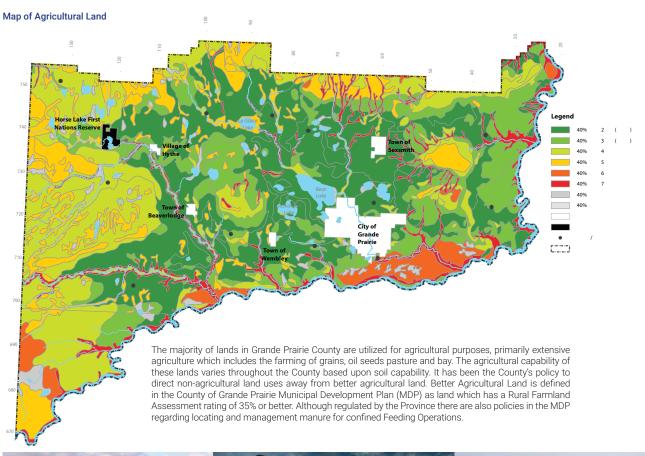
Where do you envision County residents would want to live in the future? What areas are best suited for commercial and industrial uses?



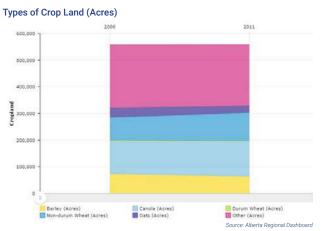


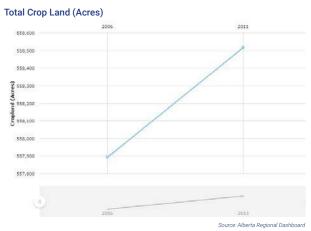


#### Agriculture continues to be an important economic development activity and lifestyle in the County.









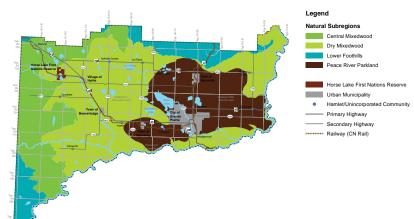




## **Environmental Stewardship**

#### Protecting the natural environment and pursuing environmentally sustainable practices needs to be a strategic priority.

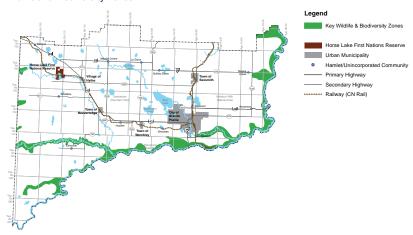
#### **Natural Subregions**



The County of Grande Prairie has a varied landscape within the Foothills, Boreal Forest, and Parkland, Natural Regions that provide suitable habitats for many sensitive species. This area is characterized by four Subregions: the Lower Foothills Natural Subregion of the Foothills Natural Region, the Central Mixedwood Subregion and Dry Mixedwood Subregion of the Boreal Natural Region, and the Peace River Parkland Subregion of the Parkland Natural region (Government of Alberta 2016d).



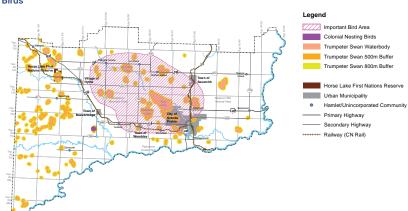
#### Wildlife and Biodiversity Zones



Key Wildlife and Biodiversity Zones are established to protect locally or regionally significant wildlife movement corridors (Government of Alberta 2013). Across the County, there are Key Wildlife and Biodiversity Zones established along the Redwillow River, the Bear River downstream from the Town of Grande Prairie, the Waptit River, the Smoky River as well as Kleskun Creek east of Kleskun Lake. These zones provide key winter habitat for ungulates and higher potential for biodiversity. River valleys contain topographic variations and site conditions that provide hiding and thermal cover for terrestrial mammals and are biodiversity areas where species tend to concentrate.



#### Birds



Trumpeter swans are designated as "may be at risk" under the Alberta Wildlife Act. They occur in several lakes across the County and have benefited from active management of those lakes to reduce disturbance during critical breeding periods. Because of the sensitivity to disturbance of trumpeter swans and their cygnets, a provincial operational standard restricts developments and industrial activity within a 500-meter buffer from the bed and shore. There are further restrictions limiting activities within an 800-meter buffer during the breeding season from April 1 to September 30.







## **Economic Development**

What are your ideas for how the County can continue to grow and diversify its economy?

## **Economic Opportunities**

Sector	Value Added Areas	Current Employment Breakdown	
Primary	•Energy •Forestry •Agriculture	3,295 Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (1,200)  - Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (1,200)	
Secondary	<ul><li>Partial Upgrading</li><li>Bio Industrial</li><li>Bio Energy</li><li>Geothermal</li></ul>	2,330 16%  • Construction (1500) • Manufacturing (575) • Utilities (170) • Other (85)	
Tertiary	<ul> <li>Health Services</li> <li>Education and Research</li> <li>Transportation and logistics</li> <li>Service Automation</li> <li>Office and Retail</li> <li>Tourism</li> </ul>	• Retail trade (1,210) • Transportation and warehousing (1,030) • Education services (935) • Other services (except public administration) (920) • Health care and social assistance (890)	

The labour force in the County and its larger towns and hamlets is engaged in a diverse set of occupations. The table above summarizes the potential economic opportunities in the County and lists the primary occupations in the community as of the 2011 census. The largest occupations in the County are oil and gas extraction (14%), construction (10%), retail trade (8%) and agriculture and forestry (8%). Breakdowns are provided in the table for the County, Beaverlodge, Hythe and Sexsmith, the only communities for which this breakdown is available.



#### Global Markets and Alberta Opportunities

	Lead Market			
	Energy efficiency	Industrial Digital Solutions	Green Buildings	
۵	Sustainable Water Management	Water Management	Advanced Recovery & Processing	
•	Power generation, storage and distribution		Geothern	nal Wind Solar CCUS Biomass
d	Material Efficiency		Biobased	
æŚ	Sustainable Mobility		Biofuel	
mi	Waste management and Recycling	Environmental Solutions		Municipal Solid Waste Management

#### **Weighing Opportunities**



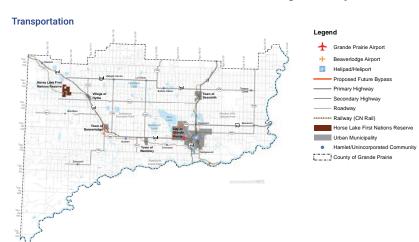
Source: Government of Alberta





# **Physical Infrastructure**

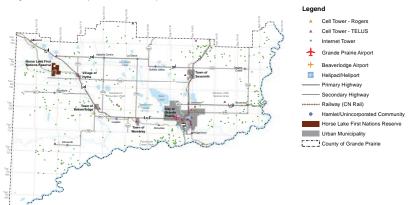
Growth management promotes compact and efficient land use patterns at intensities that make efficient use of existing and planned infrastructure.



The County of Grande Prairie is serviced by a number of different transportation modes including Highway, Airport, and Railway infrastructure. There are several major highways connecting the County as well as City of Grande Prairie to the rest of the province of Alberta and British Columbia.



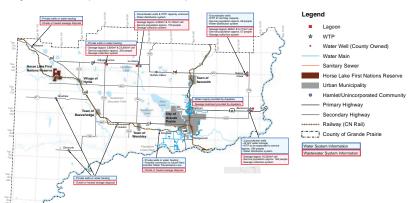
#### **Utility Infrastructure (Communication)**



Internet access is an important facilitator of growth within the County. A report completed in 2011 by ViTel Consulting Inc. concluded that although 87% of the townships within the county and all 11 hamlets had wireless internet coverage the, towers were not able to provide adequate service. To insure internet utilities, meet long term growth aspirations, the County has sponsored the installation of approximately 300 towers throughout the region and continues to work towards system improvement.



#### Utility Infrastructure (Water and Wastewater)



Water and Wastewater management within the County continues to be a challenge. Services within the City of Grande Prairie and to the Town of Clairmont are provided by Aquatera, with the majority of the county being serviced by private wells and sewage lagoon systems.

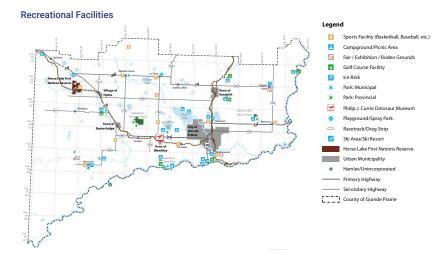
Water and wastewater infrastructure is expected to encounter a higher load due to climate change and increasing rainfall events. Higher demands from recreation and irrigation are also expected. Groundwaterqualityisexpectedtoremainwithin current parameters. Additional capacity may be required to maintain higher resiliency. Wastewater treatment may be benefited from a longer warm season but will also see greater loading due to increases in water usage.





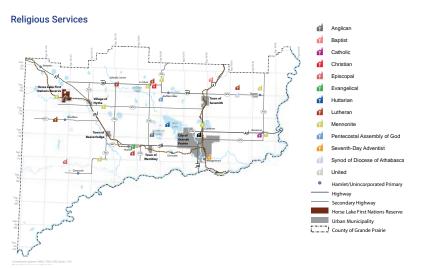
## Social Infrastructure

Having well developed social infrastructure ensures a good quality of life for County residents and is essential in attracting a skilled workforce to locate in the County.



A 2007 Open Spaces Study recommends the County "explore possibilities to establish public trails at regional and neighbourhood scales." The development of a Regional Trails Master Plan would provide a strategy for the creation of local and county-wide trail networks, incorporating various types of trails (motorized, nature interpretive, equine, etc.) and regional connections. A connected system of trails creates a transportation network throughout the County and encourages active recreational uses.

Encouraging greater use and provision of recreation facilities is important to the County of Grande Prairie. The Grande Prairie Area Joint Recreation Master Plan (GPAJRMP) examines the current state of recreational services within Grande Prairie County and the municipalities within. From these baseline goals, outcomes, and guidelines are suggested to inform new recreational services creation and enhancement of existing services.

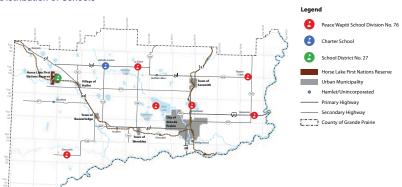








#### Distribution of Schools



Access to education including both the provision of schools as well as adequate transportation to them is essential to sustaining and progressing a community.

There are currently two (2) school district boards that oversee various educational institutions located within the County of Grande Prairie, the Peace Wapiti Public School Division and the Grande Prairie & District Catholic School Board.







## **Thank You For Attending**

Please fill out a **comment form**. When completed, place in the comment box or take the **comment form** home and mail, email, or fax your comments to ParioPlan Inc. by May 5, 2017.

## **Contact Information**

Marcelo Figueira, Planner
ParioPlan Incorporated
Planning and Development Services, County of Grande Prairie
#605, 10080 Jasper Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5J1V9
Pamela Nordin, Project Manager
Planning and Development Services, County of Grande Prairie
10001 84 Ave,
Clairmont, Alberta T0H 0W0

Phone: 780.423.6824 Phone: 780.532.9722

## **Share Your Ideas**

We are listening at - #mycountygp Visit the Project website at: www.countygp.ab.ca/mycountygp Feedback document at: www.surveymonkey.com/r/cgpecdevstrat







APPENDIX 2: POWERPOINT PRESENTATION



## Agenda



	Alleria, Canada
6:00 – 6:30pm	Registration / Open House
6:30 – 7:00pm	Overview Presentation
7:00 – 8:00pm	Small Group Working Sessions
8:00 – 8:30pm	Reporting Out / Next Steps

## Purpose and Primary Objectives of "The Strategy"



To affectively Plan to integrate growth management and economic development in a manner that provides the necessary infrastructure and services to attract business.

- a. To understand the current status of the County with respect to land uses, infrastructure, economic, and social considerations.
- a. To understand the current drivers and inhibitors of growth within the County and neighbouring communities, to better enable economic growth.
- b. To identify actions that could provide greater opportunity for the development of existing communities within the County.
- c. To form the basis for input and feedback in conjunction with other County documentation on the forthcoming Upper Peace Regional Plan under the Provincial Land Use Framework.
- a. To develop an implementation plan on actions required to lead the County towards greater economic sustainability.

## **Economic Development**



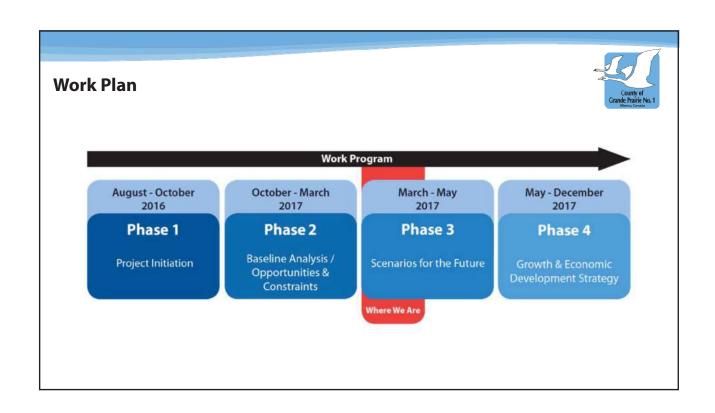
Refers to a range of activities intended to attract, create, or retain private sector jobs in a given geographical area. These activities may involve the use of public and private funds for area infrastructure investments, business financing assistance, the analysis of regional assets and attributes in the establishment of economic plans and strategies (Grant and Hall, 1988).

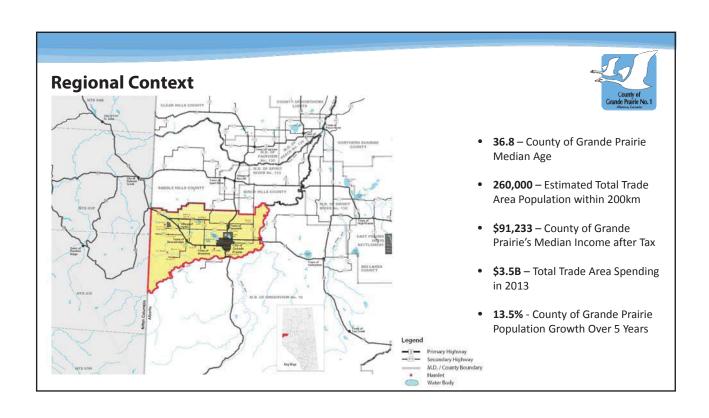


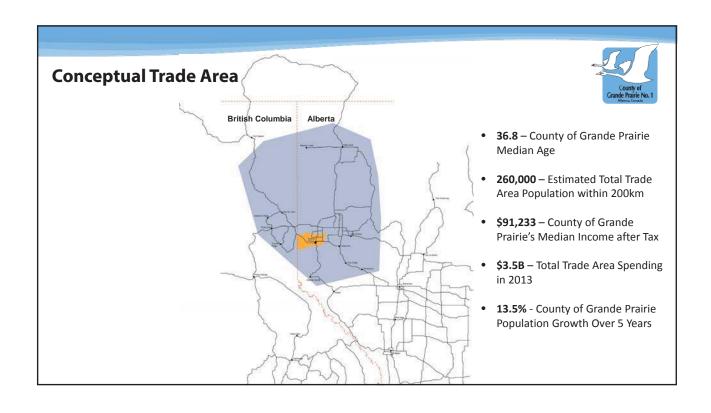
## **Growth Management**

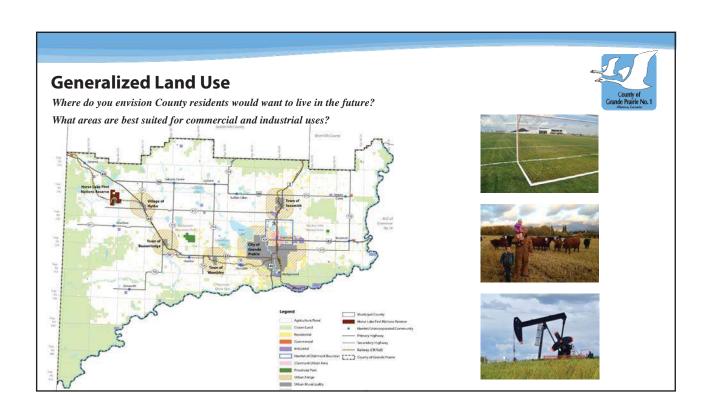
Is the process of accommodating growth in the community while directing the location and pattern of development in a manner that contributes to, and works towards making the community's future vision a reality. It also seeks to ensure that the quality of life in the County of Grande Prairie is maintained as the size of the community increases.

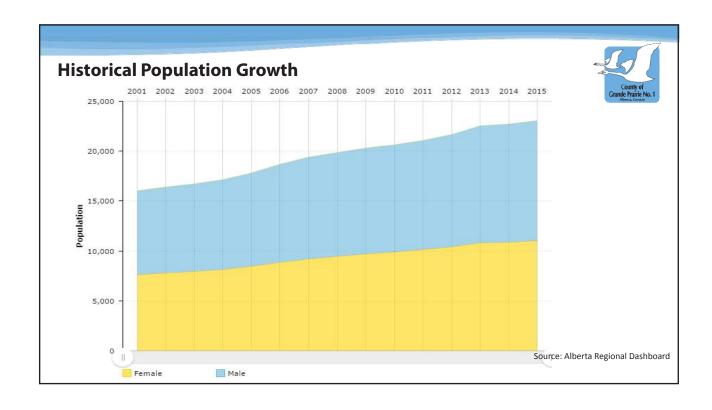


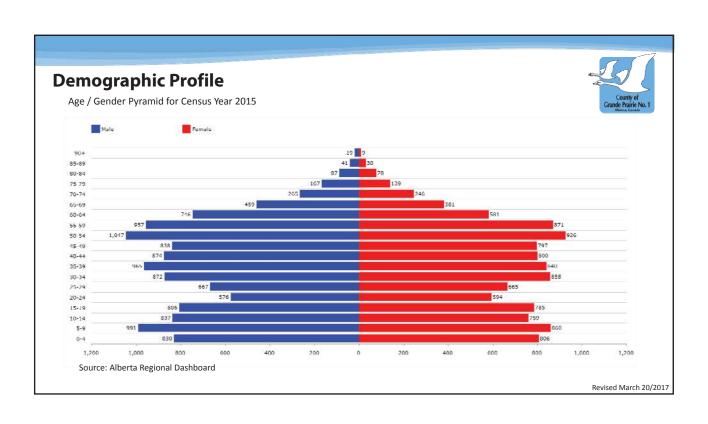


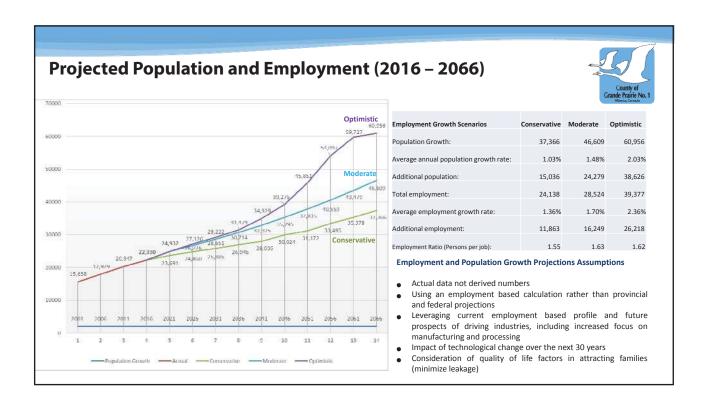


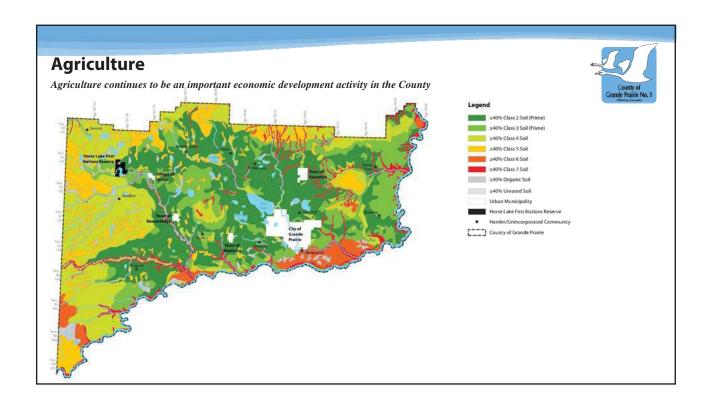


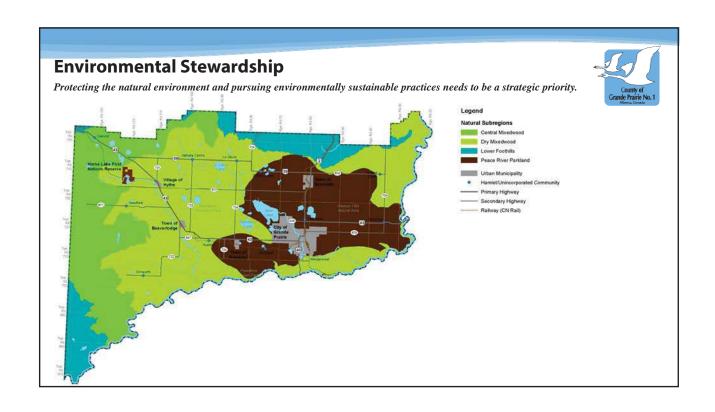


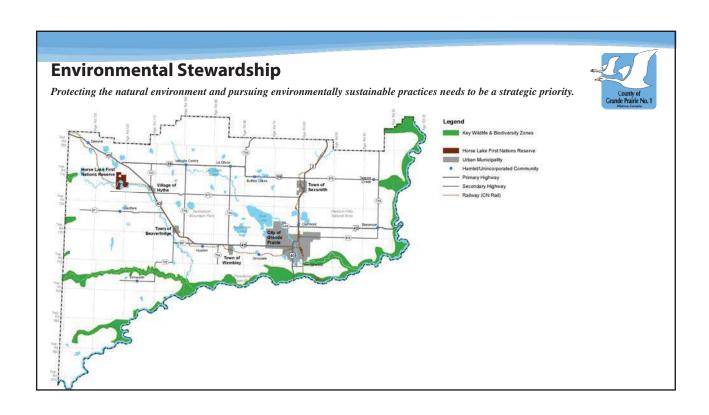


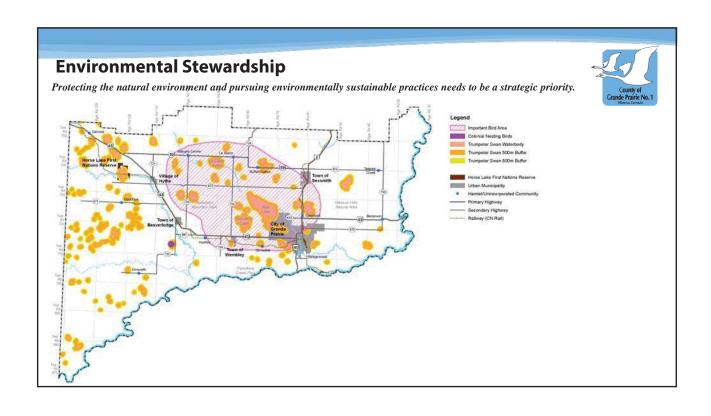


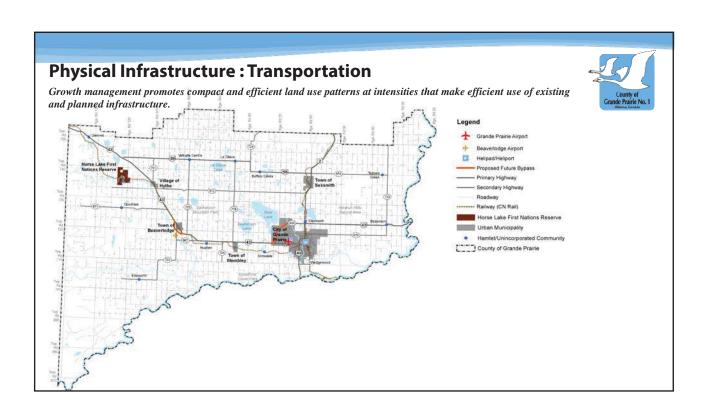


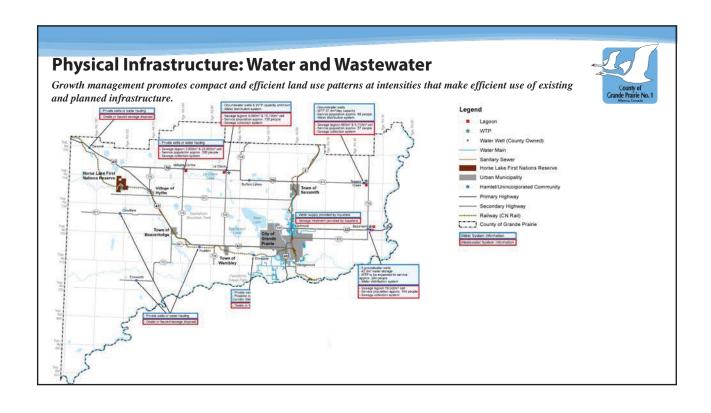


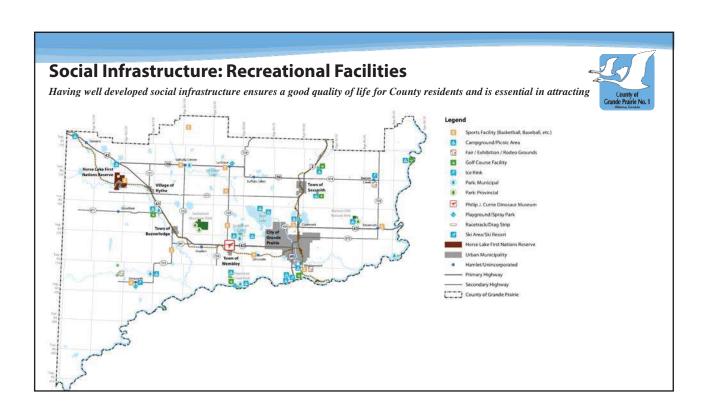


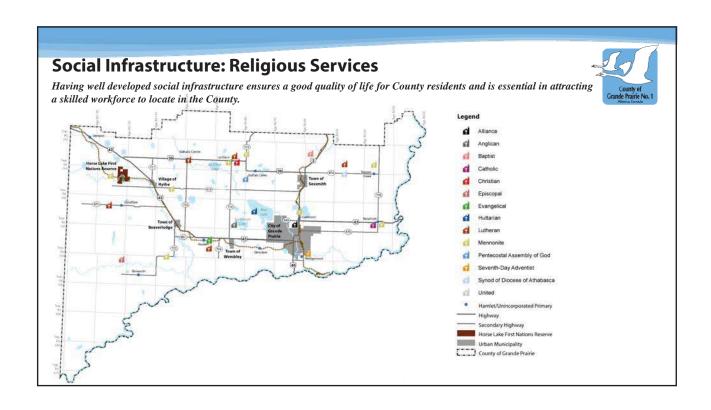


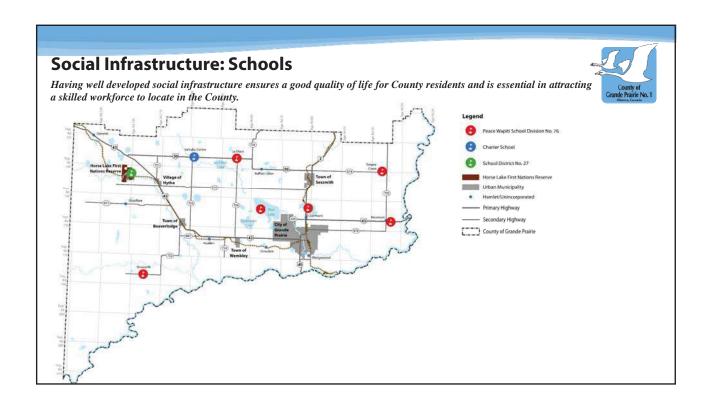












## **SWOT Analysis**



## **STRENGTHS**

- Large land base
- Low taxes / Industrial assessment
- Pro-development / Open for business / Easy to deal with
- Diversified economy (oil and gas, forestry, tourism, and agriculture)
- Grande Prairie College (future degree granting polytechnic)
- Positive economic and social impact of new Queen Elizabeth II hospital
- Adequate highway infrastructure
- · High-quality agricultural land
- Large retail and service trade area
- Diverse and large biomass industry
- Railway Infrastructure
- Intermodal and logistics potential with airport, railway and highways

## **SWOT Analysis**



## **WEAKNESSES**

- People are resistant to change/innovation
- Need to improve the image of Grande Prairie Region, currently imagined as a rough and tumble oil and gas town rather than an attractive community with a good quality of life and amenities

## **SWOT Analysis**

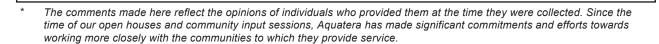
## **OPPORTUNITIES**

- Hamlet revitalization initiative
- Opportunity to develop Clairmont as a model sustainable development community
- Twinning of Highway 40 to Grande Cache
- Twinning Highway 43 to British Columbia Tourism route to Yukon and Alaska
- Biomass and Petrochemical industrial cluster with Greenview
- Implementation of the Grande Prairie Area Joint Recreation Master Plan
- Work with Provincial Government in implementing the Wapiti Corridor Multi-Use Plan
- Provide facilities and services for aging population
- Opportunities for the County and municipalities to work together on economic development/tourism initiatives
- Development of Regional Transit System (Federal funding available)
- Value added agriculture and food processing opportunities
- Tri-party agreement with the M.D. of Greenview City of Grande Prairie and County to develop the petrochemical cluster in Greenview

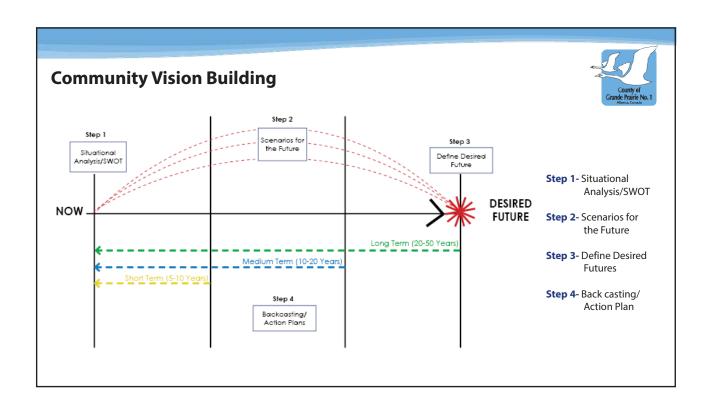
## **SWOT Analysis**

### **THREATS**

- Ability to have Aquatera proceed in upgrading sewer and water services to Clairmont\*
- Impact of depressed oil and gas industry
- Current NDP government perceived to have policies that do not support economic development
- Impact of Bill 21, new modernized Municipal Government Act.
- Conversion of prime agricultural land for industrial uses
- Aquatera is an independent corporation with an independent board –
   County of Grande Prairie's influence on priorities for coordinating water and sanitary services is limited\*
- Impact of Carbon Levy







## **Grande Prairie County Vision 2014-2017**



"The County of Grande Prairie No.1 focuses on people, their quality of life and diversity of opportunity while enabling success through cooperation and progressive leadership"

Source: County of Grande Prairie No.1 Strategic Priorities (2014-2017) Summary Report

## **Strategic Priorities**



- 1. Thinking Regionally;
- 2. Providing Quality Municipal Services and Infrastructure;
- 3. Encouraging Community Development Across the Region;
- 4. Managing Economic Development Across the County; and
- 5. Promoting Environmental Stewardship

# What is your Vision for the County of Grande Prairie in the year 2067?



- 1. What size population will we have in 50 years?
- 2. What will drive the County's economy?
- 3. What things do you value and want to preserve? (e.g. agricultural land base, water resources, family orientation, quality of life factors, historical and cultural assets)
- 4. What things would you like to change? (e.g. more diverse economy, technological advances, more sustainable forms of development etc....)
- 5. What will commercial be like? The industrial areas? Residential subdivisions?
- 6. How will we treat and address the needs of our seniors and young people?

# What is your Vision for the County of Grande Prairie in the year 2067?

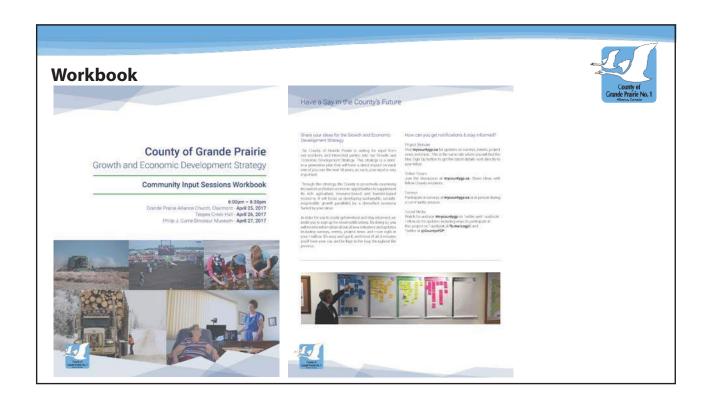


- 7. What will we have accomplished as a County?
- 8. What will the Clairmont Urban Area look like once it is built out?
- 9. What do we expect of our civic leaders?
- 10. What image do we wish to convey to the rest of the world?
- 11. What tourist, recreation facilities and activities will exist?
- 12. What new partnerships will we have created?

## **Instructions for Small Group Working Sessions**



- 1. We want participants to form small groups of 6-8 people at one of the table set ups.
- 2. Everyone should have obtained a Workbook at the Registration Desk in order to provide your individual answers to questions in the workbook. **REMEMBER TO HAND IT IN AT THE END OF THE SESSION**.
- 3. Each table will have a set of reduced versions of the Presentation Boards and a County Generalized Existing Land Use Map for you to make comments on.
- 4. Select a Spokesperson for your group or table who will take you through the questions and someone to act as a Recorder for the group.
- 5. Everyone will have (1) hour to work through the questions and summarize your answers.
- 6. At the end of the (1) hour we will get the Spokesperson to take 5-10 minutes to summarize their groups Vision for the County.



## **Share Your Ideas**



- Thank you for attending todays Community Input Session on the County of Grande Prairie Growth and Economic Development Strategy.
- Please take a moment to share your thoughts on some or all of the input requests in the workbook.
- The Comment Form will be collected tonight and can be submitted up to one week following the Community Input Session (by May 5, 2017). Please be advised that the comments you submit, either orally or in writing, may be recorded and made public, subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy act.
- All comments received will be shared between the consultant and County of Grande Prairie administration.
- In addition there is an on-line consultation process that will take the form of this Workbook. At various points, you will be asked for your reaction to the assumptions outlined in the paper and for further input. The feedback summary document at the end of this paper calls together these input requests and invites you to contribute online at https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CGPEcDevStrat
- Visit the Project website at: www.countygp.ab.ca/mycountygp

## **Next Steps**



- Summarize and analyze Community Input Session feedback
- Planning on holding a symposium at the end of May 2017
- We will complete a Challenge Dialogue Paper to elicit more stakeholder input
- Develop alternative growth strategies
- County Open Houses scheduled for
  - Monday, June 19, 5-8pm Crystal Creek Community Hall
  - Wednesday, June 21, 5-8pm South Peace Centennial Museum
  - Thursday, June 22, 5-8pm Clairmont Community School

PLEASE CONTINUE TO FOLLOW THE COUNTY OF GRANDE PRAIRIE GROWTH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY ONLINE

www.countygp.ab.ca/mycountygp

## **Contact Information**



Thank you for participating in this Community Input Session. If you have other comments or questions, please contact:

## Pamela Nordin, Project Manager

Planning and Development Services, County of Grande Prairie 10001 84 Ave,

10001 64 AVE,

Clairmont, Alberta T0H 0W0 Phone: 780.532.9722

Email: pnordin@countygp.ab.ca

## Marcelo Figueira, Senior Planner

ParioPlan Incorporated #605, 10080 Jasper Avenue Edmonton, Alberta T5J1V9 Phone: 780.423.6824

Email: marcelo@parioplan.com

APPENDIX 3: COMMUNITY INPUT SESSIONS WORKBOOK

# **County of Grande Prairie**

Growth and Economic Development Strategy

# **Community Input Sessions Workbook**

6:00pm - 8:30pm

Grande Prairie Alliance Church, Clairmont - April 25, 2017

Teepee Creek Hall - April 26, 2017

Philip J. Currie Dinosaur Museum - April 27, 2017



## Have a Say in the County's Future

# Share your ideas for the Growth and Economic Development Strategy

The County of Grande Prairie is asking for input from our residents and interested parties into our Growth and Economic Development Strategy. This strategy is a once-in-a generation plan that will have a direct impact on each one of you over the next 50 years; as such, your input is very important.

Through this strategy, the County is proactively examining its current and future economic opportunities to supplement its rich agriculture, resource-based and tourism-based economy. It will focus on developing sustainable, socially-responsible growth paralleled by a diversified economy fueled by your ideas.

In order for you to easily get involved and stay informed, we invite you to sign up for email notifications. By doing so, you will receive information about all new initiatives and updates including surveys, events, project news and more right in your mailbox. It's easy and quick, and most of all, it ensures you'll have your say and be kept in the loop throughout the process.

## How can you get notifications & stay informed?

## Project Website

Visit **mycountygp.ca** for updates on surveys, events, project news and more. This is the same site where you will find the blue Sign Up button to get the latest details sent directly to your inbox.

### Online Forum

Join the discussion at **mycountygp.ca**. Share ideas with fellow County residents.

### Surveys

Participate in surveys at **mycountygp.ca** or in person during a community session.

#### Social Media

Watch for and use **#mycountygp** on Twitter and Facebook. Follow us for updates including ways to participate in this project on Facebook at **fb.me/cogp1** and Twitter at **@CountyofGP**.





## Instructions For Small Group Working Sessions.

- 1. We want participants to form small groups of 6-8 people at one of the table set ups.
- 2. Everyone should have obtained a Workbook at the Registration Desk in order to provide your individual answers to questions in the workbook. REMEMBER TO HAND IT IN AT THE END OF THE SESSION.
- 3. Each table will have a set of reduced versions of the Presentation Boards and a County Generalized Existing Land Use Map for you to make comments on.
- 4. Select a Spokesperson for your group or table who will take you through the questions and someone to act as a Recorder for the group.
- 5. Everyone will have (1) hour to work through the questions and summarize your answers.
- 6. At the end of the (1) hour we will get the Spokesperson to take 5-10 minutes to summarize your group's Vision for the County.

PLEASE CONTINUE TO FOLLOW THE COUNTY OF GRANDE PRAIRIE GROWTH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY ONLINE AND PROVIDE US WITH YOUR COMMENTS

# Have a Say in the County's Future

## Strengths

- · Large Land Base
- · Low taxes / Industrial assesment
- Pro-development / Open for business / Easy to deal with
- Diversified economy (oil and gas, forestry, tourism, and agriculture)
- Grande Prairie College (future degree granting polytechnic)
- Positive economic and social impact of new Queen Elizabeth II Hospital
- Adequate highway infrastructure
- · High-quality agricultural land
- Large retail and service trade area
- Diverse and large biomass industry
- Railway Infrastructure
- Intermodal and logistics potential with airport, railway and highways

## Weaknesses

- People are resistant to change/innovation
- Need to improve the image of Grande Prairie Region, currently imagined as a rough and tumble, oil and gas town rather than an attractive community with a good quality of life and amenities

rengths	Weaknesses	

## Opportunities

- Hamlet revitalization initiative
- Opportunity to develop Clairmont as a model sustainable development community
- Twinning of Highway 40 to Grande Cache
- Twinning Highway 43 to British Columbia Tourism route to Yukon and Alaska
- Biomass and Petrochemical industrial cluster with Greenview
- Implementation of the Grande Prairie Area Joint Recreation Master Plan
- Work with Provincial Government in implementing the Wapti Corridor Multi- Use Plan
- Provide facilities and services for aging population
- Opportunities for the County and municipalities to work together on economic development/tourism initiatives
- Development of Regional Transit System (Federal funding available)
- Value added agriculture and food processing opportunities
- Tri-party agreement with the M.D. of Greenview City of Grande Prairie and County to develop the petrochemmical cluster in Greenview

## Threats

- Ability to have Aquatera proceed in upgrading sewer and water services to Clairmont\*
- Impact of depressed oil and gas industry
- Current NDP Government perceived to have policies that do not support economic development
- Impact of Bill 21, new modernized Municipal Government Act.
- Conversion of prime agricultural land for industrial uses
- Aquatera is an independent corporation with an independent board - County of Grande Prairie's influence on priorities for coordinating water and sanitary services is limited\*
- Impact of Carbon Levy
- \* The comments made here reflect the opinions of individuals who provided them at the time they were collected. Since the time of our open houses and community input sessions, Aquatera has made significant commitments and efforts towards working more closely with the communities to which they provide service.

What other Opportunities and Threats should be identified?			
Opportunities	Threats		
	_		
	_		
	_		

# Have a Say in the County's Future

## **Economic Development**

What barriers to the future growth and development need to be addressed in the short, medium and lo term?	ng
Are there any economic development models the County can learn from to ensure a successful a resilient future?	nd
Are there any economic development models the County can learn from to ensure a successful a resilient future?	and
Are there any economic development models the County can learn from to ensure a successful a resilient future?	ind
Are there any economic development models the County can learn from to ensure a successful a resilient future?	and
Are there any economic development models the County can learn from to ensure a successful a resilient future?	and
Are there any economic development models the County can learn from to ensure a successful a resilient future?	and
Are there any economic development models the County can learn from to ensure a successful a resilient future?	and
Are there any economic development models the County can learn from to ensure a successful a resilient future?	and
Are there any economic development models the County can learn from to ensure a successful a resilient future?	and
Are there any economic development models the County can learn from to ensure a successful a resilient future?	and
Are there any economic development models the County can learn from to ensure a successful a resilient future?	and

# Have a Say in the County's Future

# **Community Vision Building**

What is your vision for the County of Grande Prairie in the year 2067?
What size population will we have in 50 years?
What will drive the County's economy?
What things do you value and want to preserve? (e.g. agricultural land base, water resources, family orientation, quality of life factors, historical and cultural assets)
What things would you like to change? (e.g. more diverse economy, technological advances, more sustainable forms of development etc)
What will commercial be like? The industrial areas? Residential subdivisions? Where should these be located in the County? Please draw on the map provided.



How will we treat and address the needs of our seniors and young people?
What will we have accomplished as a County?
What will the Clairmont Urban Area look like once it is built out?
What do we expect of our civic leaders?
What image do we wish to convey to the rest of the world?
What tourist, recreation facilities and activities will exist?
What new partnerships will we have created?

# Community Input Sessions Evaluation

# Evaluation

Please indicate with a checkmark 🖊 the extent to which tyou agree with the following statements					ements.
	STRONGLY AGREE (1)	AGREE (2)	NEUTRAL (3)	DISAGREE (4)	STRONGLY DISAGREE (5)
The Community Input Session was well organized and appropriately paced.					
The Information presented was useful and clear.					
Opportunities to ask questions were good.					
What aspects of the Community Input Sess	ions were done v	vell?			
What are your suggestions for improvemen	t?				
Additional comments:					

County of Grande Prairie No. 1

# Share Your Ideas / Next Steps

- 1. Thank you for attending todays Community Input Sessions on the County of Grande Prairie Growth and Economic Development Strategy. Please take a moment to share your thoughts on some or all of the input requests in the workbook. This comment form will be collected tonight and can be submitted up to one week following the Community Input Sessions (by May 5, 2017). Please be advised that the comments you submit, either orally or in writing, may be recorded and made public, subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy act. All comments recieved will be shared between the consultant and County administration.
- 2. In addition there is an on-line consultation process that will take the form of this Workbook. At various points, you will be asked for your reaction to the assumptions outlined in the paper and for further input. The feedback summary document at the end of this paper calls together these input requests and invites you to contribute online at <a href="https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CGPEcDevStrat">https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CGPEcDevStrat</a>
- 3. Visit the Project website at: www.countygp.ab.ca/mycountygp

# Additional Information: Please note that filling out this information is optional.

Name:		
Address:		
Phone Number:		
Email:		

APPENDIX 4: ROLL-UPS OF VERBATIM COMMENTS

COUNTY OF GRANDE PRAIRIE NO.1

# GROWTH & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

COMMUNITY INPUT SESSIONS – ROLL UP SHEET Clairmont – April 25, 2017 The Community Input Session took place on Tuesday, April 25, 2017, between 6:00 pm and 8:30 pm at Grande Prairie Alliance Church, Clairmont, AB.

The following members of the project team attended the Community Input Session:

- Armin Preiksaitis, BES, RPP, FCIP, Principal, ParioPlan Inc.
- Jonathan Lawrence, BA, Planner, ParioPlan Inc.
- Madisen Killingsworth, Assistant Planner, ParioPlan Inc.

According to the sign in sheet a total of nineteen (19) members of the public attended the Community Input Session. Participants were asked to sign in, given a Workbook and invited to view Fourteen (14) presentation boards which displayed information on the County of Grande Prairie Growth and Economic Development Strategy.

Attendees were invited to ask questions of the project team members regarding the Growth and Economic Development Strategy and given an opportunity to identify any issues or concerns that they felt had not been addressed. A presentation was given by Armin Preiksaitis from 6:30pm to 7:00pm. A working session was held from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm in which participants were encouraged to complete their Workbooks and take part in group discussions facilitated by members of the project team.

Twelve attendees (12) completed Workbooks which were collected at the Community Input Session.

The following is a summary of written comments from the Workbooks that were received at the Community Input Session:

# S.W.O.T Analysis

### Strengths

- 23% Crowne land
- County Sportsplex (Crosslink Centre)
- Existing Schools
- Natural Areas
- Low Tax Rates
- Clairmonts image is improving

#### Weaknesses

- Lack of recognition for pristine or unaltered natural areas
- Condition/Quality of Roadway infrastructure
- Lack of access to Recreational Facilities
- Lack of Public Transit
- Lack of contact with Divisional Councilors
- Increased Crime Rate
- Shortage of law enforcement resources
- Lack of water infrastructure

- Not enough input from residents
- Spread out development of the villages (sprawl)
- Lack of Cooperation between two Municipalities
- Location of Crosslink in an industrial area

### **Opportunities**

- Utilizing existing industrial areas before expanding in agricultural land
- Young demographic profile
- Utilization of natural areas for Recreational Tourism and Larger events
- Renewable energy (Geothermal)
- Investment in younger population
- More commercial opportunity in Clairmont
- Co-operation between adjacent Towns and Communities, and Municipalities
- More commercial development in the County
- Swimming pool
- Natural Areas
- Tourism
- Bringing box stores into Clairmont
- Agriculture Intensification (greenhouses)
- Development of Rail lines

#### Threats

- New Industrial development threatening ag and natural land
- Loss of small town character
- Keeping up with infrastructure needs as the County Grows (Social and Physical)
- Investment in Municipal development (Conservative View)
- County should not act as land developers
- Protection of Water and Air Resources
- Loss of agricultural land
- Subdivision of acreages off farm land for industrial/commercial use
- Crime in Rural Areas
- Regionalization

# **Economic Development**

- 1. Do you agree with the vision that the County's economy will continue to be driven by energy, forestry and agriculture while developing new value-added opportunities in these sectors? Why or why not?
  - Forestry is vulnerable to international policies
  - Tariffs are an issue
  - Energy will continue but may not be the current sources. Growing to a green economy.
  - Agricultural intensification

- Agree with that vision (as well as rebates for thermal energy for residents)
- Yes, energy as well as green energy (2)
- Renewable Opportunities (2)

# 2. How can the County foster investment in the emerging opportunities for energy, biomass and bioindustrial development?

- Be open to new things
- Rebates for solar energy (2)
- Seminars on renewable energy
- Promotion of
- Rebates

# 3. How best can the County leverage its large (260,000 people) trading area to build stronger commercial and retail opportunities?

- Keep taxes low in the County
- Create more attractive retail and commercial areas
- Box stores
- Promote a regional center
- Self sustaining Community (services for themselves)

# 4. What barriers to the future growth and development need to be addressed in the short, medium and long term term?

- Transportation within the County (Public Transportation)
- Transportation (road infrastructure quality and condition)
- Retention of health care staff (quality)
- Crime rate (real or perceived)
- Education (post secondary) opportunities
- Drug issues in Town
- Accessibility to Amenities (2)
- Better infrastructure (3)
- Developer pays for infrastructure rather than the county
- Retail in Clairmont
- Address Crime
- Building a relationship between city and County
- Relations between urban and rural
- Internet and cell phone towers

# 5. Are there any economic development models the County can learn from to ensure a successful and resilient future?

- Fort Mcmurray area Three separate self sustaining Communities (2)
- Teepee Creek

# **Community Vision Building**

### 6. What size population will we have in 50 years?

- 40,000 "we went through our major boom already, be careful of the bust"
- 50,000 (4)

# 7. What will drive the County's economy?

- Industry demand
- Tourism
- Agriculture, forestry, energy
- Kids moving home to raise families (2)
- Small local retail not big box (seeing the future in online shopping killing the box store)

# 8. What things do you value and want to preserve? (e.g. agricultural land base, water resources, family orientation, quality of life factors, historical and cultural assets)

- Open Land, Water Resources, Agriculture,
- Quality of Life
- Agriculture and Environment (3)
- Farm and Acreage way of life
- Wetlands
- Western History
- Recreation
- Small Family businesses and a small town feel (3)
- Natural Areas (2)
- Beef Industry

# 9. What things would you like to change? (e.g. more diverse economy, technological advances, more sustainable forms of development etc....)

- Densification rather than spread out development
- Access to resources throughout the county "not just in the city"
- Less crime and safer communities
- Quit using so much land for ditches
- Residential Density increase
- Locally available university and hospital

# 10. What will commercial be like? The industrial areas? Residential subdivisions? Where should these be located in the County? Please draw on the map provided.

- Concentrated along Hwy 43 corridor, the city and Sexsmith
- Residential will be in Sexsmith, Laglace, and Teepee Creek
- Smaller, local retail shops
- Denser residential areas
- Residential land on areas with limited farming capabilities

### 11. How will we treat and address the needs of our seniors and young people?

- Listen to and involve them
- Present the opportunity for seniors to age in place
- Keep them in the outlying Centres
- Affordable seniors complex (3)
- More recreation opportunities for diverse age groups
- Keep them active accessibility to recreation centres (3)
- Accessibility to medical centres (3)
- Bus/transit system to city (2)

# 12. What will we have accomplished as a County?

- Concentrated residential growth
- Maintained agricultural land
- Present opportunities to work and stay in the area
- A well planned area(3)

### 13. What will the Clairmont Urban Area look like once it is built out?

- Well organized growth
- Trees, paths, box stores
- Compatible uses
- Utilization of the Lake
- Coherent vision for the county
- Walking and green spaces (2)

# 14. What do we expect of our civic leaders?

- Honesty, integrity, openness
- Looking at the County as a whole, not just their representative area
- Co-operate better (2)
- Vision and accountability (4)
- City and County Administration cooperation

### 15. What image do we wish to convey to the rest of the world?

- Open for business
- Safe and welcoming community
- Balanced and diversified economy
- Show attributes better (3)
- Great place for families (3)
- We cooperate as a region (3)
- Better image of Grande Prairie (2)

# 16. What tourist, recreation facilities and activities will exist?

- Pool in the County
- Sports Facilitates
- Transportation to the Rec Centers
- Swimming pool (2)
- Walking, biking trail from Clairmont-Grande Prairie-Wapti river
- Beaverlodge

# 17. What new partnerships will we have created?

- Tri-regional Partnership
- Better relationship with the City
- Inter-regional municipal partnerships (2)
- City partnership (3)

# Evaluation

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The Community Input Session was well organized and appropriately paced.	2	4	1		J
The Information presented was useful and clear.	1	5	1		
Opportunities to ask questions were good.	1	3	3		

# 1. What aspects of Community Input Sessions were done well?

- Brought Useful info
- Asked opinions
- Good opportunities to agree and disagree on ideas
- Well educated presentation
- Good food
- Presentation was okay

# 2. What are your suggestions for improvement

- Need to get more people out
- More inputs to the planning people
- No attempt to draw out quieter people at the table

COUNTY OF GRANDE PRAIRIE NO.1

# GROWTH & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

COMMUNITY INPUT SESSIONS – ROLL UP SHEET Teepee Creek – April 26, 2017 The Community Input Session took place on Wednesday, April 26, 2017, between 6:00 pm and 8:30 pm at Teepee Creek Hall, Teepee Creek, AB.

The following members of the project team attended the Community Input Session:

- Armin Preiksaitis, BES, RPP, FCIP, Principal, ParioPlan Inc.
- Jonathan Lawrence, BA, Planner, ParioPlan Inc.
- Madisen Killingsworth, Assistant Planner, ParioPlan Inc.

According to the sign in sheet a total of nine (9) members of the public attended the Community Input Session. Participants were asked to sign in, given a Workbook and invited to view Fourteen (14) presentation boards which displayed information on the County of Grande Prairie Growth and Economic Development Strategy.

Attendees were invited to ask questions of the project team members regarding the Growth and Economic Development Strategy and given an opportunity to identify any issues or concerns that they felt had not been addressed. A presentation was given by Armin Preiksaitis from 6:30pm to 7:00pm. A working session was held from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm in which participants were encouraged to complete their Workbooks and take part in group discussions facilitated by members of the project team.

Attendee input was transcribed by members of the project team

The following is a summary of comments received at the Community Input Session:

# S.W.O.T Analysis

### Strengths

- Local School (k-8)
- Proximity to the City of Grande Prairie
- Ability to live in teepee and work in GP
- History
- Community Strength (people)
- Young Population (Teepee)
- Access to big city services within 30 minutes
- Rodeo
- Untouched natural environment
- Country Living

### Weaknesses

- Centralized beef processing industry in Southern Alberta
- Interprovincial barriers to food distribution
- Ground water (not as high quality as elsewhere)
- Redneck mentality and image

### **Opportunities**

- Agricultural processing plants
- Self sustained food industry
- Utilization of abandoned wells for geothermal
- Reduce red tape for local food production and distribution
- Development of a niche (capitalize on the strengths of the community)(rodeo)(equestrian) etc.
- Young people have opportunity to have their own land
- Value added food processing plants

#### **Threats**

- School sustainability (dependent on population)
- Foreign investment
- County model of centralization, neglecting smaller hamlets
- Another oil boom taking emphasis off renewable resources
- Consolidation of energy companies (creating uncertainty)

# **Community Vision Building**

### Vision: Where do you see the County in 50 years?

- Developed a niche in:
  - o Food and agriculture cluster
  - Rodeo and equestrian specialization (tourism and rec)
- Creation of more services to draw people.
  - o Eg, restaurant, pub, etc
- Affordable recreation options
  - o Hockey rinks, etc
  - Swimming Pool
- Seniors Amenities
- Subdivided lots with a communal concept horse stable and ranch model
- Preservation of the school and sense of community
- Industrial node
  - NOT copycat development though
- Not an oil and gas industry town
  - Honor the agriculture and ranching history

**COUNTY OF GRANDE PRAIRIE NO.1** 

# GROWTH & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

COMMUNITY INPUT SESSIONS – ROLL UP SHEET Wembley – April 27, 2017 The Community Input Session took place on Thursday, April 27, 2017, between 6:00 pm and 8:30 pm at Philip J. Currie Dinosaur Museum, Wembley, AB.

The following members of the project team attended the Community Input Session:

- Armin Preiksaitis, BES, RPP, FCIP, Principal, ParioPlan Inc.
- Jonathan Lawrence, BA, Planner, ParioPlan Inc.
- Madisen Killingsworth, Assistant Planner, ParioPlan Inc.

According to the sign in sheet a total of fifteen (15) members of the public attended the Community Input Session. Participants were asked to sign in, given a Workbook and invited to view Fourteen (14) presentation boards which displayed information on the County of Grande Prairie Growth and Economic Development Strategy.

Attendees were invited to ask questions of the project team members regarding the Growth and Economic Development Strategy and given an opportunity to identify any issues or concerns that they felt had not been addressed. A presentation was given by Armin Preiksaitis from 6:30 pm to 7:00 pm. A working session was held from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm in which participants were encouraged to complete their Workbooks and take part in group discussions facilitated by members of the project team.

Two attendees (2) completed Workbooks which were collected at the Community Input Session. The majority of attendee input was transcribed by members of the project team.

The following is a summary of oral and written comments from the Workbooks that were received at the Community Input Session:

# S.W.O.T Analysis

### Strengths

- Endless resources and an abundant supply of water
- A water shed that if maintained properly can accommodate the run off
- Young demographic
- Sense of community (Dimsdale)

### Weaknesses

- Too much money has been wasted on water supply (water wells, etc.) to supply water to Clairmont only to be left dormant then to be replaces by water line installation
- Poor quality road infrastructure (2 tables)
- Access roads infrastructure not updated to accommodate the increased traffic from new subdivisions.
- Limited recreation facilities
- apathy or lack of people caring for their community and its members
- Poor communication amongst levels of Government
- City and towns lack of co-operation

- Poor communication with residents
- County spending ahead of the growth
- Dollars spent by the County

# **Opportunities**

- Potential for recreation facilities to aid in fostering a greater sense of community
- Advertising/media space on local venues and halls
- Niche farming, and introduce youth back into farming
- Community gardens and greenhouses
- Carbon credits
- Incentive structure for green infrastructure

#### **Threats**

- I am afraid the County will mismanage planning like they did throughout the years. Example: Clairmont Landfill and development around Clairmont and NW of Clairmont
- Loss of agricultural land to country residential

# **Economic Development**

- 1. Do you agree with the vision that the County's economy will continue to be driven by energy, forestry and agriculture while developing new value-added opportunities in these sectors? Why or why not?
  - New energy sources like solar power and bio thermal energy in green houses with affordable energy, hence lower food costs and fresher produce.
  - Yes, but with alternative energy programs.
  - Yes, but the county could be more conducive to value added agriculture.
  - Yes, but there is opportunity for petrochemical cluster like in Greenview.
  - There should be a push for Niche farming, this would allow farmers who don't want to be part of factory farming to contribute to the agriculture sector.
  - Encourage value-added agriculture.

# 2. How can the County foster investment in emerging opportunities for energy, biomass and bioindustrial development

- By having grants available to conscientious developers
- By having a healthy environment for the people within the area to look forward to working and living in
- Education on alternative energy sources (GPRC)
- Re-using cow manure liquid manure
- Geothermal wells could be used to support greenhouses
- Cluster developments

- Invest in industry and manufacturing rather than services
- Encourage better transportation network development
- Be more involved in industry, find out what they need or what their problems are

# 3. How best can the County leverage its large (260,000 people) trading area to build stronger commercial and retail opportunities?

- Encourage a variety of retail businesses that will attract customers from within the area as well as those from out of the region
- Greenhouses self sustaining community
- Grow and think locally produce and animal products (Meat packing plant)
- Educate people on food sources
- Awareness opportunities
- Leverage sporting/event opportunities (facilities)

# 4. What barriers to future growth and development need to be addressed in the short, medium ,and long term?

- Well maintained infrastructure
- Re-grade roads and change culverts, some are 60 years old
- Consumer debt
- Cost of Living
- Quality infrastructure to support growth (residential)
- Competition with the City and Municipalities
- Economic downturn is a challenge
- Driving distances and size (cost of travel and living)

# 5. Are there any economic development models that the County can learn from to ensure a successful and resilient future?

- The County should learn from the rushing of Clairmont Landfill into service without proper study (etc. not listening to those who have lived in the area but instead listening to Councillors who didn't even live in the area)/ Then finding years later a leachate collection system is necessary when they were warned of these same repercussions if not equipped in the latest call they want to use.
- Greenview
- Leduc and Edmonton infrastructure partnership
- Tax incentives in Saskatchewan

# **Community Vision Building**

### 6. What size population will we have in 50 years?

- Medium growth 40 000
- 40 000 50 000
- With several highs and lows, the population will average out and continue at the current rate
- Conservative estimate more concentrated areas

### 7. What will drive the County's economy?

- Forestry and oil industry will diminish
- Green energy and Agriculture will be the County's economic drivers

# 8. What things do you value and want to preserve? (eg. Agricultural land base, water resources, family orientation, quality of life factors, historical cultural assets)

- Family structure
- Niche farming
- Compact living
- Agricultural land (2 tables)

# 9. What things would you like to change (eg. more diverse economy, technological advances, more sustainable forms of development, etc.)

- HWY 43 needs to be updated
- Switch to niche and mixed farming
- Improved road construction that is capable of coping with heavier equipment and increased traffic

# 10. What will commercial be like? The industrial areas? Residential subdivisions? Where should these be located in the County? Please draw on the map provided.

- Smaller acreages to help conserve agricultural land
- Major commercial corridors along HWY 43
- Keep agricultural land as agricultural land, not subdivide
- Keep industry out of residential areas
- Encourage industry that compliments the area and has minimal environmental damage
- These areas will look similar to what we have now, and in similar locations
- Subdivision of agricultural land

# 11. How will we treat and address the needs of our seniors and young people?

- Cluster developments
- Federal funding for regional transit system (ability to age in place)
- Small residential communities of care (condominium style)
- 12. What will we have accomplished as a county?
- 13. What will the Clairmont Urban Area look like once it is built out?
- 14. What do we expect of our civic leaders?
  - Concern for everyone within the region
- 15. What image do we wish to convey to the rest of the world?
  - Quality of life
- 16. What tourist, recreation facilities and activities will exist?
- 17. What new partnerships will we have created?

# **Evaluation**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The Community Input Session was well organized and appropriately paced.	1	1			Disagree
The Information presented was useful and clear.	1	1			
Opportunities to ask questions were good.	1	1			

- 1. What aspects of Community Input Sessions were done well?
  - Allowing input from participant

# 2. What are your suggestions for improvement

- Honesty within the County, taking all parties into consideration when developing areas
- Better advertised on what it is about
- Would like to see more

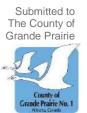
### 3. Additional Comments

• Glad to hear the plans of the County

**COUNTY OF GRANDE PRAIRIE NO.1** 

# GROWTH & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Building for the Future: Setting Direction Together Symposium



# Prepared for the County of Grande Prairie No.1 by

ParioPlan Inc.



# CONTENTS

1.	INTR	ODUCTION AND PURPOSE	2
		UT INSPIRED CONVERSATIONS	
	2.1	OPERATING PRINCIPLES	
	2.2	KEY QUESTIONS	
3.	SUM	IMARY OF KEY FINDINGS: COUNTY ECONOMIC FUTURES	4
	3.1	AGRICULTURE	4
	3.2	ENERGY / ENERGY INNOVATION	
	3.3	Tourism	
	3.4	EDUCATION	6
	3.5	HEALTH / HEALTH ECONOMIC IMPACTS	
4.	CON	CLUSIONS	8
5.	APPE	ENDICES	9
	5.1	Agenda	10
	5.2	Symposium Program	
	5.3	FACILITATORS GUIDE	
	5.4	LIST OF PARTICIPANTS	



### 1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The County of Grande Prairie No.1 engaged ParioPlan Inc. in association with Tessellate Inc. and Associated Engineering Alberta Ltd. to prepare a Growth and Economic Development Strategy. The purpose and primary objectives of the Strategy are as follows:

To affectively plan to integrate growth management and economic development in a manner that provides the necessary infrastructure and services to attract business.

- a. To understand the current status of the County with respect to land uses, infrastructure, economic, and social considerations.
- b. To understand the current drivers and inhibitors of growth within the County and neighbouring communities, to better enable economic growth.
- c. To identify actions that could provide greater opportunity for the development of existing communities within the County.
- d. To form the basis for input and feedback in conjunction with other County documentation on the forthcoming Upper Peace Regional Plan under the Provincial Land Use Framework.
- e. To develop an implementation plan on actions required to lead the County towards greater economic sustainability.

As part of *Phase 3: Scenarios for the Future,* in the work plan, a Symposium was held from 8:30 am – 4:00 pm, May 26, 2017 at the ENTREC Centre, Evergreen Park, County of Grand Prairie.

Personal invitations to the Symposium were given to one hundred and six (106) people. Thirty-four (34) people participated in the Symposium, including eight (8) speakers and nine (9) members of the project team.





Challenge Panels provided participants with their insights into economic sectors and social infrastructure (Agriculture, Energy/Energy innovation, Tourism, Education, and Health). Inspired Conversation Sessions were held after the morning and afternoon sessions to review the opportunities, barriers and goals the County should consider to stimulate growth and guide its Growth and Economic Development Strategy. Inspired Conversations table discussions were facilitators who recorded the insights and ideas generated through a series of questions and open conversation at each table. The following is a summary of key themes and strategic priorities generated by topic.

The appendices provide copies of

- The Symposium Agenda and Program
- Facilitator guide for Inspired Conversations



### 2. ABOUT INSPIRED CONVERSATIONS





An Inspired Conversation is a brief dialogue designed to seek input and views from a variety of participants on an issue of significant importance to a company, organization, sector or political jurisdiction.

#### 2.1 OPERATING PRINCIPLES

A key challenge is identified as the focus of the conversation. The hosts of the Inspired Conversation have invited attendees to engage them in a dialogue in their search to advance the thinking on the key challenge and to identify potential solutions.

The Inspired Conversation operates under "Chatham House Rules." Participants are free to voice their opinions and ideas freely secure, in the knowledge that anything said during the Inspired Conversation is not for attribution. The Inspired Conversation is intended to generate input from diverse participants in order to:

- refine and improve the initial thinking on the topic of focus;
- identify potential initiatives to address the key challenge and potential collaborators to design, develop and test the initiative; determine the appropriate next steps required to continue the conversation and
- possibly turn it into action.

An Inspired Conversation Summary Report is prepared and distributed to all participants with an invitation to continue the conversation in an informal way if participants are interested.

# 2.2 KEY QUESTIONS

Three critical questions guided the discussions:

- 1. What opportunities do you see for the County of Grande Prairie?
- 2. What barriers do you see the County must address to maximize the opportunity for growth in the County?
- 3. What infrastructure and growth needs must the County consider in its planning?



### 3. SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS: COUNTY ECONOMIC FUTURES

Though Agriculture, Energy, and Forestry will remain critical drivers of the regional economy, emerging opportunities in tourism, value-added agriculture, bio-industry and commercial and retail development will play an increasingly important role in the development of the region.

- **For Agriculture**: Continue to value the important role of the sector in the region by maximizing productive lands, enhancing access to markets, and developing value-added opportunities in the region.
- **For Energy**: Collaborate closely with industry to minimize land and ecological impacts from development while providing a cost competitive business environment. Collaborate on the attraction, training and retention of talent in the region while exploring regional opportunities in upgrading and alternative power generation.
- **For Tourism**: Take a regional coordinated approach to packaging and marketing the region's significant potential in areas such as dark sky, industry, agriculture, outdoor and paleontological tourism experiences.
- **For Learning**: Secure regional degree granting capacity for colleges to help retain learners in the region and build stronger applied research capacity with industry.
- **For Health**: Advance the regional recreational master plan and promote healthy lifestyles to improve community wellness, focus health delivery closer to residents and assist in attracting and retaining clinical talent needed in the region.

To capture opportunities several shared priorities were identified to advance the region's growth aspirations:

- 1. Improve regional broadband access:
- 2. Improve multi-modal and inter-regional transportation by rail and highway;
- 3. Cultivate and promote the strong quality of life afforded residents of the County to attract and retain people;
- 4. Develop a stronger regional brand that projects a strong, positive and inviting image for tourism and talent attraction; and,
- Create stronger linkages between industry and the innovators in the region to advance new opportunities in the County.

Many more specific opportunities were identified that will be factored into the full strategy as it develops. Here are some highlights from each of the table discussions.

#### 3.1 AGRICULTURE

#### **Opportunities**

Participants felt strongly that there is a significant opportunity for value added agriculture within the County of Grande Prairie. Long daylight hours and the increasing appetite for farm land preservation and locally produced agricultural products could provide a competitive advantage to producers in the County.

Identifying strategic partnerships within the County that could create the conditions for value added agriculture was viewed as critical. This can be facilitated with differentiated products and business



structures that ensure producers and processors work collaboratively and with shared responsibility. Marketing campaigns rooted in the region are critical too.

Considering dairy and meat products, the impacts of the 2003 mad cow disease and herd losses continues to present a significant growth opportunity in the industry. As with harvested crops, participants noted that marketing what value added producers can gain from participation in the region is an important first step.

#### Challenges

A number of threats were discussed including loss of appreciation of the importance of farming and agriculture. Another important note is the challenge presented by insurance for smaller producers to cover liability.

#### Infrastructure Needs

A key theme uncovered was the need for infrastructure to accommodate increased production and value-added producers in agriculture. Critical elements of this infrastructure include regional multimodal transportation networks as well as training and preparation of entrepreneurs and small business owners. It was suggested that this demand can in part be met through creation of an institute of entrepreneurship providing partnerships, industry alignment, training, and capacity.

#### 3.2 ENERGY / ENERGY INNOVATION

#### **Opportunities**

It was agreed that the County's economy will continue to be driven by energy, forestry and agriculture. There is a recognition that despite extensive oil and gas reserves in the region, declining prices and a global movement away from non-renewable energy necessitates new solutions. Market innovation and innovative technology are important ways of doing that. The tri-municipal agreement among city and County of Grande Prairie and MD of Greenview in developing a 'petrochemical cluster' in Greenview is an important element to foster this innovation and investment.

#### Challenges

Continued cost pressure will create challenges for regional investment unless a low cost operating environment can be enhanced. Part of this also affects how the County addresses land use, by minimizing fragmentation to avoid conflicts with agricultural interests.

Attracting, training and retaining talent in the industry has been a challenge. An attractive quality of life affordable housing and high-quality social infrastructure is needed to attract and keep workers and families in the region. Engaging youth in the industry is important too. A strong relationship between industry and regional colleges will help address these workforce challenges.

Going forward, the energy sector will also have a different mix of skills needed, with growing demands for digital technology, that workforce will be more technical and smaller in size.

#### Infrastructure Needs

A consistent and low tax business environment will remain critical for local producers. To create the environment for a low cost operating environment, additional infrastructure investments are needed. This includes greater broadband coverage across the County, and a greater emphasis on upgrading highway and rail infrastructure.

To develop diversification options, additional infrastructure will be needed to realize the potential of the new tri-municipal partnership between the City, County and MD of Greenview. The County, Province, Educational Institutions as well as private corporations and energy companies have a role to play. The County must provide infrastructure and establish a regional approach to land use management including



affordable housing, social infrastructure and dispute resolution. Colleges and educational institutions must continue to provide training and pursue innovation through research and development. Energy companies need to continue to engage with the municipalities and communities they work in, maintain open communication and pursue sound environmental practices and industry leading safety standards.

#### 3.3 Tourism

### **Opportunities**

Tourism has significant potential to grow in the County of Grande Prairie based on new and emerging industry trends. Capitalizing on this potential requires an open dialogue around what tourism can and should look like in the region and an exploration of the tourism experiences that are currently overlooked. In particular, significant potential exists to leverage existing regional strengths including dark sky, industry, agriculture, and outdoor recreation in addition to current tourism amenities such as the Philip J. Currie museum. Exploring opportunities to develop small communities around a niche (equestrian, archeological, agriculture, history) and to promote their existing capacities was noted as an important part of the thinking to be done. More tourism operators are needed to provide any designed visitor experience.

Strong leadership will be needed from a regional champion, such as the Chamber of Commerce, to boost tourism throughout the County.

### Challenges

The image and reputation of Grande Prairie was viewed as an obstacle. The transient population and the County's focus on industrial capacity are also viewed as barriers to future tourism industry growth.

As any tourism strategy is developed and implemented, the preparation of a local workforce was viewed as an important challenge too. Training front line staff at first points of contact for visitors (service stations, hotels, restaurants and others) will be important.

### **Infrastructure Needs**

To service a growing visitor population, transportation infrastructure as well as broadband internet and water services need to be improved to accommodate industry growth.

An important first step will be to enhance regional coordination and to create cohesive tourism marketing and positioning strategies. Reviews of policies impacting land uses and other regulatory requirements will be needed to support tourism sector development.

Creating and updating a "Top ten things to do" campaign will be an important first public step to expanding the region's role as a major economic centre and "stay and play" destination.

#### 3.4 EDUCATION

### **Opportunities**

Table discussions around education were centered largely around post-secondary institutions, particularly Grande Prairie Regional College (GPRC). The GPRC is interested in responding to the growth needs of the region and has developed strong relationships with firms growing employment in the region in order to tailor training and applied research opportunities (e.g., 7Generations and GPRC training program collaborations). This approach localizes regional professional development opportunities through education and industry partnerships, and provides a model for continued education innovation in the region. Moreover, a partnership strategy and a focus on development needs within the region provides applied learning (project-based) opportunities for students focused on industry projects.



The County has learning advantages that can be capitalized on. There is significant opportunities in Business research services available in the region through colleges and the regional innovation network and partners. Driving the local economy, the County has an engaged and entrepreneurial population boasting the Highest patent per capita ratio of anywhere in Canada.

### Challenges

There was discussion as well around some of the challenges faced in the County of Grande Prairie. It was discussed that if youth are not receiving training from colleges in the region they are less likely to be aware of local opportunities for employment or entrepreneurship. Building on that point, participants noted the importance of improving channels of communication with the community and seeking input on what it needs to learn to take advantage of emerging opportunities. As was heard in other discussion, a lack of broadband telecommunications infrastructure is a barrier.

#### Infrastructure Needs

Some of the immediate needs in the region are:

- Better ways of attracting talent to the region to meet regional demands (as local labour supply is constrained).
- Regional leadership forums that help address challenges
- More regional champions
- Maker Space
- Degree granting post-secondary institution in the region
- Clear statement of vision on what the County wants to be
- Better broadband coverage and access speeds
- Resources processing infrastructure for value add opportunities
- Transportation connections

#### 3.5 HEALTH / HEALTH ECONOMIC IMPACTS

### **Opportunities**

The success and effectiveness of health care within the County of Grande Prairie is a critical aspect of its overall success. Ensuring continued service at rural hospitals and high quality care in small communities as the regional hospital opens is key to the level of care in the region. Having acknowledged the challenges associated with regional cooperation, table discussion brought forth the insight that eliminating political barriers and grant physicians' admission rights to larger regional facilities was critical in ensuring the effectiveness of regional health care as new facilities come on line. Moreover, there was a recognition that care close to where people live is most effective and that infrastructure for continuing care and programming for an aging rural population is an important part of the overall regional strategy.

### Challenges

There are several barriers to health care provision in the County. Small communities have challenges attracting and keeping doctors. It was discussed that a regional approach to attracting doctors and other health professionals could help solve the problem.



#### Infrastructure Needs

Regional cooperation may reduce competition between municipalities and ensure that physicians are integrated into communities and are not overworked. Part of the discussion was focused around looking at alternative solutions. There is potential for engaging nurse practitioners to become part of the solution, pursuing telehealth systems and exploring shared agreements between communities and municipalities. Health care should be thought of holistically and preventative health care should be part of the picture. Encouraging healthy living through education, social programs and careful planning. Concentrating on reduction of smoking rates, implementation of the joint recreation master plan and promoting active lifestyles are all part of the solution.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the feedback received by session sponsors, the event was successful in seeking input and views from a variety of participants on the opportunities, challenges and gaps for the County to address as it develops its growth and economic development strategy. Many of the items raised will stimulate additional input opportunities for participants and research by the project team.

The insights shared by the high caliber speakers provided an optimistic view of the County's future, but also presented some honest assessments of the critical and important steps needed to realize the growth potential of the region. The critical role of soft infrastructure such as learning and health was acknowledged and some concrete recommendations made impact

Thank you for your contribution to the success of the event and we encourage all participants to continue the dialogue by following:

- The Project Website: Visit mycountygp.ca for updates on surveys, events, project news and more. This is the same site where you will find the blue Sign Up button to get the latest details sent directly to your inbox.
- 2. Online Forums: Join the discussion at mycountygp.ca. Share ideas with fellow County residents.
- 3. Surveys: Participate in surveys at mycountygp.ca or in person during a community session.
- 4. Social Media: Watch for and use #mycountygp on Twitter and Facebook. Follow us for updates including ways to participate in this project on Facebook at fb.me/cogp1 and Twitter at @CountyofGP.



# 5. APPENDICES



# 5.1 AGENDA



Start	Title	Objectives
8:30	Registration	Name Tags, coffee, networking, seating
9:00	Opening Remarks and County Profile (Bill Rogan, Christopher King)	Extend greetings and provide an overview of the County economy and region.
9:20	Challenge Panel: County Economic Futures	Provide a baseline shared understanding of
9:30	Agriculture (Jerry Bouma, Principal, Toma & Bouma)	the primary resource sectors driving the County's economy.
9:45	Energy (Susan Targett, VP, Seven Generations)	Identify the critical opportunities and threats for each industry in the region, paying particular regard to the impact of commodity market directions, secondary industry development and service sector growth prospects.
10:00	Energy Innovation (Judy Fairburn, VP, Cenovus, Chair, Alberta Innovates)	<ul> <li>Set the context for a productive discussion of participants in their table groups of the key challenges and opportunities identified by</li> </ul>
1015	Tourism (Tracey Desjardins, Industry Development Manager, Northern Region, & Christopher Smith, Manager, Cooperative Marketing for Northern Alberta, Travel Alberta)	Challenge Panel speakers.
10:30	Coffee Break	People move to their Discussion tables
10:45	Inspired Conversation: Economic Futures	Objective is to gather critical input into defining growth needs resulting from potential economic growth futures in the short, medium and long term.
12:00	Lunch (Buffet)	
12:45	Challenge Panel 2: Infrastructure and Amenities	Review the social infrastructure changes coming to the community in the short, medium and long
1:00	Learning (Dr. Bruce Rutley, Director, GPRC Research and Innovation)	term.
1:15	Health (Diana Gitzel, and Kelly Kuz, AHS Northern Region)	
1:30	Health Economic Impacts (Cindy Park, Chamber of Commerce)	
1:45	Coffee Break	People move to their Discussion tables
2:00	Inspired Conversation: Growth Plans	Objective is to gather critical input into defining growth needs resulting from potential economic growth futures in the short, medium and long term.
4:00	Closing Comments	Thank participants and discuss next steps in the consultation. Provide the Challenge Paper to participants to provide additional feedback online.



## 5.2 Symposium Program









## THE SYMPOSIUM

The purpose of the Symposium is to address trends and directions of industries in the energy, forestry and advanced technology sectors (information technology, genomics). This will be critical to the current and future development of the County community and region.

We believe bringing these perspectives to your community and business leaders will help build new networks, deepen understanding of important economic trends that will impact the region and help your community and business leaders envision new possibilities for a sustainable future.

The Symposium will provide community leaders an opportunity to share their understanding of future directions and implications for the region.

## **LOCATION**

County of Grande Prairie ENTREC Centre - Evergreen Park May 26, 2017 Time: 8:30 Am - 4:00 pm

### **HOSTED BY**



**County of Grande Prairie No.1** 

## **PARTNERS**















## **COUNTY ECONOMIC FUTURES**

### **PRESENTERS**



## **Agriculture**

## **Jerry Bouma**

## Principal, Toma & Bouma

Jerry Bouma, Founder and Senior Partner of Toma and Bouma Management Consultants, has over 35 years experience as a management consultant in the agrifood industry. As a founder and senior partner with Toma & Bouma Management Consultants, he has managed more than 500 strategic planning and marketing projects. Prior to establishing Toma & Bouma in 1992, he worked as the Senior Marketing Manager with Maple Leaf Foods and as a management consultant with Deloitte Haskins + Sells – now Deloitte.

Project experience specific to value added and municipal strategies include:

- · "Changing Course" A Value Added Strategy for the Alberta Agri-Food Industry.
- Future of Agriculture, Parkland County a detailed plan for agriculture, agri-food including zoning requirements.
- Agriculture Master Plan, Strathcona County detailed plan for the County to inform the MDP including strategies to attract food and agricultural processing.
- Agriculture Plan, Leduc County served as part of the consulting team (project led by Serecon).
- Agriculture Working Paper White Paper on agriculture and land use for the Capital Region Growth Plan Update.
- Assessment of Edmonton/Capital Region evaluating the potential of the region as a Site for Permanent Outdoor Farm Show.
- Functional Program and Land Use/Site Requirements for the University of Alberta (Faculty of Agricultural, Life and Environmental Sciences.
- Member of the City of Edmonton Task Force to develop a City Wide Agri-Food Strategy and the formation of a Food Council.
- Strategic Plans for several sectors including beef, pork, dairy, feed industry, bio refining, nutraceuticals, functional foods and food processing.











**Energy** Susan Targett **VP, Seven Generations** 

Susan was named Senior Vice President in July 2016, previously serving as Vice President, Land since July 2008. Before Seven Generations, Susan was Vice President, Land for Artemis Exploration Ltd. and prior to that served in a variety of positions at Tom Brown Resources Limited, Ranger Oil Limited and Pembina Resources Ltd. Susan has extensive experience in land negotiations, contracts, regulatory issues and stakeholder communications and is a 1981 graduate of Mount Royal College in Petroleum and Mineral Resource Land Management. Susan is an active member of the Canadian Association of Petroleum Landmen, since 1981, and she was designated a Professional Landman in 1992.



**Energy Innovation Judy Fairburn** VP, Cenovus, Chair, Alberta Innovates

As the Executive Vice-President, Safety & Chief Digital Officer at Cenovus, Judy is accountable for evolving our health and safety standards and operations management system, and driving our safety commitments across the company. She is also accountable for leading Cenovus's digital transformation strategy and developing innovative cross-sector partnerships in areas of strategic importance to the company. Judy also oversees Cenovus's enterprise information systems, workplace requirements and real estate. Her previous executive and senior leadership responsibilities include operations, refining, strategic planning, environment, portfolio management, technology development and corporate venture capital.

Trained as a chemical engineer and having completed an MBA, Judy started her career as a facilities and operations engineer in oil sands and natural gas facilities. She is well known for driving collaborative innovation. She was pivotal in furthering the integration of environment into Cenovus's business strategy and in the creation of Canada's Oil Sands Innovation Alliance (COSIA). Judy serves as the Board Chair of





Alberta Innovates, the Alberta government's not-for-profit corporation that seeks to catalyze impactful research and innovation across the energy, environment, forestry, agriculture, health and emerging technology sectors. Judy is a Director and co-founder of Evok Innovations, a cleantech fund focused on accelerating the development and commercialization of solutions to environmental and economic challenges facing the oil and gas sector. She is also a Director for the federal cleantech fund Sustainable Technology Development Canada, as well as Director of the Public Policy Forum, an organization focused on tackling Canada's most complex challenges through constructive dialogue across all sectors.

Judy is a Fellow of the Canadian Academy of Engineering and is also a member of Abundance 360 – a select group of entrepreneurs and senior executives focused on capitalizing on transformative digital change.



## **Tourism**

# **Tracey Desjardins**

## **Industry Development Manager for the North for Travel Alberta**

Tracey Designations is the Industry Development Manager for the North for Travel Alberta- the tourism marketing agency of the Government of Alberta. She has been in Alberta for three years and out west for four. She grew up in Ontario but has lived in Quebec, Manitoba and Saskatchewan and has travelled all over North America and other destinations.

She has over eighteen years' experience overall in marketing and destination development both in private sector and public sector working with large and small destinations, urban and rural with associations and corporations in Ontario, Saskatchewan, and Alberta. She has worked with international sporting events, conferences, large and small-scale festivals and events, heritage attractions, managed a visitor centre and hosted tour operators, media and film producers from all over the world.

Tracey personally loves history, reading and hiking and being outdoors. She loves to connect with locals and build ambassador programs that celebrate their community and she has lectured on sustainable tourism practices for universities. She of course loves to travel! She has two grown kids and a cat and lives in Edmonton.







# **Tourism Christopher Smith**

# Manager, Cooperative Marketing for Northern Alberta and Edmonton, Travel Alberta

Christopher Smith is the Manager, Cooperative Marketing for Northern Alberta and Edmonton. He is a born and raised Albertan and calls Edmonton home.

He has been fortunate to work in tourism for the last 16 years including: managing the Tourism Information System; as part of the Ag Tourism initiative; The Holiday Card Program and the Alberta Tourism Information Service.

In true Gen X fashion, he is interested and curious in technology, but can't commit to twitter or Instagram. He believes that disruption in the tourism ecosystem has created opportunities for communities and regions to participate in tourism as never before.

Christopher loves to spend time with him family, hiking, taking his kids on dadventures (trademarked) or reading whatever catches his fancy.





# SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE PRESENTERS



# **Learning Bruce Rutley**

# PhD Pag, Director, Grande Prairie Regional College Research and Innovation

Having drunk the waters of the Peace River soon after he first arrived in the Peace Country in 1976 with his BSc (Agr), Bruce was naturally predisposed to return to the Peace. He left in 1978 to return to the family dairy farm in Chilliwack but his interest in reproduction and genetics took him to Macdonald College of McGill University, a MSc in Animal Genetics in 1981 and a winter of program development and teaching at Olds College, Olds AB.

In 1985, he returned to the Peace where he spent the next 20 years raising his family and working at Peace Country colleges. He started as the Coordinator for the Agriculture Program at Northern Lights College in Dawson Creek, BC, where he redeveloped the program before his passion for learning drove him to obtain his PhD in Renewable Resources - energetics of plains bison - from the University of Alberta. This enabled him to make a meaningful contribution to the research & development of the diversified livestock industry in the region (reindeer) and bison (Canada). He returned to post-secondary education in 1996 serving as Dean, Agricultural Technologies at Fairview College. In 1999, he started Boreal R&D working again with the bison industry and the development of The Innovation Network for the Peace Region Economic Development Alliance.

Bruce left the Peace in 2005 for Victoria where he created a new R&D practice on Vancouver Island with his son Ryan. Rutley Ventures Ltd. enabled him to fulfill two of his other passions – community economic development and organizational innovation where he soon realized that 'the journey begins with the decision'. Research (needs assessments and studies) and development (small business, agrifood, innovation) kept him active.









Back in the Peace Country for the third time in September 2008 for three months to lead the expansion of the Centre for Research & Innovation (CRI), he is still here satisfying his passion for research and innovation as its Director. What he loves about Research & Innovation at GPRC is that it enables him to be passionate about systems, innovation, research and community economic development every day.

As Director he leads GPRC's applied research programs and supervises innovation services (new product development) for regional innovators and SME's. He sees innovation as more than technology commercialization and is an active advocate for both social and organizational (business) innovation. Day-to-day responsibilities includes the development of two NSERC funded applied research initiatives (Pollutants to Products; National Bee Diagnostic Centre) and the recently announced SSHRC Police and Crisis Team program evaluation for the Clty of Grande Prairie.



Health

# **Kelly Kuz**

## RN, BScN, MN, Director Clinical Operations, AHS, **Northern Region**

Kelly is responsible for Acute Care, Seniors Health, and Allied Health for North Zone Area 3 which includes Beaverlodge, Hythe, Spirit River, Valleyview, Fox Creek, and Grande Cache. Kelly and her husband reside and operate a small cow/calf operation in the Valhalla area. They raised their family in the area and now enjoy watching their grandchildren grow up in the county.

Kelly had a successful frontline nursing career working long term care, medicine, surgery, and in the surgical suite at the QEII in Grande Prairie. After receiving a Masters of Nursing Degree she progressed to teaching at GPRC then to leadership roles with the previous Peace Country Health and now with Alberta Health Services. She is based out of Hythe and is committed to the provision of safe, quality, health care.







# **Health Economic Impacts**

# **Cindy Park**

## **Chamber of Commerce**

Cindy is the Executive Director of the GPRH Foundation, but will be speaking on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce.

#### Cindy:

- Grew up in a farming community north east of Edmonton, AB.
- Spent 21 years in a banking career with CIBC with the majority of that time in small business and branch management throughout Alberta and BC.
- She's also been a small business owner and an international property investment manager for many years.
- Changed from a long career in the for profit world to a not for profit business 6 years ago when joining the Grande Prairie Regional Hospital Foundation.
- Spent many years volunteering in the community with many organizations as both an active member and often a board member.
- Been a member of organizations like Kinsman, Child Development Centers, Economic Development Council, multiple Rotary clubs, our Hospital Foundation, Canadian Breast Cancer Society, Mighty Peace Youth Society (modeled after Free the Children), Estate and Financial Planning Institute, Terry Fox Foundation, a Chamber of Commerce member and the Provincial Rep for Convene Canada the Canadian division of the Association of Health Care Philanthropy, BNI, SPCA and Peace Health Advisory Council.
- She's mentored her children on how important community is, having her kids start volunteering at the age of 2 collecting food door to door for our local Salvation Army food drive. They fondly call it being volun-told





## AM SESSION

## **CHALLENGE PANEL: COUNTY ECONOMIC FUTURES**

#### 9:20 AM - 10:15 AM

#### **Agriculture**

Jerry Bouma, Principal, Toma & Bouma

### Energy

Susan Targett, VP Seven Generations

## **Energy Innovation**

Judy Fairburn, VP, Cenovus, Chairr, Alberta Innovates

#### **Tourism**

Tracey Desjardins, Industry Development Manager, Northern Regioin, Christopher Smith, Manager, Cooperative Marketing for Northern Alberta, Travel Alberta

## **OBJECTIVES**

- 1. Provide a baseline shared understanding of the primary resource sectors driving the County's economy.
- 2. Identify the critical opportunities and threats for each industry in the region, paying particular regard to the impact of commodity market directions, secondary industry development and service sector growth prospects.
- 3. Set the context for a productive discussion of participants in their table groups of the key challenges and opportunities identified by Challenge Panel speakers.







## PM SESSION

## **CHALLENGE PANEL: INFRASTRUCTURE AND AMENITIES**

12:45 PM - 1:45 PM

### Learning

Dr. Bruce Rutley, Director, GPRC Research and Innovation

#### Health

Kelly Kuz, AHS Northern Region

## **Health Economic Impacts**

Cindy Park, Chamber of Commerce

## **OBJECTIVES**

Review the social infrastructure changes coming to the community in the short, medium and long term.







## INSPIRED CONVERSATIONS

## **COUNTY ECONOMIC FUTURES**

10:45 PM - 12:00 PM

## **GROWTH PLANS**

2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

## **OBJECTIVES**

To gather critical input into defining growth needs resulting from potential economic growth futures in the short, medium and long term.





TIME	EVENT
8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Registration Opening Remarks and County Profile
	Bill Rogan, CAO, County of Grande Prairie Christopher King, Director, Economic Development, County of Grande Prairie
9:20 AM	Challenge Panel: County Economic Futures
9:30 AM	Agriculture
9:45 AM	Jerry Bouma, Principal, Toma & Bouma  Energy  Susan Targett, VP Seven Generations
10:00 AM	Energy Innovation
10:15 AM	Judy Fairburn, VP, Cenovus, Chair, Alberta Innovates  Tourism
	Tracey Desjardins, Industry Development Manager, Northern Regioin, Christopher Smith, Manager, Cooperative Marketing for Northern Alberta, Travel Alberta
10:30 AM	Coffee Break
10:45 AM	Inspired Conversations: Economic Futures
12:00 PM	Lunch (Buffet)
12:45 PM	Challenge Panel 2: Infrastructure and Amenities
1:00 PM	<b>Learning</b> Dr. Bruce Rutley, Director, GPRC Research and Innovation
1:15 PM	<b>Health</b> Kelly Kuz, AHS Northern Region
1:30 PM	Health Economic Impacts Cindy Park, Chamber of Commerce
1:45 PM	Coffee Break
2:00 PM	Inspired Conversations: Growth Plans
4:00 PM	Closing Comments



# 5.3 FACILITATORS GUIDE

• • •

# Building for the Future: Setting Direction Together

## Facilitator's Guide

An overview of the format, principles and process for hosting Inspired Conversations on May 26, 2017 as part of the Building for the Future 1-day Conference in Grande Prairie, Alberta.

• • •

## Building for the Future: Setting Direction Together

#### Facilitator's Guide

### **Table of Contents**

What is an Inspired Conversation?	1
•	
Operating Principles	1
Format	2
Facilitator Responsibilities	3
Inspired Conversation Agendas	
Focus of our Discussion	
Inspired Conversation Context	4
Inspired Conversation Key Questions	4

## What is an Inspired Conversation?

• An Inspired Conversation is a brief dialogue designed to seek input and views from a variety of participants on an issue of significant importance to a company, organization, sector or political jurisdiction.

## Operating Principles

- A key challenge is identified as the focus of the conversation. The challenge is important, significant and does not lend itself to simple, conventional solutions.
- The organizers are transparent about their intentions for the conversation. The organizers have invited attendees to engage them in a dialogue in their search for viable solutions to the key challenge.

• • •

- The organizers are clear and open about the assumptions which are driving them to organize the conversation and the outcomes they expect to achieve.
- The Inspired Conversation operates under "Chatham House Rules". Participants are free to voice their opinions and ideas freely secure in the knowledge that anything said during the Inspired Conversation is not for attribution.
- The Inspired Conversation is intended to generate input from diverse participants to:
  - o refine and improve the initial thinking on the challenge and generate questions aimed at increasing clarity about the challenge;
  - identify potential initiatives to address the key challenge and potential collaborators to design, develop and test the initiative;
  - o determine the appropriate next steps required to continue the conversation and possibly turn it into action.
- A personalized "Invitation to Participants to Engage in an Inspired Conversation" is distributed in advance to position the event as an "invitation-only" event, to stimulate curiosity about the event and to help invitees determine whether or not this event is a priority for them and their organization.
- An Inspired Conversation Summary Report is prepared and distributed to all
  participants with an invitation to continue the conversation in an informal way if
  participants are interested.

## **Format**

- Total attendance for the Inspired Conversation is expected to be approximately 50 people (40 guests; 7-8 table facilitators and note takers from a number of participating organizations.
- The Inspired Conversation is triggered by a brief context-setting presentation to help participants understand the nature of the challenge. The Provocateurs open the Conversation. Our agenda has this being done with 15-minute TED Style talks from thought leaders in their industries.
- The opening context presentation often offers some initial thinking by the organizers about the nature of the challenge and some initial insights as to how it might be addressed.
- Participants are organized into table groups (6 or 8 person round tables) for easy discussion.
- Each table is served by an informed facilitator who has been briefed by the organizers as to the operating principles and their role in both keeping the conversation moving and collecting the key learnings from the conversation. Each table will also be staffed with a note taker to assist the facilitator.

### Building for the Future: Setting Direction Together

• • •

• Each table facilitator and note taker will produce a summary of their table's discussion as input into the Inspired Conversation Summary Report.

## Facilitator Responsibilities

- Welcome attendees to your table, facilitate introductions.
- Re-emphasize the format and operating principles of the Inspired Conversation:
  - o "Chatham House Rules" nothing that is said will be for attribution; people are free to present their views on the key challenge.
  - o It is a conversation. We are looking for dialogue, discussion and debate on the key challenge. Feel free to challenge people on their point of view or prompt them for more details on an interesting point.
- Highlight the key challenge under discussion as set out in the Challenge Panel. Note some the more detailed elements of the key challenge that you would like to insert as part of the conversation.
- Inform your table that you will be taking notes during the conversation and that these notes will form the basis of a Summary Report of the conversation that will be provided to all attendees.
- Your notes should include broad themes and general tenor of the discussion as well as any interesting points of conversation that you think would be useful to highlight in the Summary Report.
- Thank your table for their contribution to the conversation.
- Following the conversation, please provide your notes to Tom Ogaranko from Tessellate Inc. for inclusion in the Summary Report.

## Inspired Conversation Agendas

Time	Activity	Session 1	Session 2
		Participants	Participants
5	Seating and Introductions	All	All
5	Operating Principles	Tom	Armin
5	Opening Remarks	Table Facilitators	Table Facilitators
60	Inspired Conversation	All	All
5	Closing Remarks	Tom	Armin

## Focus of our Discussion

The following is a proposed key focus and discussion topics for the Inspired Conversation.

#### Building for the Future: Setting Direction Together

• • •

## **Inspired Conversation Context**

What opportunities and needs must the County of Grande Prairie address to prepare a successful and long term Economic Development and Growth Strategy?

Coping with the significant growth experienced in the County over the past decade has raised the awareness of the many opportunities present in the region, but also the importance of careful planning for future economic development and growth. Recent economic events have shown the challenges created by weak commodity prices and the need for a diversified economy and a community resilient to economic and social change.

With a common understanding of the medium- and long-term changes in the key industries driving the region's economy and supporting its social infrastructure, the County of Grande Prairie is identifying factors critical to successfully stewarding the region's future growth. The County seeks to do this in partnership with all of the players in its community: citizens, retail and commercial businesses, service providers, technology developers, financers/funders, government, NGO's, social agencies.

This 'ecosystem' of players must work effectively together to (a) define and prioritize needs and (b) develop solutions to related challenges and opportunities. Due to the diversity and complexity of the ecosystem, regular communication and collaboration between the players about how to continuously improve the ecosystem is important to ensure maximum productivity and innovation output. To that end, this Inspired Conversation will connect diverse members of the County to discuss tangible ways of better supporting and growing companies and the community over the next several decades.

We are expecting candid, honest discussion at each of the tables that will focus on a series questions designed to gather input from across the technology innovation spectrum that will help inform technology challenges, open calls, and other initiatives going forward.

## Inspired Conversation Key Questions

- 1. Do you agree with that the County's economy will continue to be driven by energy, forestry and agriculture while developing new value-added opportunities in these sectors? Why or why not?
- 2. How can the County foster investment in emerging opportunities in the region?

#### Building for the Future: Setting Direction Together

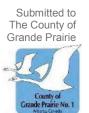
• • •

- 3. What barriers to the future growth and development need to be addressed in the short, medium and long term?
- 4. What groups in the community must be engaged and participate to advance regional growth and prosperity and what roles should they play?
- 5. Which scenario for the geographic growth of the County is the most likely? The most desirable?
  - Option 1 Trend Scenario what we are doing now in allowing scattered country residential development, industrial areas, all hamlets being given equal weight along with smaller towns and villages in the County.
  - Option 2 Nodal Scenario Essentially residential growth is directed to a new Clairmont new town similar to Bremner in Strathcona County. Country residential development (unserviced) clustered similar to what is in Capital Regional Plan. Growth hamlets (those that have sewer and water services (La Glace, Bezanson, Clairmont)
  - Option 3 Balanced Scenario Clairmont is the primary growth node, more growth directed to existing urban centres such as Beaverlodge, Town of Sexsmith, Town of Wembley, Village of Hythe. We also need to show the distribution of employment industrial areas.
- 6. Are there any economic development models the County can learn from to ensure a successful and resilient future?

**COUNTY OF GRANDE PRAIRIE NO.1** 

# GROWTH & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

OPEN HOUSES DECEMBER 6 & 7, 2017 SUMMARY REPORT





### CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE	1
2.0	FORMAT FOR SESSIONS	2
3.0	WHAT WE HEARD	3
4.0	SUMMATION	

### APPENDICES

**Appendix 1: Open House Presentation Boards** 

**Appendix 2: Overview Presentation** 

Appendix 3: Exit Survey



#### 1.0 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The County of Grande Prairie No.1 engaged ParioPlan Inc. in association with Tessellate Inc. and Associated Engineering Alberta Ltd. to prepare a Growth and Economic Development Strategy. The purpose and primary objectives of the Strategy are as follows:

To effectively plan to integrate growth management and economic development in a manner that provides the necessary infrastructure and services to attract business.

- a. To understand the current status of the County with respect to land uses, infrastructure, economic, and social considerations.
- b. To understand the current drivers and inhibitors of growth within the County and neighbouring communities, to better enable economic growth.
- c. To identify actions that could provide greater opportunity for the development of existing communities within the County.
- d. To form the basis for input and feedback in conjunction with other County documentation on the forthcoming Upper Peace Regional Plan under the Provincial Land Use Framework.
- e. To develop an implementation plan on actions required to lead the County towards greater economic sustainability.

As part of *Phase 4: Growth and Economic Development Strategy*, in the work plan, two (2) Open Houses were held from 5:30 – 8:30 PM at the following locations:

- December 6, 2017 Beaverlodge Community Centre, Beaverlodge
- December 7, 2017 Wellington Resource Centre, Clairmont

The Open Houses were advertised using the following methods:

- Personal invitations sent to a list of stakeholders and previous attendees of public engagement activities by the County of Grande Prairie.
- Radio Advertisements
- Postings on the mycountygp.ca website
- Facebook

Twenty-three presentation boards (See Appendix 1) and an overview presentation were prepared for the Open Houses. Attendees were encouraged to view the presentation boards outlining the project process and findings and ask the Project Team any questions they may have about the Growth and Economic Development Strategy. From 6:30 PM to 7:30 PM each evening, a presentation was given where the Project Team explained the purpose of the project, the population projections, the land requirements



#### 2.0 FORMAT FOR SESSIONS

The agenda for the three (3) hour Open Houses was as follows:

- 5:30 6:30 pm Participants were able to view the boards and speak with the Project Team
- 6:30 7:30 pm Overview Presentation
- 7:30 8:30 pm Participants were able to view the boards and speak with the Project Team

Copies of the presentation boards used in the Open Houses are provided in **Appendix 1**.

The Overview Presentation made in the Open Houses is provided in Appendix 2.

An Exit Survey was created to provide attendees with an opportunity to provide feedback and enable the Project Team to gauge the level of agreement with the presented project growth management, infrastructure, and economic development components. A copy of the Exit Survey is provided in **Appendix 3**.

Based on the sign-in sheets, the number of participants at each location were as follows:

December 6, 2017 – Beaverlodge Community Centre, Beaverlodge		
December 7, 2017 – Wellington Resource Centre, Clairmont	25	
Total	41	



#### 3.0 WHAT WE HEARD

In total, 14 Exit Surveys were received either at the Open Houses or via mail after the Open Houses took place. Below, each of the questions from the Exit Survey has been reiterated and the number of response received for each degree of agreement for that particular question. (Note: Not all questions were answered on all surveys, therefore some questions may have fewer than fourteen total responses)

#### A. BALANCED GROWTH OPTION

After viewing the presentation by the Project Team as well as the presentation boards, please indicate the extent with which you agree or disagree with the following:

1. The Balanced Growth Option preserves prime agricultural land by appropriately identifying them and directing development away from them whenever possible.

	1 – Strongly Disagree	2 – Somewhat Disagree	3 – Neutral	4 – Somewhat Agree	5 – Strongly Agree
Number of Responses	0	1	2	7	4
Percent of Responses	0%	7%	14%	50%	29%

2. The Balanced Growth Option directs development away from environmentally significant areas within the County (eg. water bodies, wildlife habitat corridors, floodplain, etc.).

	1 – Strongly Disagree	2 – Somewhat Disagree	3 – Neutral	4 – Somewhat Agree	5 – Strongly Agree
Number of Responses	2	0	1	7	4
Percent of Responses	14%	0%	7%	50%	29%

3. The Balanced Growth Option provides majority of the residents of the County with access to a wide range of community services (e.g.: Schools, recreational facilities, health care facilities, etc.).

	1 – Strongly	2 – Somewhat	3 – Neutral	4 – Somewhat	5 – Strongly
	Disagree	Disagree		Agree	Agree
Number of Responses	1	0	1	9	3
Percent of Responses	7%	0%	7%	64%	21%



# 4. The Balanced Growth Option provides majority of the residents of the County with access to a wide range of housing options (e.g.: Country residential, single detached, apartment buildings, etc.).

	1 – Strongly Disagree	2 – Somewhat Disagree	3 – Neutral	4 – Somewhat Agree	5 – Strongly Agree
Number of Responses	1	1	4	6	2
Percent of Responses	7%	7%	29%	43%	14%

# 5. The Balanced Growth Option supports the existing hamlets and urban centres and provides opportunity for them to grow.

	1 – Strongly Disagree	2 – Somewhat Disagree	3 – Neutral	4 – Somewhat Agree	5 – Strongly Agree
Number of Responses	0	2	3	7	2
Percent of Responses	0%	14%	21%	50%	14%

#### **B. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES**

After viewing the presentation by the Project Team as well the presentation boards, please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following economic development initiatives:

# 1. Explore models for intermunicipal and interagency (e.g.: Chamber of Commerce, Grande Prairie Regional College) partnerships for economic development in the region.

	1 – Strongly Disagree	2 – Somewhat Disagree	3 – Neutral	4 – Somewhat Agree	5 – Strongly Agree
Number of Responses	0	1	2	5	5
Percent of Responses	0%	8%	15%	38%	38%

# 2. Focus investment attraction and regional capacity building on sectors well suited to locate in the County such as but not limited to petrochemicals, value-added agriculture, clean tech, and bio-industrial product development.

	1 – Strongly Disagree	2 – Somewhat Disagree	3 – Neutral	4 – Somewhat Agree	5 – Strongly Agree
Number of Responses	0	0	3	8	2
Percent of Responses	0%	0%	23%	62%	15%



## 3. Work with the provincial government and industry to achieve broadband coverage throughout the County.

	1 – Strongly Disagree	2 – Somewhat Disagree	3 – Neutral	4 – Somewhat Agree	5 – Strongly Agree
Number of Responses	0	0	4	6	4
Percent of Responses	0%	0%	29%	43%	29%

# 4. Work with the Grande Prairie Airport and City of Grande Prairie to develop a masterplan for airport expansion.

	1 – Strongly Disagree	2 – Somewhat Disagree	3 – Neutral	4 – Somewhat Agree	5 – Strongly Agree
Number of Responses	0	1	6	4	3
Percent of Responses	0%	7%	43%	29%	21%

#### 5. Develop a retail and office support and recruitment program.

	1 – Strongly	2 – Somewhat	3 – Neutral	4 – Somewhat	5 – Strongly
	Disagree	Disagree		Agree	Agree
Number of Responses	0	1	9	4	0
Percent of Responses	0%	7%	64%	29%	0%

# 6. Update the regional tourism strategies drawing on best practices in tourism experience and products.

	1 – Strongly Disagree	2 – Somewhat Disagree	3 – Neutral	4 – Somewhat Agree	5 – Strongly Agree
Number of Responses	0	3	3	5	3
Percent of Responses	0%	21%	21%	36%	21%



# 7. Be a leader in enhancing the low carbon economy by intensifying potential investment opportunities (e.g.: geothermal).

	1 – Strongly Disagree	2 – Somewhat Disagree	3 – Neutral	4 – Somewhat Agree	5 – Strongly Agree
Number of Responses	1	3	3	5	2
Percent of Responses	7%	21%	21%	36%	14%

## 8. Develop a regional workforce strategy with partners such as Grande Prairie College and Chamber of Commerce.

	1 – Strongly Disagree	2 – Somewhat Disagree	3 – Neutral	4 – Somewhat Agree	5 – Strongly Agree
Number of Responses	0	1	4	6	3
Percent of Responses	0%	7%	29%	43%	21%

#### C. OTHER COMMENTS RECEIVED:

The following statements are verbatim comments made by individuals in the Exit Survey:

- "Would encourage partnerships when completing ICF's with surrounding municipalities."
- "There are more environmentally significant areas than the large river corridors: Kleskun Hills, Saskatoon Mountain, and swan nesting sites."
- "One goal "inclusive community that provides quality of life for people of all ages" The county has
  destroyed my quality of life in the last 4 years. YOU WILL NOT MEET THIS GOAL UNLESS YOU
  HAVE SOUND EMMISSION REGULATIONS. I would recommend following the format of the
  Alberta Energy Utilities Board for energy utilities in rural setting.
  - BEFORE PRESENTATION: In your actions I did not see support for a hospital or emergency care facility in the West end of the county. The Beaverlodge Hospital needs upgraded and replace.
  - AFTER PRESENTATION: Apparent that support for technology to a regional hospital in Grande Prairie with remote monitoring systems (that could sell to other areas) would negate the need of hospital in Beaverlodge. You still require emergency medical in west end of county (Hythe) as there is only 1 airport for evacuations in GP which is over an hour from west end."
- "Will free enterprise dictate development in the growth areas or will subsidies be provided to attract desired retail i.e. Upscale dining in Clairmont. (similar to incentives to get Doctors to practice in the County)."
- "I believe the low carbon economy is counter productive. It is disturbing to see how politicians go along with arguments by environmental activists. The latest solid research says average yearly temperature has increased 2°F in the last 74 years in Western Canada. If the world was not warming in the last 15,000 years, we would still have the ice age in what is now Alberta."



- "Factors and priorities to consider wisely, in the next 50 years of development in the County of Grande Prairie.
  - First agriculture, and then,
  - o Environment, watershed preservation,
  - Clean drinking water,
  - o Global warming, and climate change
  - o Air Transportation Service, a public community airport,
  - o Disaster plans, search and rescue planes and helicopters,
  - New fire hall with air service.
  - o Medical facilities, a new hospital,
  - o Healthcare, seniors care, poverty,
  - o Roads and transport,
  - Sewage and garbage service,

And the list goes on, as you read all the candidates platform letters for the past October election. These are the words of the people, wanting to work for and represent the people. Listen to the people.

So, looking at the plan for the future, I have many questions. How are we dealing with the present drug overdose crisis situation? What is going to happen in a year when marijuana is legalised? How will we control the party activities of recreation then? What is the backup disaster plan, when Donald Trump declares World War III? Denial?, or disaster, whether by the wrath of nature, wild fire, storm, or man made. All of these questions, and the idea of more recreation activities is no longer a priority. For the next 50 year plan, I will pray for the councillors, to make the best decisions, on behalf of the tax paying people and the stewards of the land."

#### D. OPEN HOUSE EVALUATION

#### 1. The Open House was well organized and informative.

	1 – Strongly Disagree	2 – Somewhat Disagree	3 – Neutral	4 – Somewhat Agree	5 – Strongly Agree
Number of Responses	0	1	3	4	5
Percent of Responses	0%	8%	23%	31%	38%

#### 2. The information presented was clear and relevant.

	1 – Strongly Disagree	2 – Somewhat Disagree	3 – Neutral	4 – Somewhat Agree	5 – Strongly Agree
Number of Responses	0	3	0	4	6
Percent of Responses	0%	23%	0%	31%	46%



#### 3. Opportunities to comment and ask questions were provided.

	1 – Strongly Disagree	2 – Somewhat Disagree	3 – Neutral	4 – Somewhat Agree	5 – Strongly Agree
Number of Responses	0	0	3	2	8
Percent of Responses	0%	0%	23%	15%	62%

#### 4. Other Comments:

- "Poorly presented. No one could hear what was said. Sad very poor."
- "The information from the speakers was exactly the same as on the posters, I was expecting something dynamic from the speaking."
- "I did not know the presentation was to be at 6:30. I could not stay past 6:30."

#### E. VERBAL COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

The following statements are summarized comments or questions asked by individuals during the question periods after each presentation:

Question: What is the timeline for construction of the twinning of Highway 43?

**Answer (Councillor):** Highway 43 is a provincial highway and under the jurisdiction of Alberta Transportation. It is up to them and when their timeline and budget allows for the twinning.

**Comment:** A concern is the water issues in the province, mainly the availability of water in the southern areas of the province and how that might affect the migration of people to the Grande Prairie area.

**Question:** What is the County doing in regard to providing water, is there a requirement for water wells in some parts and where are regional water lines going to service?

**Answer:** There are different levels of service depending on the location and type of development. Some country residential areas or industrial areas would be responsible for their own private sewer and water systems. Regional water lines to provide piped water are planned based on population and need.

**Question:** What are the plans for accessibility and user friendliness for people with disabilities? Is there a plan for transit in this growth strategy?

**Answer:** The *Growth and Economic Development Strategy* is a high-level strategy for the entire County over 50 years. It deals with the location of growth and economic development; the County would be responsible for guidelines on individual building or neighbourhood accessibility, not only for people with disabilities but the elderly as well. This is an important consideration and has been noted. Transit is an important issue and looking into creating a county transit service has been included in one of the implementation actions we are recommending.



**Question:** You talked about cluster development, what kind of densities are planned for this type of development?

**Answer:** Clustering of county residential subdivisions is being encouraged to conserve land, avoid land use conflicts, and allow for the economic provision of services. Lots would still be large (approximately 2 hectares).

**Question:** With farms becoming larger and less people living on them, where will people live, especially those that are moving into the area? What will this look like?

**Answer:** The Growth and Economic Development Strategy takes fewer people living on farms into account. The Balanced Growth Option provides a wide range of housing choice from country residential to urban estates to smaller urban style lots and apartment units in growth hamlets like Clairmont. Growth is also encouraged in the stable hamlets to help sustain the viability of local schools.

#### 4.0 SUMMATION

Based on the comments made by participants, there is support for the Balanced Growth Option.

Only two responses strongly disagreed that the Balanced Growth Option preserves environmentally significant areas. There was also a comment stating there are unidentified environmentally valuable areas in the County.

Some respondents indicated that the County of Grande Prairie should not update regional tourism strategies. 21% of responses disagreed that the County should update regional tourism strategies, 21% responded as neutral, and 57% of responses agreed that the County should update regional tourism strategies.

Some respondents indicated the County of Grande Prairie should not pursue a low carbon economy. 28% of responses disagreed that the County should attempt to enhance the low carbon economy, 21% responded as neutral, and 50% of responses agreed.

The majority of responses indicate participants found the Open Houses to be a positive experience and was well-organized, informative, and provided opportunities to comment and ask questions.



APPENDIX 1: OPEN HOUSE PRESENTATION BOARDS

## Welcome To The Growth and Economic Development Strategy Open House

#### Purpose of the Growth and Economic Development Strategy

Since 2011, the County of Grande Prairie has seen a 13.1 per cent rise in population, resulting in an increase of over 2,579 new residents (2016 Federal Census). More recently, the economic landscape of Alberta has also changed, and many Albertan's now view diversifying the economy as essential. In response to these changes, the County is preparing a Growth and Economic Development Strategy that will guide growth in the region and ensure the County's economy is sustainable, socially responsible, and diversified.

A Growth and Economic Development Strategy is a document that can be approved and adopted by Council and will provide a roadmap for attracting new investment and ensures long-term and sustainable growth. The Growth and Economic Development Strategy also provides a framework for how land in the County can best be utilized to create additional economic opportunities for the

#### Instructions

✓ Please view the display boards

Speak to project representatives, and ask any questions you may have

✓ Stay for the Presentation

Complete the Comment Sheet

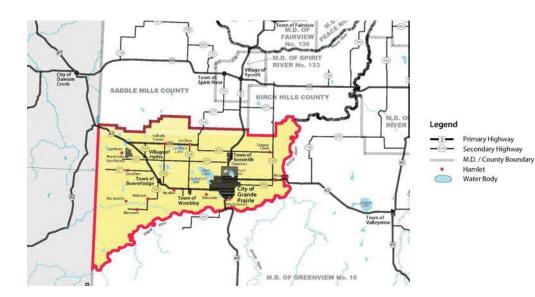
#### **Share Your Ideas**

We are listening at:



Visit the Project website at: www.mycountygp.ca

**County of Grande** Prairie No. 1 **Regional Context** 









**Our Team** 













### Vision and Guiding Principles

### Vision 2066

"Capitalizing on its strategic location, as the "Middle of Everywhere", by the year 2066 the County of Grande Prairie will have grown to a community of over 74,000 people and a model of sustainable development for the region. Building on Clairmont's transformation into a model "green community", the hamlets and rural areas of the County will become vibrant and desirable places to live, work, and play.

The traditional economic base of agriculture, oil and gas, forestry, and tourism will look to grow and diversify through innovation, the application of new technology, and value-added manufacturing. The County will continue to be open for business and foster collaboration with neighbouring municipalities by promoting economic development and efficient, cost effective delivery of physical and social infrastructure.

People will recognize that the County of Grande Prairie is an ideal place to invest, start a business, raise a family, and age in place."







### **Guiding Principles for Achieving the Vision 2066**

- 1. Grow and diversify the County's economy through innovation, use of technology, and entrepreneurship.
- 2. The County will continue to protect its natural environment and pursue environmentally sustainable practices.
- 3. Ensure that agriculture remains an important economic activity and way of life in the County by maintaining the Right to Farm and avoiding the premature fragmentation of farmland.
- 4. Through the provision of social infrastructure (i.e. health, education, recreation and cultural facilities and programming), the County will be a healthy, safe, and inclusive community that provides high quality of life for people of all ages.
- 5. Promote land use patterns that provide for the economic and responsible use of infrastructure and avoid land use conflicts.
- 6. The County will help facilitate regional partnerships with industry, neighbouring municipalities, and the provincial and federal orders of government to continue to develop a competitive, resilient, attractive, and liveable region.
- 7. County Council and staff will endeavor to facilitate responsible, transparent and well-informed decision making based upon ongoing public engagement to better understand the needs of County residents and ratepayers.











### **Economic Development**

### **Guiding Principle #1**

Grow and diversify the County's economy through innovation, use of technology, and entrepreneurship.

### **Economic Opportunities**

Sector	Value Added Areas	Current Employment Breakdown
Primary	• Energy • Forestry • Agriculture	3,295 Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (1,200)  22%  • Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction (2,095) • Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (1,200)
Secondary	<ul><li>Partial Upgrading</li><li>Bio Industrial</li><li>Bio Energy</li><li>Geothermal</li></ul>	2,330 16%  • Construction (1500) • Manufacturing (575) • Utilities (170) • Other (85)
Tertiary	<ul> <li>Health Services</li> <li>Education and Research</li> <li>Transportation and logistics</li> <li>Service Automation</li> <li>Office and Retail</li> <li>Tourism</li> </ul>	• Retail trade (1,210) • Transportation and warehousing (1,030) • Education services (935) • Other services (except public administration) (920) • Health care and social assistance (890)

The labour force in the County and its larger towns and hamlets is engaged in a diverse set of occupations. The table above summarizes the potential economic opportunities in the County and lists the primary occupations in the community as of the 2011 census. The largest occupations in the County are oil and gas extraction (14%), construction (10%), retail trade (8%) and agriculture and forestry (8%). Breakdowns are provided in the table for the County, Beaverlodge, Hythe, and Sexsmith, the only communities for which this breakdown is available.



### Global Markets and Alberta Opportunities

	Lead Market			
E.3	Energy efficiency	Industrial Digital Solutions	Green Buildings	
	Sustainable Water Management	Water Management	Advanced Recovery & Processing	
9	Power generation, storage and distribution		Geothern	mal Wind Solar CCUS Biomass
d	Material Efficiency		Biobased	
er la	Sustainable Mobility		Biofuel	
m	Waste management and Recycling	Environmental Solutions		Municipal Solid Wasle Management



Low to high

Source: Government of Alberta



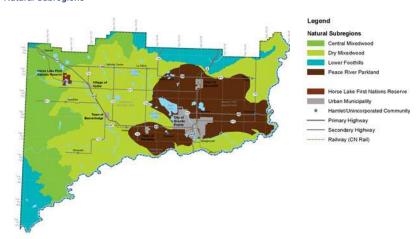


### **Environmental Stewardship**

### **Guiding Principle #2**

The County will continue to protect its natural environment and pursue environmentally sustainable practices.

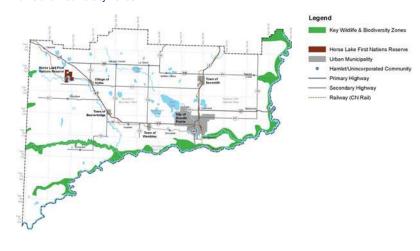
### **Natural Subregions**



The County of Grande Prairie has a varied landscape within the Foothills, Boreal Forest, and Parkland, Natural Regions that provide suitable habitats for many sensitive species. This area is characterized by four Subregions: the Lower Foothills Natural Subregion of the Foothills Natural Region, the Central Mixedwood Subregion and Dry Mixedwood Subregion of the Boreal Natural Region, and the Peace River Parkland Subregion of the Parkland Natural region (Government of Alberta 2016d).



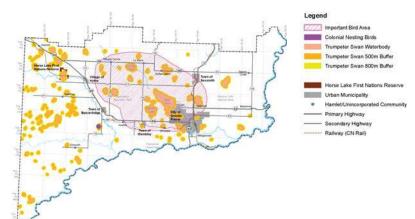
### Wildlife and Biodiversity Zones



Key Wildlife and Biodiversity Zones are established to protect locally or regionally significant wildlife movement corridors (Government of Alberta 2013). Across the County, there are Key Wildlife and Biodiversity Zones established along the Redwillow River, the Bear River downstream from the Town of Grande Prairie, the Wapiti River, the Smoky River as well as Kleskun Creek east of Kleskun Lake. These zones provide key winter habitat for ungulates and higher potential for biodiversity. River valleys contain topographic variations and site conditions that provide hiding and thermal cover for terrestrial mammals and are biodiversity areas where species tend to concentrate.



### Birds



Trumpeter swans are designated as "may be at risk" under the Alberta Wildlife Act. They occur in several lakes across the County and have benefited from active management of those lakes to reduce disturbance during critical breeding periods. Because of the sensitivity of trumpeter swans and their cygnets to disturbance, a provincial operational standard restricts developments and industrial activity within a 500-meter buffer from the bed and shore. There are further restrictions limiting activities within an 800-meter buffer during the breeding season from April 1 to September 30.

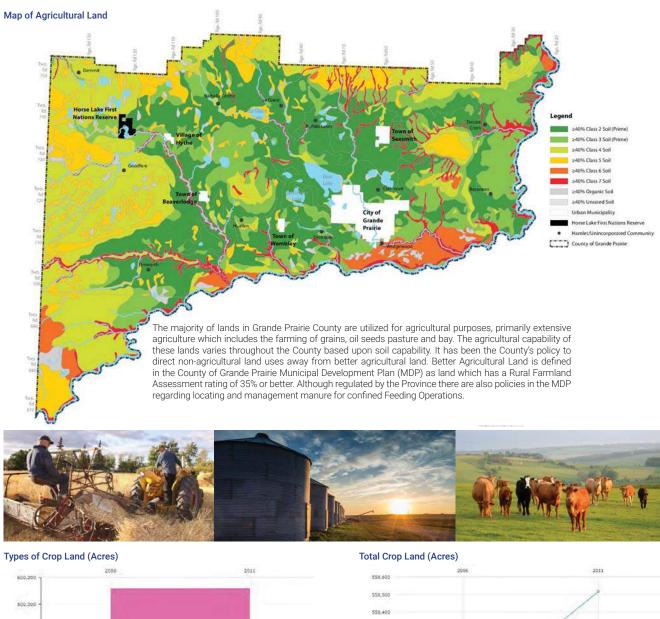




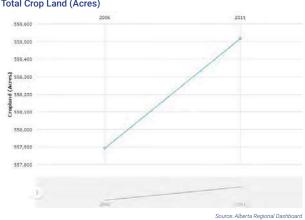


### **Guiding Principle #3**

Ensure that agricultural land remains an important economic activity and way of life in the County by maintaining the Right to Farm and avoiding the premature fragmentation of farmland.







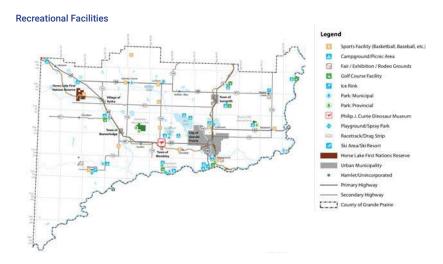




### Social Infrastructure

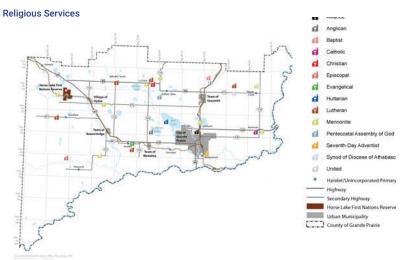
### **Guiding Principle #4**

Through the provision of social infrastructure (i.e. health education, recreation, and cultural facilities and programming), the County will be a healthy, safe, and inclusive community that provides a high quality of life for people of all ages.



A 2007 Open Spaces Study recommends the County "explore possibilities to establish public trails at regional and neighbourhood scales." The development of a Regional Trails Master Plan would provide a strategy for the creation of local and county-wide trail networks, incorporating various types of trails (motorized, nature interpretive, equine, etc.) and regional connections. A connected system of trails creates a transportation network throughout the County and encourages active recreational uses.

Encouraging greater use and provision of recreation facilities is important to the County of Grande Prairie. The Grande Prairie Area Joint Recreation Master Plan (GPAJRMP) examines the current state of recreational services within Grande Prairie County and the municipalities within. From these baseline goals, outcomes, and guidelines are suggested to inform new recreational services creation and enhancement of existing services.

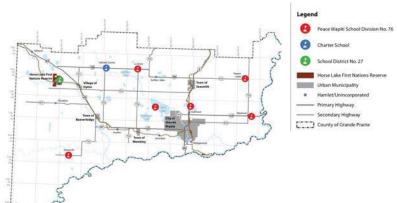








### **Distribution of Schools**



Access to education including both the provision of schools as well as adequate transportation to them is essential to sustaining and progressing a community.

There are currently two (2) school district boards that oversee various educational institutions located within the County of Grande Prairie, the Peace Wapiti Public School Division and the Grande Prairie & District Catholic School Board.





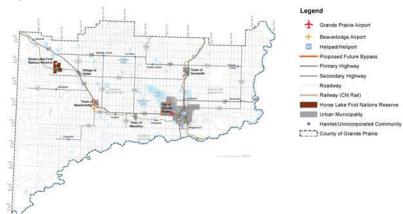


### Physical Infrastructure

### Guiding Principles #5 and #6

Promote land use patterns that provide for the economic and responsible use of infrastructure and avoid land use conflicts. The County will help facilitate regional partnerships with industry, neighbouring municipalities, and the provincial and federal orders of government to continue to develop a competitive, resilient, attractive, and liveable region.

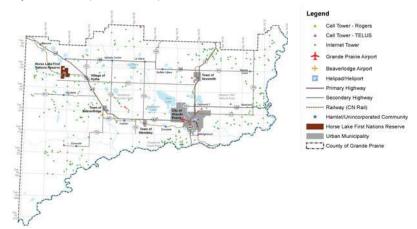
### Transportation



The County of Grande Prairie is serviced by a number of different transportation modes including Highway, Airport, and Railway infrastructure. There are several major highways connecting the County as well as City of Grande Prairie to the rest of the province of Alberta and British Columbia.



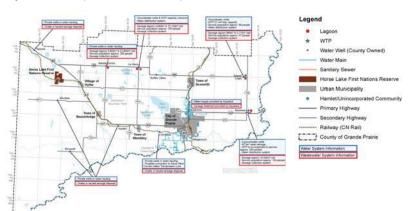
### **Utility Infrastructure (Communication)**



Internet access is an important facilitator of growth within the County. A report completed in 2011 by ViTel Consulting Inc. concluded that although 87% of the townships within the county and all 11 hamlets had wireless internet coverage, the towers were not able to provide adequate service. To insure internet utilities, meet long term growth aspirations, the County has sponsored the installation of approximately 300 towers throughout the region and continues to work towards system improvement.



### Utility Infrastructure (Water and Wastewater)



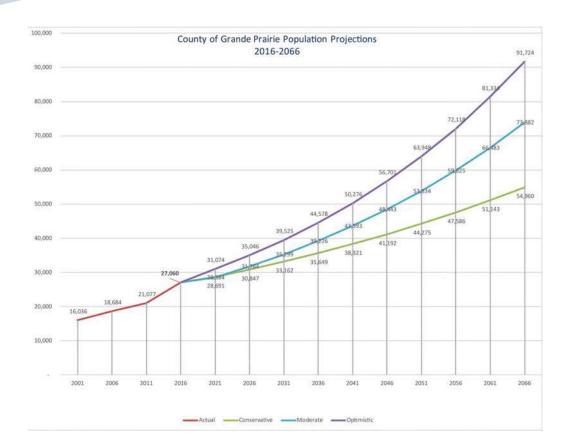
Water and Wastewater management within the County continues to be a challenge. Services within the City of Grande Prairie and to the Town of Clairmont are provided by Aquatera, with the majority of the county being serviced by private wells and sewage lagoon systems.

Water and wastewater infrastructure is expected to encounter a higher load due to climate change and increasing rainfall events. Higher demands from recreation and irrigation are also expected. Groundwater quality is expected to remain within current parameters. Additional capacity may be required to maintain higher resiliency. Wastewater treatment may be benefited from a longer warm season but will also see greater loading due to increases in water usage.





### 50 Year Population and Employment Projections







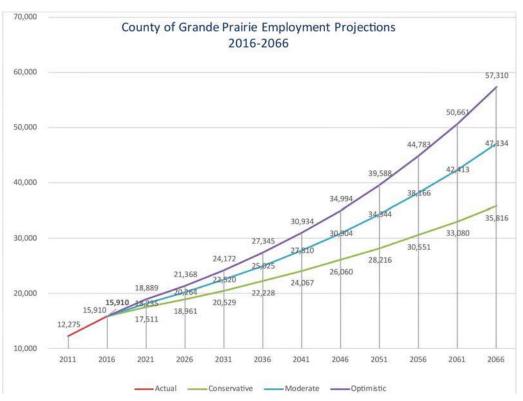


### With Moderate Growth Rate



46,822 New Residents





<sup>\*</sup> The Moderate Projections were used in the Growth and Economic Development Strategy





### **Growth Options**

### **Economic Development:**

A range of activities intended to attract, create, or retain private sector jobs in a given geographical area. These activities may involve the use of public and private funds for area infrastructure investments, business financing assistance, the analysis of regional assets and attributes in the establishment of economic plans and strategies (Grant and Hall, 1988).

### **Growth Management:**

The process of accommodating growth in the community while directing the location and pattern of development in a manner that contributes to, and works towards making the community's future vision a reality. It also seeks to ensure that the quality of life in the County of Grande Prairie is maintained as the size of the community increases. A lack of coordinated growth management can lead to land use conflicts and inefficient servicing patterns which may compromise the County's ability to allocate funds optimally for capital improvements and upgrades.

### **Land Use Designations:**



### Agriculture

- Allows for a wide range of agricultural operations.
- Considers Residential,industry/ businesses and recreational uses and developments.



### **Urban Municipality**

- Incorporated towns, villages and summer villages that are neighbouring municipalities to The County of Grande Prairie.
- Includes: Towns of Sexsmith, Wembley, Beaverlodge and the Village of Hythe.



### Potential Urban Expansion

- Areas identified for the future expansion of a neighboring urban municipality.
- Expansion areas for Towns of the County of Grande Prairie are identified in the MunicipalDevelopmentPlanasfringeareas, while other potential urban expansion areas are illustrated conceptually on the growth management strategy maps.



### Hamlet

- A small, rural unincorporated community that feature a limited number of land uses.
- Land uses typically include: single family dwellings and rural commercial businesses, such as a general store.



### **Growth Hamlet**

 A hamlet that the County wishes to grow and expand beyond its boundaries.



### Country Residential

 Larger, multi-lot subdivision with parcels serviced by private, individual sewer and water systems.



### Estate Residential

 Smaller-sized lots at higher densities developed inmulti-lot subdivisions serviced by either a communal or municipal water and sewer system.



### Higher Density / Resort Residential

 A range of housing types, including multifamily dwellings like duplexes, four-plexes, row housing and low-rise apartments (four to five stories high)



### Commercial Development

- · Accommodated in four categories:
  - · HWYC Highway Commercial
  - H Hamlet
  - A Agriculture
  - · RF Recreation Facility



### Industrial

 Accommodated for industrial activities that can be serviced efficiently and will not conflict with agricultural or residential uses.



### Parks, Recreation & Open Space

 Includes municipal and environmental reserve, community recreation facilities, and halls.



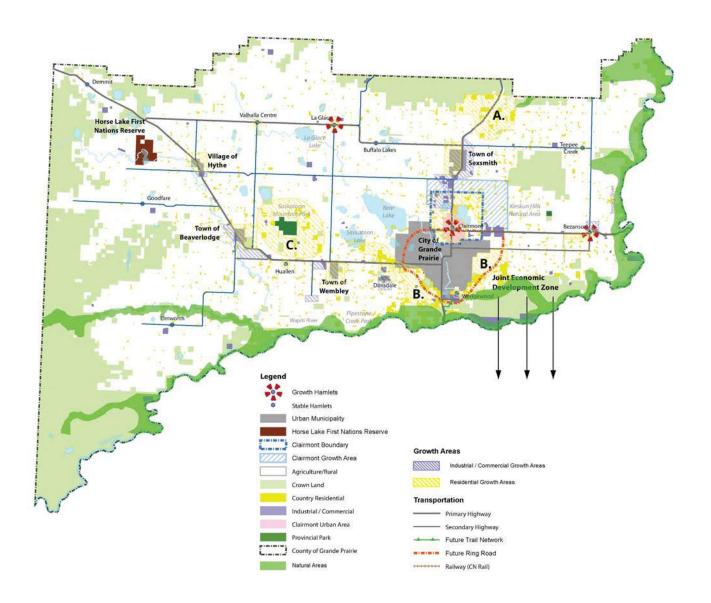
### Country Residential

 Larger, multi-lot subdivision with parcels serviced by private, individual sewer and water systems.







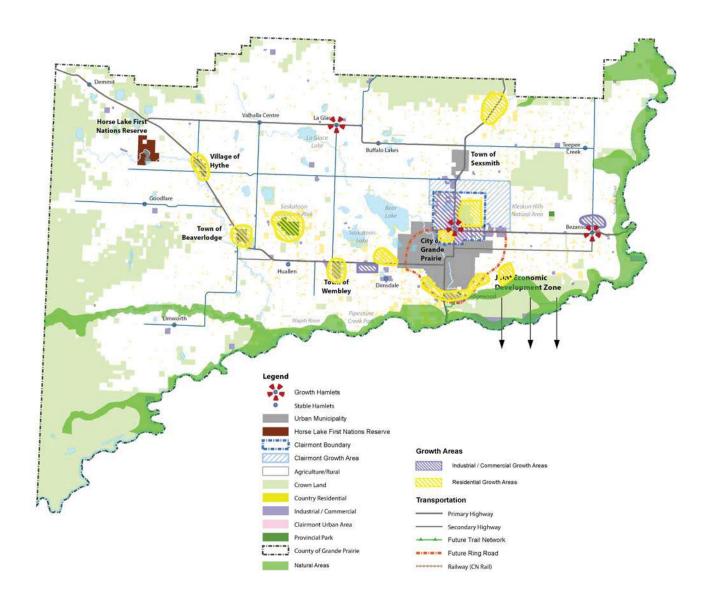


### **Key Features:**

- Residential growth areas around the towns of Beaverlodge, Wembley, and Sexsmith; the Village of Hythe, and within the hamlets of Valhalla Centre, La Glace, Hueallen, Dimsdale, Clairmont, Teepee Creek, and Bezanson.
- Country residential growth and development has been identified for three major areas Area A north
  of Sexsmith, Area B to the southeast, south, and southwest of the City of Grande Prairie, and Area C
  a large area surrounding Saskatoon Mountain Park.
- Industrial / Commercial Development growth areas south of the Village of Hythe, south and west
  of Beaverlodge, adjacent to Wembley, south of Dimsdale, northwest of Clairmont, east of Sexsmith,
  and north of Bezanson.







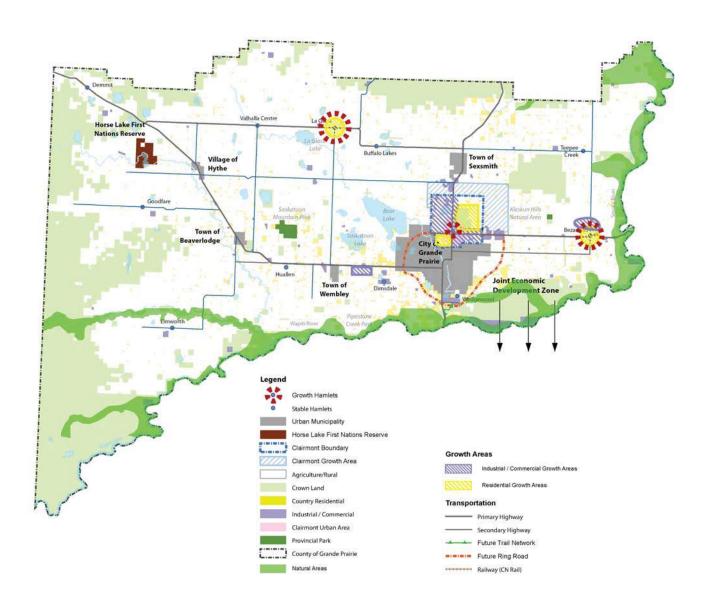
### **Key Features:**

- Residential growth areas around the Towns of Beaverlodge and Wembley and around the Village of Hythe.
- Country residential growth and development to the north of Sexsmith, south and east of the City of Grande Prairie, north of Dimsdale, and around Saskatoon Mountain Park.
- Industrial / commercial development along the highway by Dimsdale, in and around Clairmont, and to the north of the hamlet of Bezanson.





### Concentrated Growth Option



### **Key Features:**

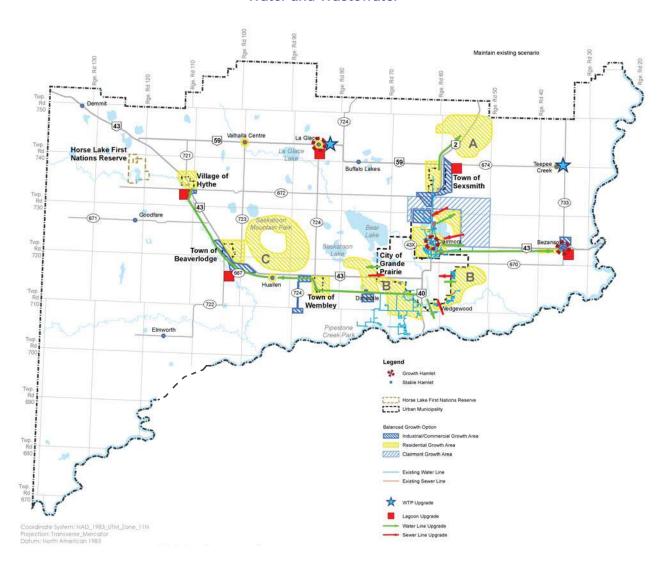
- · Residential growth areas concentrated in Clairmont, the hamlets of La Glace and Bezanson.
- Country residential growth and development has been restricted to existing country residential developments with no new areas identified for growth.
- Industrial / Commercial Development growth areas northwest of Dimsdale, in and around Clairmont, and to the north of Bezanson.





### Infrastructure Gap Analysis

### **Water and Wastewater**



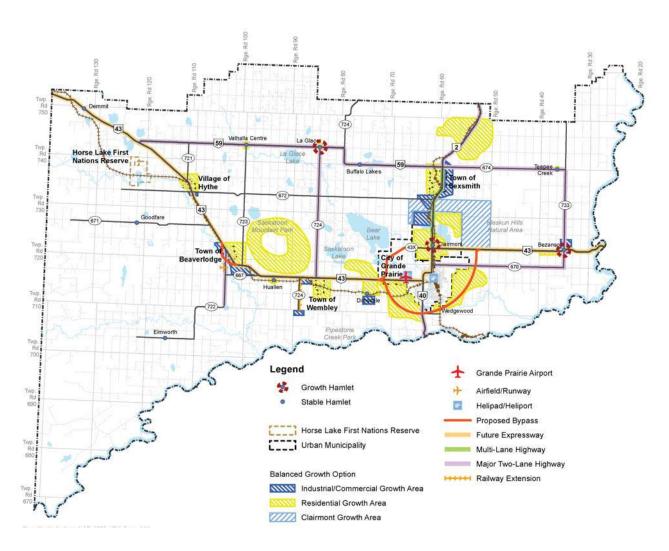
### Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Upgrades

	water and wastewater initiation details	
Area	Water Upgrades	Sewer Upgrades
Clairmont*	Water supply and Treatment Upgrades, Mercer Hill Reservoir, New transmission line from Grande Prairie, Extension to east.	Wastewater Treatment Upgrades, Regional Liftstation and Forcemain to GP
Sexsmith Fringe*	Booster station upgrade, Reservoir and Pumphouse Expansion	Lagoon Expansion
North of Sexsmith (Area A)*	Water Pipeline from Sexsmith, Reservoir and Pumphouse	No municipal service
Bezanson	Waterline from Grande Prairie	Lagoon Expansion
Grande Prairie Fringe (Area B)*	Water supply from Grande Prairie	Sewer Service from Grande Prairie
Dimsdale	Water pipeline from Grande Prairie, Reservoir and Pumphouse	No municipal service
Wembley Fringe*	Water pipeline from Grande Prairie, Reservoir and Pumphouse	Lagoon Expansion
Beaverlodge Fringe*	Water pipeline from Grande Prairie, Reservoir and Pumphouse	Lagoon Expansion
Hythe Fringe*	Water pipeline from Grande Prairie, Reservoir and Pumphouse	Lagoon Expansion
Saskatoon Mountain (Area C)	No municipal service	No municipal service
LaGlace	Water Treatment Plant and Distribution System	Lagoon Expansion
Teepee Creek, Valhalla Centre, Huallen	Maintain Existing service	Maintain Existing service
Farms	No municipal service	No municipal service





### **Transportation Infrastructure Upgrades**



### **Transportation Infrastructure Upgrades and Initiatives**

- Twinning of Highway 40 to Grande Cache
- Twinning of Highway 43 to British Columbia
- Construction of the Grande Prairie Highway 43 Bypass
- Construction of the Highway 43X Beaverlodge Bypass
- · Construction of Rail Spurs to Industrial Growth Areas
- Expansion of the Grande Prairie Airport











### **Goals and Strategies**

### **Investment Attraction**

- Leverage strengths by attracting investments for regional productivity
- · Strengthen retail and services investments

### **Diversification**

- · Focus on value-added resource development
- Develop a Petrochemical sector strategy
- Develop a Clean Technology and BioIndustrial sector strategy
- Develop a Tourism strategy
- · Develop a Workforce strategy
- · Strengthen business mentorship
- · Identify economic resiliency lessons

### Sustainability

- · Lead on the low carbon economy
- Encourage business investment in productivity and competitiveness
- Strengthen access to markets

### Collaboration

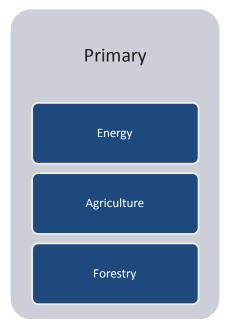
- · Provide strong regional leadership
- Strengthen relationships with cities, hamlets, towns, and surrounding counties
- · Partner for growth

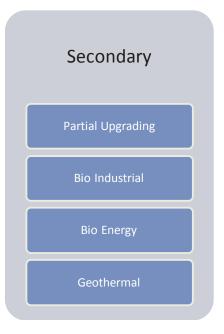






### **Economic Opportunities**











### **AGRICULTURE**

### **Sector Insights**

























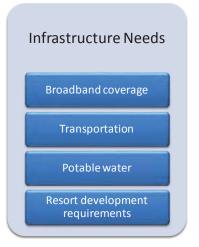


### **TOURISM**

### **Sector Insights**



























### Growth Management 5 Year Initiatives

	<b>Actions 2018-20</b>	)23	
Action	Type of Action	Responsibility	Potential Funding Sources
Review and update the County's Municipal Development Plan.	Policy Development	Planning & Development Services	• Tax Levy
Complete Intermunicipal Development Plans (IDPs) and Intermunicipal Collaboration Frameworks (ICFs) with neighbouring municipalities.	Policy Development	Planning & Development Services Town of Beaverlodge Town of Sexsmith Town of Wembley Village of Hythe City of Grande Prairie MD of Greenview Birch Hills County Saddle Hills County	Tax Levy     Alberta Community     Partnership Grant
3. Complete Area Structure Plans (ASPs) and Master Servicing Plans for the growth hamlets of La Glace and Bezanson.	Policy Development	Planning & Development Services Public Works	Tax Levy
4. Participate in the creation of the Upper Peace Regional Plan with the Government of Alberta.	Policy Development	Planning & Development Services Alberta Environment and Parks	Provincial Funding
5. Prepare ASPs for the three (3) country residential growth areas identified in the Balanced Growth Option.	Policy Development	Planning & Development Services Public Works	Tax Levy     Provincial Grants









### Required Infrastructure 5 Year Initiatives

	Actions 2018-20	)23	
Action	Type of Action	Responsibility	Potential Funding Sources
6. Work with Aquatera to implement the required upgrades to sewer and water infrastructure in: Clairmont, Mercer Hill Reservoir, and a Regional Lift Station to Grande Prairie.	Infrastructure Project	Aquatera Planning & Development Services Public Works	<ul><li> Utility Charges</li><li> Offsite Levies</li><li> Tax Levy</li></ul>
7. Make representation to the Province of Alberta to twin Highway 40 to Grande Cache.	Advocacy	Reeve and Council Alberta Infrastructure Alberta Transportation	Alberta Transportation's     Capital Budget
<ol> <li>Make representation to the Province of Alberta and the Government of Canada to twin Highway 43 to British Columbia.</li> </ol>	Advocacy	Reeve and Council Alberta Infrastructure Alberta Transportation Infrastructure Canada	<ul> <li>Canada Strategic Infrastructure Fund</li> <li>Alberta Transportation's Capital Budget</li> </ul>
<ol> <li>Make representation to the Province of Alberta and the Government of Canada to construct the Grande Prairie Highway 43 Bypass, Southwest Resources Road, and Southeast Bypass</li> </ol>	Advocacy	Reeve and Council Alberta Infrastructure Alberta Transportation Infrastructure Canada	Canada Strategic     Infrastructure Fund
10. Design and construct upgrades to the Bezanson lagoon	Infrastructure Project	Public Works	<ul> <li>Alberta Municipal Water/ Wastewater Partnership</li> <li>Off-site Levies</li> <li>Utility Charges</li> <li>Tax Levy</li> </ul>
11. Investigate municipal water systems for La Glace	Infrastructure Project	Public Works	<ul><li>Alberta Municipal Water/ Wastewater Partnership</li><li>Tax Levy</li></ul>
12. Investigate implementation of municipal water system in Dimsdale after regional line to Wembley is constructed	Infrastructure Project	Public Works	• Tax Levy
<ol> <li>Update County Design Standards to reflect AEP Standards and Guidelines regarding stormwater quality</li> </ol>	Policy Development	Planning & Development Services	Tax Levy
14. Adopt Infrastructure Resiliency Practices with County Design Standards	Policy Development	Planning & Development Services Public Works	• Tax Levy
15. Investigate Opportunities to improve broadband speed or wireless internet system within County	Advocacy	Reeve and Council Planning & Development Services	• Tax Levy
16. Include wetlands in policy development; consider identifying wetland areas where onsite replacement instead of in-lieu fee payment should take place	Policy Development	Planning & Development Services Planning and Development	<ul><li>Watershed Resiliency and Restoration Program</li><li>Tax Levy</li></ul>
17. Investigate the development of a intermunicipal bus system with the County and surrounding Municipalities	Policy Development Infrastructure	<b>Public Works</b> Planning and Development	<ul><li>Tax Levy</li><li>Provincial Grants</li><li>Intermunicipal Agreements</li><li>Federal Grants</li></ul>
18. Rank agricultural capability of the growth areas and prioritize conservation of the highest value agricultural land through land use zoning and development permitting	Policy Development	Planning & Development Services Planning and Development	• Tax Levy
<ol> <li>Build awareness of the opportunities for service automation and productivity solution for service company and regional industry.</li> </ol>	Advocacy	Economic Development Chamber of Commerce	<ul><li>Go Productivity training</li><li>Private Funding</li></ul>





### Economic Development 5 Year Initiatives

	<b>Actions 2018-20</b>	23	
Action	Type of Action	Responsibility	Potential Funding Sources
20. Develop local business productivity and competitiveness through regional productivity benchmarking studies with strategic industries to determine critical opportunities for regional industries to improve their productivity. Integrate these insights into training programs and investment attraction activities to develop local supply chains. Update the study in priority sectors to evaluate progress on a rolling biannual basis.	Advocacy	Economic Development Chamber of Commerce Go Productivity Alberta Economic Development Alberta Agriculture Natural Resources Canada	Private Funding
21. Conduct a targeted investment attraction	Investment Attraction	<b>Economic Development</b>	Tax Levy
campaign in areas of regional strength and high priority to local industry such as the Tri- Municipal Partnership.		Chamber of Commerce Alberta Economic Development Alberta Agriculture and Forestry Tri-Municipal Industrial Partnership	Investment Attraction project funding programs
22. Develop an Airport Expansion Strategy	Economic Development Infrastructure	<b>Grande Prairie Airport</b> County of Grande Prairie City of Grande Prairie	Grande Prairie Airport
23. Select and target high priority retail and commercial opportunities for development in the County.	Investment Attraction	Economic Development Regional Economic Development Partnership Chamber of Commerce Alberta Economic Development	Alberta Economic     Development
24. Diversify the regional economy by developing and monitoring sector strategies designed to define the needs of strategic growth sectors for investment attraction and regional capacity development, such as Petrochemicals, Cleantech and BioIndustrial.	Policy Development	Economic Development Regional Economic Development Partnerships Chamber of Commerce Trade Associations Regional Colleges and Innovation Networks	<ul> <li>Alberta Economic Development</li> <li>Climate Leadership Secretariat</li> <li>Emissions Reduction Alberta</li> <li>Alberta Agriculture and Forestry</li> <li>NRCan</li> </ul>
25. Support the Regional Tourism Association develop a new Tourism Strategy that capitalizes on leading practices in tourism experience design.	Policy Development	Regional Tourism Association Economic Development	Tourism Alberta
26. Develop a regional workforce strategy to ensure skilled labour is available to support regional business growth, innovation, and prosperity.	Policy Development	Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Grande Prairie Regional College Lakeland College Alberta Health Services	<ul> <li>Alberta Advanced Education and Alberta Education</li> <li>Alberta Labour</li> <li>Alberta Economic Development and Trade</li> </ul>





### Economic Development 5 Year Initiatives

	Actions 2018-20	23	
Action	Type of Action	Responsibility	Potential Funding Sources
27. Strengthen business capacity with regional mentorship programs and the harvesting of key insights on resilience from the sector strategy development efforts.	Policy Development	Chamber of Commerce Economic Development	<ul> <li>Alberta Venture Mentor Service</li> <li>A100</li> <li>EO - Entrepreneur Organization &amp; YEO</li> </ul>
28. Lead the regions low carbon economy development by Identifying high potential investment opportunities in the County, highlighting them through the sector strategies.	Investment Attraction	Economic Development Regional Economic Development Partnerships Alberta Innovates	<ul> <li>Alberta Climate Leadership Plan</li> <li>Emissions Reduction Alberta</li> <li>Sustainable Technology Development Canada (SDTC)</li> </ul>
29. Identify green infrastructure initiatives relevant to long term capital planning in the County, such as geothermal power generation, or water and waste management system innovations.	Infrastructure	Economic Development Regional Economic Development Partnerships	<ul> <li>Alberta Climate Leadership Plan</li> <li>Emissions Reduction Alberta</li> <li>Alberta Municipal Water/ Wastewater Partnership (AMWWP)</li> <li>Sustainable Technology Development Canada (SDTC)</li> </ul>
30. Strengthen regional competitiveness and market access by ensuring infrastructure investments meet current and future demands for regional broadband, multi-modal and interregional transportation linkages.	Policy Development	Economic Development Planning and Development Services Public Works Alberta Transportation Service Alberta	<ul> <li>Service Alberta</li> <li>Western Economic Diversification</li> <li>Telecommunications Carriers</li> </ul>
31. Explore economic development partnerships with regional communities such as the City of Grande Prairie, Sexsmith, Beaverlodge, Hythe, Wembley, the County of Greenview, Horse Lake First Nations. Include and monitor these strategies in inter-municipal development plans (IDPs).	Governance Policy Development	Economic Development Town of Beaverlodge Town of Sexsmith Town of Wembley Village of Hythe City of Grande Prairie MD of Greenview Birch Hills County Saddle Hills County	Tax Levy     Alberta Municipal Affairs
32. Continue to strengthen the County brand by developing specific industrial park brands and integrate this into the marketing strategy for "Middle of Everywhere". Extend this brand into sector strategies.	Policy Development	Economic Development	• Tax Levy
33. Support the Grande Prairie Regional Tourism Association identify additional expertise and resources to increase targeted tourism activity.	Advocacy	Grande Prairie Regional Tourism Association Economic Development	Tourism Alberta





### Economic Development 5 Year Initiatives

	Actions 2018-20	23	
Action	Type of Action	Responsibility	Potential Funding Sources
34. Explore cooperative approaches that enhance the coordination and monitoring of strategic initiatives and regional initiatives	Governance	Economic Development Town of Beaverlodge Town of Sexsmith Town of Wembley Village of Hythe City of Grande Prairie MD of Greenview Birch Hills County Saddle Hills County	• Tax Levy
35. Develop and Economic Development Advisory Committee to provide advice and recommendations that advance the County's Economic Development Strategy.	Governance	<b>Economic Development</b> Reeve and Council	• Tax Levy
36. Benchmark the County against other communities to monitor employment growth and tax assessments to maintain the County's competitive position.	Policy Development	Economic Development	• Tax Levy
37. Investigate a cost neutral Business Permit System to assist in tracking County business and economic patterns and trends.	Program Development	Economic Development Reeve and Council	Tax Levy     Service Fee
38. Continue to support the development of the Tri- Municipal Industrial Partnership.	Policy Development  Infrastructure	MD of Greenview	CARES Grant - Provincial Government









### **Thank You For Attending**

Please fill out a Comment Sheet. When completed, please leave with a Project Team Member or take the Comment Sheet home and mail, email, or fax your comments to ParioPlan Inc. by December 31, 2017.

### **Contact Information:**

Marcelo Figueira, Planner ParioPlan Incorporated #605, 10080 Jasper Avenue Edmonton, Alberta T5J1V9

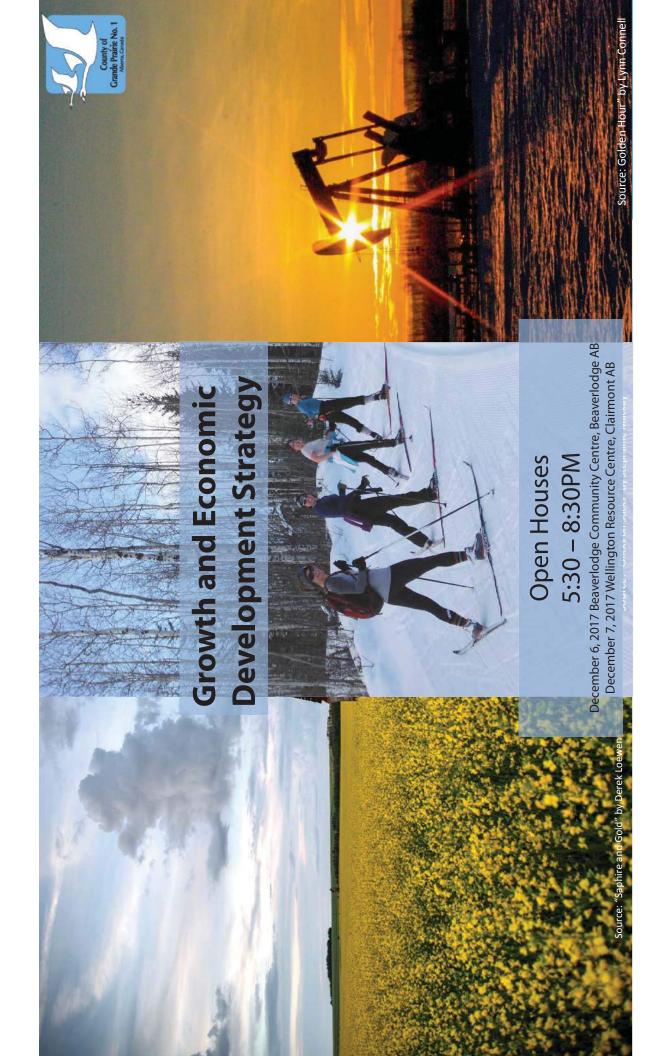
Phone: 780.423.6824 Fax: 1.855.611.8701

Email: marcelo@parioplan.com





**APPENDIX 2: OVERVIEW PRESENTATION** 



### Our Team



Environment

GIS Mapping/ Draffing

Public Engagement &

Communication



## Purpose of "The Strategy"



A Growth and Economic Development Strategy is a document that can be approved and adopted by how land in the County can best be utilized to create additional economic opportunities for the area. sustainable growth. The Growth and Economic Development Strategy also provides a framework for Council that provides a roadmap for attracting new investment and ensures long-term and

- To understand the current status of the County with respect to land uses, infrastructure, economic, and social considerations. ö
- To understand the current drivers and inhibitors of growth within the County and neighbouring communities, to better enable economic growth. ö
- To identify actions that could provide greater opportunity for the development of existing communities within the County. <u>.</u>
- To form the basis for input and feedback in conjunction with other County documentation on the forthcoming Upper Peace Regional Plan under the Provincial Land Use Framework. ن
- To develop an implementation plan on actions required to lead the County towards greater economic sustainability. ö



## **Work Plan**



### **Work Program**

August - October 2016

Phase 1

Project Initiation

October - March 2017

Phase 2

Baseline Analysis / Opportunities & Constraints

March - May 2017

Phase 3

Scenarios for the Future

May 2017 - January 2018

Phase 4

Growth & Economic Development Strategy

Where We Are

## Vision 2066



Prairie will have grown to a community of over 74,000 people and a model of sustainable development for the region. Building on Clairmont's transformation into a model "green community", the hamlets and rural areas "Capitalizing on its strategic location, as the "Middle of Everywhere", by the year 2066 the County of Grande of the County will become vibrant and desirable places to live, work, and play.

The traditional economic base of agriculture, oil and gas, forestry, and tourism will look to grow and diversify through innovation, the application of new technology, and value-added manufacturing. The County will continue to be open for business and foster collaboration with neighbouring municipalities by promoting economic development and efficient, cost effective delivery of physical and social infrastructure.

People will recognize that the County of Grande Prairie is an ideal place to invest, start a business, raise a family, and age in place."

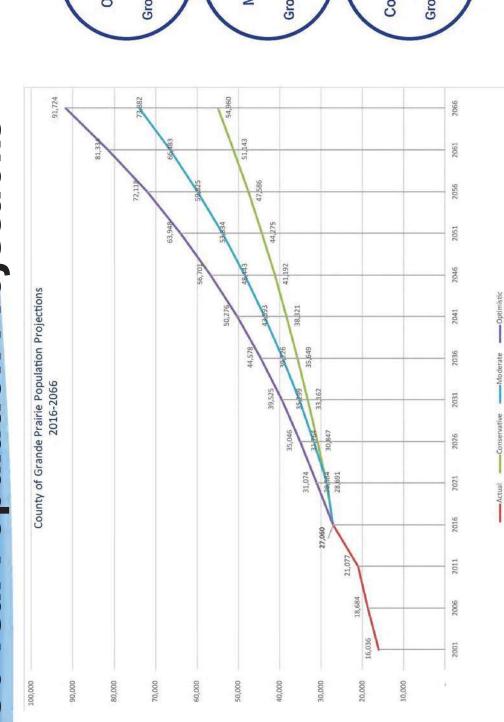


## **Guiding Principles**



- entrepreneurship. The County will continue to protect its natural environment and pursue Grow and diversify the County's economy through innovation, use of technology, and environmentally sustainable practices.
- Ensure that agriculture remains an important economic activity and way of life in the County by maintaining the Right to Farm and avoiding the premature fragmentation of farmland 7
- Through the provision of social infrastructure (i.e. health, education, recreation and cultural facilities and programming), the County will be a healthy, safe, and inclusive community that provides high quality of life for people of all ages. <u>~</u>
- Promote land use patterns that provide for the economic and responsible use of infrastructure and avoid land use conflicts. 4.
- The County will help facilitate regional partnerships with industry, neighbouring municipalities, and the provincial and federal orders of government to continue to develop a competitive, resilient, attractive, and liveable region. 5
- County Council and staff will endeavor to facilitate responsible, transparent and well-informed decision making based upon on-going public engagement to better understand the needs of County residents and ratepayers. 6

## 50 Year Population Projections





Moderate
2.0%
Growth / Year







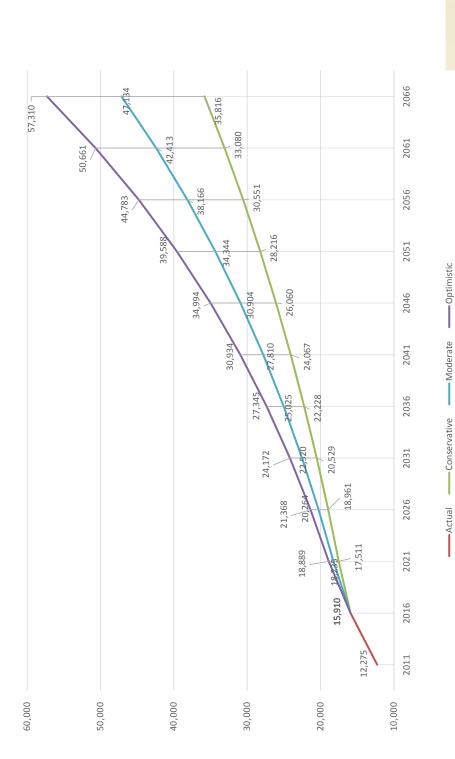


## 50 Year Employment Projections

County of Grande Prairie Employment Projections 2016-2066

70,000













### Land Requirements Residential

			Land Requirements	irements		
	Res	Residential	по	Commercial	uI	Industrial
Year	New Land (ha)	New Land (ha) Surplus/Deficit (ha)	New Land (ha)	New Land (ha) Surplus/Deficit (ha) New Land (ha) Surplus/Deficit (ha)	New Land (ha)	Surplus/Deficit (ha)
2016	0	,	0.0		0	
2021	586	8915	6.0	107.5	152	2101
2026	1139	7776	1.5	106.0	132	1968
2031	1270	9059	1.7	104.3	147	1821
2036	1397	5109	2.0	102.3	163	1658
2041	1541	3568	2.3	6.66	182	1476
2046	791	7772	2.7	97.2	202	1274
2051	1055	1722	3.2	94.1	224	1050
2056	1095	627	3.7	90.4	249	801
2061	1130	-504	4.3	86.0	277	524
2066	1161	-1665	5.0	81.0	308	216

# **Option 1: Balanced Growth - Preferred Option**



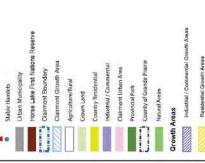






Growth Hamlets

Town of Sexsmith





Town of Wembley



Balanced Growth Option







File No.: 16-018



## Option 2: Nodal Growth

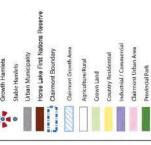












Town of Sexsmith



















































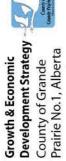
## Option 3: Concentrated Growth

















Town of Sexsmith









Town of Wembley

































Concentrated Growth Option







File No.: 16-018

# Infrastructure Gap Analysis - Transportation

Rge. Rd 70

PR BE

PRd 740

Twp.









**Growth Hamlet** 

Stable Hamlet

Horse Lake First Nations Reserve

Village of Hythe

Urban Municipality

Balanced Growth Option

Industrial/Commercial Growth Area

Residential Growth Area

Clairmont Growth Area

Grande Prairie Airport

Airfield/Runway

Helipad/Heliport

Proposed Bypass

Future Expressway

Multi-Lane Highway

Major Two-Lane Highway

Railway Extension

**ဓ** 

Twinning of Highway 43 to British Columbia Twinning of Highway 40 to Grande Cache

**Construction of the Grande Prairie Highway 43 Bypass** 

**Construction of the Highway 43X Beaverlodge Bypass** Construction of Rail Spurs to Industrial Growth Areas

**Expansion of the Grande Prairie Airport** 

# Infrastructure Gap Analysis - Water and Wastewater

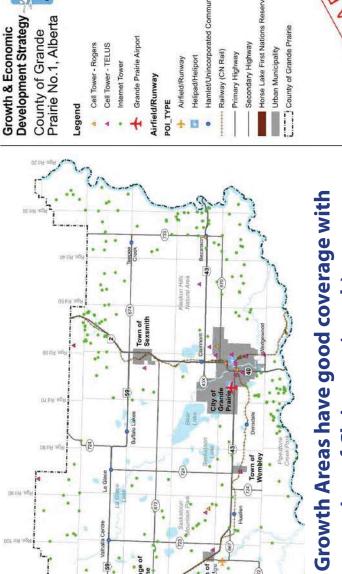


Area	Water Upgrades	Sewer Upgrades
Clairmont*	Water supply and Treatment Upgrades, Mercer Hill Reservoir, New transmission line from Grande Prairie, Extension to east.	Wastewater Treatment Upgrades, Regional Liftstation and Forcemain to GP
Sexsmith Fringe*	Booster station upgrade, Reservoir and Pumphouse Expansion	Lagoon Expansion
North of Sexsmith (Area A)*	Water Pipeline from Sexsmith, Reservoir and Pumphouse	No municipal service
Bezanson	Waterline from Grande Prairie	Lagoon Expansion
Grande Prairie Fringe (Area B)*	Water supply from Grande Prairie	Sewer Service from Grande Prairie
Dimsdale	Water pipeline from Grande Prairie, Reservoir and Pumphouse	No municipal service
Wembley Fringe*	Water pipeline from Grande Prairie, Reservoir and Pumphouse	Lagoon Expansion
Beaverlodge Fringe*	Water pipeline from Grande Prairie, Reservoir and Pumphouse	Lagoon Expansion
Hythe Fringe*	Water pipeline from Grande Prairie, Reservoir and Pumphouse	Lagoon Expansion
Saskatoon Mountain (Area C)	No municipal service	No municipal service
LaGlace	Water Treatment Plant and Distribution System	Lagoon Expansion
Teepee Creek, Valhalla Centre, Huallen	Maintain Existing service	Maintain Existing service
Farms	No municipal service	No municipal service



# Infrastructure Gap Analysis - Wireless





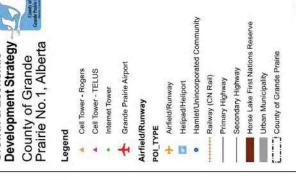
Red 740

Twp. Rd 720

Look for opportunities to share tower exception of Clairmont (north).

**Cellular, high speed internet providers will** space or land with WISP and cellular providers.

follow population centres.



Map 5

Utility Infrastructure Communication & Internet







# Sector Insights

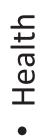




Energy

Forestry Tourism

Learning







### Energy





Petrochemical cluster

Partial upgrading

Geothermal

#### Challenges

Production cost pressures

Land use (fragmentation, ag conflict)

Talent

## Infrastructure Needs

Low tax business environment

**Broadband** coverage

Educational partnerships

Upgraded transportation infrastructure

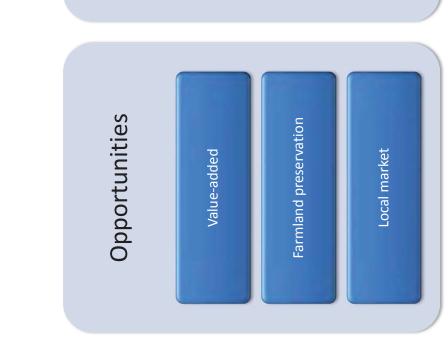
Affordable housing







## Agriculture



Challenges Liability insurance

Social value of farming

## Infrastructure Needs

support local Ag opportunities Zoning and bylaws needed to

**Partnerships** 

Regional marketing campaigns

regional multi-modal transportation Training and mentorship



### **Forestry**



Opportunities

Bioproducts

diversification Market

Challenges

Market access

Talent retention

Infrastructure Needs

**Broadband** coverage

partnerships Educational

**Transportation** 



### **Tourism**



Opportunities

Designing experiences

Outdoor experiences

Museum

Increasing number of operators

Challenges

Image

Tourism workforce

Infrastructure Needs

**Broadband** coverage

Transportation

Potable water

Resort development requirements



## Education



Opportunities

Tailored learning

Contract R&D

apprenticeships Internships &

Challenges

Local youth retention

Meeting industry needs

**Talent** 

Champions

Infrastructure Needs

**Broadband** coverage

Educational partnerships

Transportation

Vision of the County







#### Health

Opportunities

Physician admission rights in hospital

Homecare

Community care

Challenges

Talent retention

Infrastructure Needs

Regional cooperation

recreation programs Joint prevention and

**Educational Partnerships** 

**Broadband** 





# **Economic Opportunities**

Primary

Energy

Agriculture

Forestry

Secondary

Partial Upgrading

**Bio Industrial** 

**Bio Energy** 

Geothermal

Tertiary

**Health Services** 

**Education and Research** 

Transportation and Logistics

Service Automation

Retail and Commercial



# **Economic Development Strategies**



## Investment Attraction

- Leverage Strengths by attracting investments for regional productivity
- Strengthen retail and services investment attraction

#### Diversification

- Focus on value-added resource development
- Develop a Petrochemical sector strategy
- Develop a Clean Technology and Bio-Industrial sector strategy
- Develop a Tourism strategy
- Develop a Workforce strategy
- Strengthen business mentorship
- Identify economic resiliency lessons



# **Economic Development Strategies**



### Sustainability

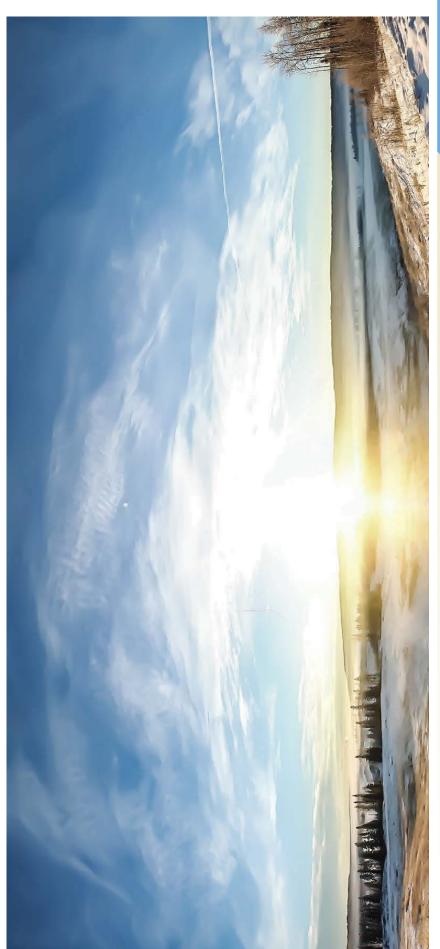
- Lead on the low carbon economy
- encourage business investment in productivity and competitiveness
- Strengthen access to markets

### Collaboration

- Provide strong regional leadership
- cities, hamlets and surrounding Strengthen relationships with counties
- Partner for growth



## Questions





**APPENDIX 3: EXIT SURVEY** 

#### **County of Grande Prairie No.1**



#### **Growth and Economic Development Strategy**

#### **Public Open House – Comment Sheet**

Beaverlodge Community Center, Beaverlodge, December 06, 2017 Wellington Resource Centre, Clairmont, December 07, 2017 Time: 5:30pm-8:30pm

Thank you for attending today's Open House. Your feedback is very important to us. The responses to the following questions should only take 7-10 minutes and will be used to determine community's acceptance of the Draft *Growth and Economic Development Strategy* for the County of Grande Prairie No.1 before advancing it to Council.

#### A. BALANCED GROWTH OPTION

After viewing the presentation by the Project Team as well as the presentation boards, please indicate the extent with which you agree or disagree with the following:

1. The Balanced Growth Option preserves prime agricultural land by appropriately identifying

	them and direc	ting development av	way from them whe	enever possible.	, , ,
	Strongly isagree	2 - Somewhat Disagree	3 - Neutral	4 - Somewhat Agree	5 - Strongly Agree
2. The Balanced Growth Option directs development away from <b>environmentally significa</b> within the County (eg. water bodies, wildlife habitat corridors, floodplain, etc.).					
	1-Strongly Disagree	2 - Somewhat Disagree	3 - Neutral	4 - Somewhat Agree	5 - Strongly Agree
3. The Balanced Growth Option provides majority of the residents of the County with access to wide range of <b>community services</b> (e.g.: Schools, recreational facilities, health care facilities etc.).					•
	1-Strongly Disagree	2 - Somewhat Disagree	3 - Neutral	4 - Somewhat Agree	5 - Strongly Agree



4.		Growth Option provi housing options (e.g	, ,		•
	1-Strongly Disagree	2 - Somewhat Disagree	3 - Neutral	4 - Somewhat Agree	5 - Strongly Agree
5.		Growth Option support them to grow.	orts the existing <b>har</b>	nlets and urban cent	tres and provides
	1-Strongly Disagree	2 - Somewhat Disagree	3 - Neutral	4 - Somewhat Agree	5 - Strongly Agree
	at extent you as	sentation by the Progree or disagree with	the following econ	omic development i	nitiatives:
		ege) partnerships for	·	_	
	L- Strongly Disagree	<ul><li>2 - Somewhat Disagree</li></ul>	3 - Neutral	4 - Somewhat Agree	5 - Strongly Agree
2.	County such a	nent attraction and re as but not limited to p duct development.		_	
	L- Strongly Disagree	2 - Somewhat Disagree	3 - Neutral	4 - Somewhat Agree	5 - Strongly Agree
•					



<ol><li>Work with the the County.</li></ol>	e provincial governme	ent and industry to a	chieve broadband co	overage throughout
1- Strongly Disagree	2 - Somewhat Disagree	3 - Neutral	4 - Somewhat Agree	5 - Strongly Agree
4. Work with the airport expan	e Grande Prairie Airpo sion.	ort and City of Grand	le Prairie to develop	a masterplan for
1- Strongly Disagree	2 - Somewhat Disagree	3 - Neutral	4 - Somewhat Agree	5 - Strongly Agree
5. Develop a ret	ail and office support	and recruitment pro	ogram.	
1- Strongly Disagree	2 - Somewhat Disagree	3 - Neutral	4 - Somewhat Agree	5 - Strongly Agree
6. Update the re products.	egional tourism strate	egies drawing on bes	t practices in tourism	n experience and
1- Strongly Disagree	2 - Somewhat Disagree	3 - Neutral	4 - Somewhat Agree	5 - Strongly Agree
	enhancing the low cases (e.g.: geothermal).	arbon economy by ir	ntensifying potential	investment
1- Strongly Disagree	2 - Somewhat Disagree	3 - Neutral	4 - Somewhat Agree	5 - Strongly Agree
8. Develop a reg Chamber of C	gional workforce strat Commerce.	egy with partners su	ich as Grande Prairie	College and
1- Strongly Disagree	2 - Somewhat Disagree	3 - Neutral	4 - Somewhat Agree	5 - Strongly Agree

C.	OTHER COMMENTS?	

#### D. OPEN HOUSE EVALUATION



Please let us know how we did tonight.

1. The Open Ho	use was well organize	d and informative.		
1-Strongly	2 - Somewhat	3 - Neutral	4 - Somewhat	5 - Strongly Agree
Disagree	Disagree		Agree	
2. The information	on presented was clea	r and relevant.		
1-Strongly Disagree	2 - Somewhat Disagree	3 - Neutral	4 - Somewhat Agree	5 - Strongly Agree
2. Opportunities	s to comment and ask	questions were pro	ovided.	
1-Strongly Disagree	2 - Somewhat Disagree	3 - Neutral	4 - Somewhat Agree	5 - Strongly Agree
4. Other Commo	ents:			

Thank you for providing feedback. Please leave your comment sheet with a County of Grande Prairie representative or Project Team member. If you wish to complete it later, you can drop it off at County of Grande Prairie Office or forward it to ParioPlan Inc. by <u>December 31, 2017</u>.

Pamela Nordin

Project Manager, County of Grande Prairie

Email: <a href="mailto:pnordin@countygp.ab.ca">pnordin@countygp.ab.ca</a>
Phone: 780-532-9722 ext. 1280
10001 - 84 Avenue, Clairmont, AB

T8X 5B2

Marcelo Figueira

Senior Planner, Project Manager

ParioPlan Inc.

Email: marcelo@parioplan.com Phone: 780-423-6824 drge #605, 10080 Jasper Avenue Edmonton, AB, T5J 1V9