

# **TOWN OF BLACKFALDS**



## **MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

**AUGUST 2009**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	PURPOSE.....	1
2	LAND USE CONCEPT .....	1
3	SUSTAINABLE URBAN FORM.....	2
4	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT .....	5
5	RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT .....	7
6	BUILT ENVIRONMENT (COMMUNITY IMAGE).....	11
7	OPEN SPACE .....	12
8	COMMUNITY FACILITIES.....	14
9	TRANSPORTATION.....	15
10	UTILITIES .....	16
11	INTERMUNICIPAL COOPERATION .....	18
12	IMPLEMENTATION .....	19
13	REVIEW AND AMENDMENT .....	20
	Map 1 – Significant Features .....	23
	Map 2 – Future Land Use Concept.....	24

## 1 PURPOSE

Section 632 of the Municipal Government Act, requires all municipalities with a population of 3,500 or more to prepare and adopt a Municipal Development Plan (MDP). The Act states that an MDP must address future land use and development, the provision of municipal services and facilities, the provision of transportation systems, open space and the coordination of future growth, land use and infrastructure with an adjoining municipality. The Act also indicates that an MDP may also address economic development, social, environmental and financial matters. Town Council recognizes the benefits of long range planning, and therefore have adopted this Municipal Development Plan.

**The purpose of Blackfalds' Municipal Development Plan is:**

- **To serve as a common guide for Council, subdivision and development authorities, municipal residents and businesses, and the development community, respecting Blackfalds' land use and development and by doing so promote orderly growth which is appropriate, sustainable and efficient, thus enhancing opportunities for business and the quality of life of residents.**

**Vision Theme:**

The Town of Blackfalds has adopted the following theme:

- **Blackfalds . . . . A Nice Place to Grow.**

This reflects the community's quality of life through its small town atmosphere and friendly nature, as well as its growth opportunities and the acceptability of appropriate growth.

**Vision Principles:**

The general theme is supported by eight Vision Principles:

- a. Blackfalds desires to retain its small town, family oriented atmosphere in which health, safety, viability and sustainability are cornerstones.
- b. Blackfalds desires to become the best place to live, focussing on excellence of service to families.
- c. Blackfalds desires to strengthen its economic base, welcoming new clean industries and a diversity of commercial enterprises.
- d. Blackfalds desires to grow in an orderly fashion, mindful of the environment, natural resources and major infrastructure surrounding the community.
- e. Blackfalds desires to enhance its visible image and quality of the built environment.
- f. Blackfalds desires to strengthen its residential character through an expanding variety of affordable housing and neighbourhoods.
- g. Blackfalds desires to retain fiscal prudence, providing a level of services and facilities within the financial means of the community.
- h. Blackfalds desires to cooperate with neighbouring municipalities, assisting all cooperating partners to thrive.

## 2 LAND USE CONCEPT

The Land Use Concept displayed in Map 2 indicates the Town of Blackfalds preferred long range growth and land use pattern. In allocating general land use areas, it provides approximate boundaries for the variety of land uses to be accommodated in the Town. Further definition of the pattern of land uses may be provided through Area Structure Plans, which can

provide more detailed land use directions for portions of the community. As a primary means of implementing the MDP, the Land Use Bylaw will determine more specific boundaries for land uses through the designation of land use districts. As well, the administration of the Land Use Bylaw will determine the mix of land uses within each of the general land use areas through decisions on permitted and discretionary uses within each of the land use districts.

The Land Use Concept recognizes the existing pattern of land uses, roads and utilities within the Town at the time of the preparation of the MDP. The Master Plan Growth and Infrastructure and the MDP Background Report document the growth and development history of the Town and provide the context and support for the Town's desire to grow and diversify. Additionally existing features within the Town have been illustrated on Map 1 – Significant Features, which may pose constraints on potential development. The land use concept considered alternate opportunities for urban expansion as affected by topography, the efficient extension of utilities, major transportation infrastructure and surrounding rural land uses and resources. Because communities evolve, and economic and social forces change, there will be a need for a periodic review of Blackfalds Land Use Concept to ensure it remains contemporary in its reflection of evolving realities and municipal aspirations.

The Land Use Concept is supported by the goals, objectives and policies presented in the succeeding sections of the Municipal Development Plan.

### **3 SUSTAINABLE URBAN FORM**

A sustainable community is continually adjusting to meet the social and economic needs of its residents while preserving the environments ability to support it. Growth and change may be ad hoc and undirected. However, a lack of reasonable growth management within a community can lead to land use conflicts, inefficient utility servicing patterns, uncoordinated road networks and environmental degradation, all working against a positive environment for economic sustainability and the general liveability of the community. A sustainable community uses its resources to meet current needs while ensuring that adequate resources are available for future generations focusing on balanced and sustainable development, land use compatibility, the retention of environmental quality and the effective and efficient provision of municipal services.

**Goal: To manage the growth rate and direction in accordance with the Town's ability to respond in a fiscally responsible manner while preserving the Town's sense of community.**

**Objectives:**

- To manage growth to ensure the Town becomes more financially, environmentally, and socially sustainable.
- To achieve a greater balance between residential and non-residential assessment.
- To facilitate orderly community growth and cost-effective urban expansion.
- To ensure the availability of land in various stages of readiness for current and future development.
- To provide land use directions for the community and its growth.
- To cooperate with Lacombe County in the coordination of growth, land use change and resource conservation.
- To encourage redevelopment of the downtown area.

## Policies

- 3.1 The Town will strive to increase the non-residential assessment base to 30% of total assessment.
- 3.2 Orderly urban expansion is to be promoted through the phased, cost effective expansion of roads and utilities.
- 3.3 Wherever possible, development is to be contiguous to existing built-up areas, unless otherwise provided for in an adopted area structure or intermunicipal development plan.
- 3.4 To ensure the provision of land suitable for development, in both the short and long term, the Town will:
  - a. Periodically update the Town's engineering study to provide overall direction for the provision of roads and utilities;
  - b. Coordinate the private sector's placement and sizing of utilities and alignment of roads and their standards to ensure the availability of serviced land for development and that the infrastructure accommodates the logical expansion of development areas; and,
  - c. Keep private landowners informed of long range growth patterns and land development needs.
- 3.5 Regarding the provision of roads and utilities, the Town:
  - a. Will rely primarily on the private sector to fulfill land development needs;
  - b. May undertake infrastructure and facility projects which facilitate or enhance development and quality of life;
  - c. Shall require a developer to enter into a development agreement or contract for the provision of services related to a proposed subdivision or development; and,
  - d. May require the oversizing of services by a developer in order to accommodate additional future development in the area.
- 3.6 All costs of development on private land and all applicable off-site development costs associated with the development of the land will be the responsibility of the developer, who at the Town's discretion may be required to enter into a development agreement with the Town.
- 3.7 The Town will seek effective consultation mechanisms with Lacombe County to:
  - a. Ensure the availability of land to accommodate Blackfalds' long range growth; and,
  - b. Coordinate mutually beneficial land use change, economic development and resource conservation in the fringe area of Blackfalds.
- 3.8 Wherever possible, the non-intensive agricultural use of land will be encouraged until the land is needed for urban development purposes.
- 3.9 The Town shall have regard for the preservation of agricultural land and the protection of the right to farm when considering applications for subdivision and development adjacent to agricultural operations.

- 3.10 Pursuant to Bill 202 (Farming Practices Protection Act), the Town shall provide a notice to accompany subdivision and development approvals for residential purposes, which lie immediately adjacent to or within an Agricultural District. The notice shall advise the applicant that the primary purpose of the Agricultural District is to support agriculture and that agricultural operations have precedence over any other form of land use.
- 3.11 Blackfalds' growth and development should be monitored in relation to:
- a. The supply of serviced and non-serviced land;
  - b. The capacity of the water, sewer and storm water systems;
  - c. Highway access and safety;
  - d. Internal traffic patterns;
  - e. Adequacy of parks and open space; and,
  - f. Any other matter as deemed appropriate by Council.
- 3.12 In considering a proposal to redesignate, subdivide or develop land, the following matters should be considered where applicable:
- a. The type and scale of the proposed use or uses;
  - b. The suitability of the site for the proposed use or uses;
  - c. Site design, where applicable, with respect to natural topography and treed areas, as well as landscape features, including wetlands and steep slopes;
  - d. Compatibility of the proposal with surrounding existing and potential land uses;
  - e. Proposed access, including the pattern and standards of roads, as well as intersection treatment;
  - f. Impacts on the municipal road system;
  - g. The availability of utility services;
  - h. Provision of open space in terms of public access and use, where applicable;
  - i. The adequacy of parcel sizes to reasonably provide for the intended use;
  - j. Design and appearance;
  - k. Consistency with provisions contained in this Plan, any other applicable statutory plan and Land Use Bylaw;
  - l. Proximity to gas wells and pipelines, oil wells and pipelines, wastewater treatment facilities, solid waste handling facilities and water supply facilities;
  - m. Effects on non-renewable resources;
  - n. The need for the development and the benefits the development would bring to the community; and,
  - o. Any other matters deemed relevant by the Town.
- 3.13 Condominium proposals will be treated in the same manner and be subject to the same location and assessment criteria as proposals for separate title. Condominium development must conform with the requirements of the Condominium Property Act, and its amendments.
- 3.14 Prior to consideration of third reading of a bylaw to amend the Land Use Bylaw, the Town may require the applicant to:
- a. Submit an application for development permit; or,
  - b. Enter discussions with the Town with respect to the conditions under which any related development may occur; or,

- c. Otherwise assure the Town that any related development will be carried out to the satisfaction of the Town and that the development is not proposed for land speculation purposes.

3.15 The Town will establish, and periodically review and amend, its detailed requirements respecting road, trail and parking facility construction, utility installation, off-site levy payment, security provisions and other pertinent matters in agreements entered into with prospective developers.

## **4 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

The Town of Blackfalds is essentially a residential community. While this has positive attributes pertaining to living in a small town, the high proportion of residential assessment is required to carry the majority of the cost of municipal services. To create and maintain a sustainable economy the Town must insure that capital is invested in the community and that the Town attract new businesses while enhancing conditions for existing ones. More sustainable growth, will not only provide greater local employment opportunities, but also additional municipal revenues to assist in the provision, upkeep and improvement of municipal services. More jobs within the community provide employment options for residents and contribute to economic prosperity. Furthermore, the availability of jobs in a community can also encourage people to live and work in the same community, which contributes to a better quality of life and encourages people to spend more money locally. However, economic growth at the expense of environmental degradation or community liveability is also harmful. Therefore, balanced growth through the attraction of clean and attractive economic development to suitable locations in the Town is desirable.

**Goal: To diversify the economic base of the Town and surrounding region.**

**Objectives:**

- To increase local employment opportunities.
- To facilitate the retention and expansion of existing businesses and attraction of new businesses.
- To increase effective consultation with neighbouring municipalities, provincial agencies and the private sector regarding the economic diversification in the Town and region.
- To beautify the downtown commercial core.
- To provide alternate areas for commercial development.
- To ensure an adequate supply of industrial land.
- To cooperate with Lacombe County in facilitating industrial development.

**Policies**

- 4.1 The Town will monitor the total number of local employment opportunities and strive to achieve a ratio of jobs to employable adults of 0.85.
- 4.2 The Town supports the diversification of the economic base of Blackfalds and the surrounding region through the development and expansion of mutually compatible economic activities in an environmentally responsible manner.

- 4.3 In the pursuit of forms of economic development compatible with the character and aspirations of the Town, the Town will encourage and facilitate as necessary consultation and cooperation among, the industrial sector, the business community, developers, owners of land intended for commercial and economic development, Lacombe County, and other stakeholders and interest groups to identify and pursue a sustainable economic development strategy.
- 4.4 In encouraging commercial development, commercial uses will be directed to appropriate commercial areas as shown in Figure 1, or as otherwise illustrated in an approved Area Structure Plan.
  - a. The central commercial area;
  - b. A transitional commercial area, which may contain both commercial and residential uses as permitted uses;
  - c. Highway commercial areas;
  - d. Business park areas; and,
  - e. Local commercial sites as provided for in Figure 1 or as may be shown in an Area Structure Plan, an Outline Plan approved by Council or designated in the Land Use Bylaw.
- 4.5 The Town encourages the improvement of the visual appearance of the central commercial area, including the gradual replacement of houses with new commercial structures or the renovation and upgrading of existing residential structures to accommodate commercial activities.
- 4.6 To facilitate possible improvements in the central commercial core, the Town will work with developers, downtown businesses, and the general public to undertake designs for optional streetscape improvements, pedestrian movement, traffic patterns, parking provisions and mix of housing provisions in consultation with central commercial area businesses and interested citizens.
- 4.7 The Town will undertake an Area Redevelopment Plan for the downtown area outlining a community vision for the long-term growth and development of the area.
- 4.8 Highway Commercial Development:
  - a. Will have controlled access from highways and collectors;
  - b. Must maintain a high visual standard, including landscaping, as defined in the Land Use Bylaw; and;
  - c. Shall not have flashing lights or other visual distractions that may endanger the safety of the traveling public.
- 4.9 Local commercial sites may be permitted in or adjacent to residential areas at the intersection of a collector road with an arterial road or another collector road, but the number of sites, the size of a site and design and appearance of the site development must be in keeping with the residential character of the area.
- 4.10 A commercial activity may be permitted as a discretionary use in an industrial area if:
  - a. The commercial use is directly related to the principle industrial use and the area of commercial activity is minor; or,
  - b. The commercial use primarily serves the workers and business in the industrial area.

- 4.11 Industrial development is encouraged in accordance with the provisions of this Plan and shall be directed to industrial areas as shown in Map 2. An Area Structure Plan may be required to guide the creation or expansion of industrial areas.
- 4.12 In order to expand opportunities for economic development Council may encourage the development of Business Parks that provide a compatible mix of light industrial, office and commercial uses. An Area Structure Plan may be required to guide the creation or expansion of business parks.
- 4.13 While a broad range of industrial development should be accommodated, industries, which in the opinion of the Town detracts from the community's character, quality of life for its residents, or unduly impact the environment or the Town's infrastructure, may not be permitted.
- 4.14 Heavy industries shall be directed away from residential areas, recreation and institutional facilities and commercial districts, and shall be separated from non-industrial uses by light industrial land uses or by landscaped screens and buffers, or both. In this regard, any industrial land adjacent to the east side of Broadway Avenue south of the cemetery should be designated light industrial.
- 4.15 Industries, which involve the use or storage of hazardous materials, should not be permitted in proximity to residential, recreational and institutional land uses.
- 4.16 Sand and gravel extraction operations may be approved only in accordance with applicable Provincial regulations or similar standards and requirements the Town may wish to apply. In order to assess a proposal to redesignate, subdivide or develop land for an extractive resource operation, the Town may require the submission of a report and other information which may include any or all of the following:
  - a. Proposed method and phasing of the operation;
  - b. Operating regime, including days of the week and hours during the day;
  - c. Impacts on surrounding land uses and proposed measures to minimize impacts, including screening and noise attenuation measures;
  - d. Impacts on the environment, and proposed measures to minimize and mitigate impacts;
  - e. Site accessibility and road suitability to accommodate traffic generated by the operation, as well as proposals to upgrade and maintain roads;
  - f. Comments by or copies of the necessary permits and approvals from appropriate provincial agencies; and,
  - g. Any other matter or information deemed appropriate by the Town.

## **5 RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT**

Many residents have chosen to live in Blackfalds because of its proximity to employment opportunities in Red Deer and the surrounding area and the advantages offered by living in a smaller town. While growth is desired, residents have stated growth should not be at the cost of Blackfalds' small town atmosphere. Therefore, it is important to guide residential development in a way that provides affordable housing choices in attractive neighbourhoods while retaining the essence of Blackfalds as a "nice place to grow".

**Goal: To maintain the small town residential character of neighbourhoods while accommodating a diversity of housing.**

## Objectives:

- To ensure an adequate supply of land appropriately located for residential development.
- To accommodate residential expansion in neighbourhood settings which provide suitable amenities and services.
- To promote a mix of housing to meet a variety of life style and life cycle demands.

## Policies

- 5.1 Future residential expansion shall be directed to the residential areas generally shown on the Future Land Use Concept Map (Map 2).
- 5.2 The Town will provide opportunities for a range of housing types and parcel sizes in residential areas through the appropriate distribution of the residential land use districts contained in the Land Use Bylaw.
- 5.3 The residential density for new neighbourhoods shall be a minimum of 10 residential units per gross developable hectare (4 per gross developable acre) and up to a maximum of 17 residential units per gross developable hectare (7 per gross developable acre).
- 5.4 In considering development proposals for densities beyond 12.5 residential units per gross developable hectare (5 per gross developable acre) the Town shall evaluate the merits of the proposal during the Area Structure Plan development process based on the following general criteria:
  - a. The scale and character of adjacent neighbourhoods;
  - b. The predicted traffic generated by the proposal and the ability of the municipal road network to accommodate it;
  - c. The predicted impacts on water, wastewater, and storm water and the available capacity of municipal networks to accommodate the increase in demand;
  - d. The predicted impacts on community services and the Town's ability to meet the increased demand;
  - e. The extent to which the proposal provides for recreation facilities;
  - f. The extent to which the proposal incorporates multi-modal transportation facilities into the overall transportation network and the linkages it provides to off-site facilities;
  - g. The extent to which the proposal demonstrates the use of sustainable development practices, including but not limited to water conservation, energy efficiency and decreased use of impervious surfaces; and
  - h. Any other matter deemed appropriate by the Town.
- 5.5 Notwithstanding the defined maximum density the Town may approve a development in excess of 17 residential units per gross developable hectare (7 per gross developable acre) provided it is defined within an approved Area Structure Plan.
- 5.6 The Town shall require a mix of housing types and forms in all residential neighbourhoods and avoid excessive concentration of any single type of housing. The actual mix shall be determined through the process to prepare an Area Structure Plan.

- 5.7 To retain the character of the older neighbourhoods, the retention of the existing form of housing is preferred. If older structures require replacement, only new residences of the same form will be allowed unless Council redesignates the land upon feeling assured that a residential structure of higher density would be in keeping with the character of the neighbourhood, especially the local street and nearby dwellings.
- 5.8 Multiple family housing sites (i.e. row house, apartment, integrated multiple housing developments) may be accommodated within a neighbourhood in a number of suitable locations, which may contain one or more compatible developments, but each location should not exceed 1.75 hectares (4.32 acres) unless special site characteristics or design features will reasonably accommodate larger sites within the context of the characteristics of the neighbourhood and surrounding land uses. Except for apartments, densities on multiple family housing sites should not exceed 30 units per net hectare (12 units per net acre).
- 5.9 Factors to be considered in the potential approval of any site for multiple family housing, including any possible redevelopment of existing housing areas are:
- a. Direction provided in an approved Area Structure Plan;
  - b. Direct access to a collector or arterial road;
  - c. Convenient access to institutional, recreational and community facilities and open space;
  - d. Existing housing area suitable for increased residential density;
  - e. Compatibility (e.g. height, volume, appearance) with existing housing;
  - f. Proximity to commercial services and facilities;
  - g. Potential impact of additional traffic on adjacent development;
  - h. Availability of space on site to meet parking requirements;
  - i. The development does not isolate a single lot such that it could not be subsequently redeveloped; and.
  - j. The presence of other medium and high-density buildings on the block face.
- 5.10 In a commercial district, one or more residential dwelling units may be permitted above the ground floor commercial development where so provided for in the Land Use Bylaw.
- 5.11 In recognizing the need for special housing for seniors and the disadvantaged, the Town should:
- a. Continue to monitor the demand for and supply of special housing; and,
  - b. Encourage senior government and agencies to provide housing in response to needs.
- 5.12 In recognizing the demand for special needs housing the Town shall continue to encourage new development to provide opportunities for housing special needs populations and establishing other care facilities within:
- a. The central commercial area; and,
  - b. In other locations within the community within proximity to commercial, cultural, recreation facilities and the open space network.

- 5.13 Home-based businesses may be allowed in residential areas subject to the relevant provisions in the Land Use Bylaw. When any home occupation evolves in a manner, which outgrows the general function of a residential area or creates negative impacts on surrounding residents or residential properties, the home occupation should be required to relocate to an appropriately designated site.
- 5.14 Manufactured homes may be permitted only:
- a. As replacements for units in existing manufactured home communities; or,
  - b. On individual lots within existing neighbourhoods provided the unit is suitably integrated with the design and character of the surrounding houses; or
  - c. On individual lots and only when part of a comprehensively designed manufactured home subdivision that is suitably integrated with the design and character of the residential neighbourhood.
- 5.15 A new manufactured home community and/or park will not be permitted unless Council views, through an Area Structure Plan or amendment thereto, special circumstances warrant such development of a particular site. An existing manufactured home community may be redeveloped for other forms of residential development, or other appropriate use, compatible with adjacent uses if an Area Structure Plan for the change in use is approved by Council.
- 5.16 Area Structure Plans may be required to guide the expansion of residential lands. Each application for a multi-lot subdivision shall complete a site specific Area Structure Plan or Outline Plan which, among other factors, provides information in regard to:
- a. The number and size of parcels being created;
  - b. Internal vehicle and pedestrian circulation;
  - c. Environmental sensitivity and constraints;
  - d. Provision of servicing, including the impact of the subdivision on external roads;
  - e. The provision of and impact on local community services;
  - f. Identify and deal with any legitimate concerns of adjacent landowners; and,
  - g. The provision of municipal and/or environmental reserve.
- 5.17 The requirement for either an Area Structure Plan or Outline Plan will be at the discretion of Planning and Development Manager.
- 5.18 The Town will require a high standard of subdivision design in order to promote the efficient use of land, roads and utilities, compatibility between housing types and other land uses and an aesthetically pleasing residential environment.
- 5.19 Subdivision designs should:
- a. Provide for varied lot sizes to accommodate different housing types and designs;
  - b. Minimize through traffic on local streets;
  - c. Provide sufficient on-site parking;
  - d. Encourage the retention of natural amenities;
  - e. Accommodate a large central park and where appropriate some strategically located smaller park spaces;
  - f. Provide a pathway system linking parks and community facilities as outlined in the Trails Master Plan;

- g. Provide for lanes (alleys), although laneless lots may be required when backing onto parks or major roads, in which cases the lots should have greater depth;
  - h. By means of buffers or distance separate land uses of lesser compatibility;
  - i. Provide, wherever possible, noise attenuation devices and/or visual screens between housing areas and major infrastructure and industrial areas; and,
  - j. Promote high visual standards, in part by the provision of street landscaping.
- 5.20 Residential development should have a visually pleasing appearance, whether as an individual structure or as part of an integrated grouping, and be in keeping with existing adjacent development.

## **6 BUILT ENVIRONMENT (COMMUNITY IMAGE)**

Although the real essence of a community is the well being of its residents, programs and services, the way a community looks greatly contributes to its sense of liveability. Widespread areas of run-down development, incoherent mixtures of land uses, bland or overly uniform development and lack of green and living landscapes run counter to a positive, healthy and desirable community image. It is important that standards be set and pursued to provide an attractive, vibrant community image wherein the built environment respects and meshes with the natural environment.

**Goal: To integrate the parkland setting into the community while enhancing the visual image of the Town.**

### **Objectives:**

- To enhance the appearance of the Town along its major arterials.
- To maintain heritage buildings.
- To green the community through an arbor program.
- To beautify the community.

### **Policies**

- 6.1 The Town will continue to require development and landscape standards for lands along Highway 2 and 2A and Secondary Highway 597 and will encourage similar action through cooperative measures with Lacombe County. All development adjacent to Highways 2 and 2A and Secondary Highway 597 will require higher design and landscaping standards as described in the Land Use Bylaw.
- 6.2 The Town may identify structures, which are deemed to have heritage merit and seek to encourage successive owners of these structures to maintain the buildings in a manner that conserves the heritage essence of the structures.
- 6.3 The Town will encourage the upkeep and improvement of the appearance of all buildings and will require a high standard of development in new areas.
- 6.4 Through the Land Use Bylaw architectural controls may be established in order to guide the development and appearance of any building, including but not restricted to: shape, scale and mass; appearance including colour and the type of façade materials; roof lines and projections; signs; and lighting.

- 6.5 The Town's Land Use Bylaw will provide for signage throughout the community which is meaningful and effective without being visually obtrusive.
- 6.6 To complement the built environment and promote its integration with the parkland setting of Blackfalds, the Town will:
- a. Encourage selective tree planting in developed private lands throughout the community; and,
  - b. Consider a tree planting program for municipal boulevards, parks and other lands as may be deemed appropriate through the Open Space Master Plan.
- 6.7 The Town shall encourage new development to use Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) in the design of new developments to avoid the creation of areas hidden from view and isolated spaces, as well as provide clear sightlines, sufficient lighting and promote natural surveillance throughout the Town.
- 6.8 The Town shall encourage developers and builders to follow the voluntary LEEDTM green building rating system administered by the Canadian Green Building Council or follow sustainable building practices compatible with LEEDTM standards. Sustainable building practices include:
- Minimizing storm water volumes through the installation of roof top gardens or on-site cisterns;
  - Installing water saving plumbing fixtures;
  - Using water efficient landscaping;
  - Increasing energy performance through reduction in demand, harvesting site energy and efficient building design;
  - Reducing waste by extending the life of existing buildings and using local and recycled building materials;
  - Improving indoor environmental quality through efficient heating and ventilation; and
  - Reducing light pollution and energy costs by installing outdoor lights that are designed to minimize escape of light to the sky or beyond the site.

## 7 OPEN SPACE

The provision of open spaces, both „wild“ and constructed, adds significantly to its character and liveability. Open space not only improves the physical appearance and vitality of a community – especially its residential neighbourhoods – but, more importantly, contributes to the physical and mental health of residents. Playgrounds, parks and natural spaces, connected by a series of linked pathways, are extremely important elements in community growth. Planning for a range and distribution of accessible open spaces for all ages to enjoy and interact, serves to greatly promote community satisfaction, while also attracting new residents.

**Goal: To provide public parks, recreation areas and related facilities, which meet the growing needs of the community, while also retaining natural landscape features.**

**Objectives:**

- To conserve and sensitively utilize natural features as an integral part of the community open space system.
- To provide effective open space areas mindful of the needs of residents and visitors.

- To effectively link open spaces and community facilities by a safe trail network.

## **Policies**

- 7.1 A variety of parks, including tot lots and playgrounds, must be integrated into residential development areas.
- 7.2 Regarding the provision of open spaces:
  - a. Playgrounds and tot lots should be located on local residential streets and accessible to the immediate neighbourhood; and,
  - b. Neighbourhood parks should be centrally located and be accessible to the entire neighbourhood.
- 7.3 For all new development the provision of open spaces shall be guided by the Facility and Parks Needs Assessment Master Plan or as otherwise provided for in an approved Area Structure Plan.
- 7.4 The Town will encourage the development of an integrated trail system for pedestrians and/or bicycles to provide linkages between open spaces, both built and natural, community facilities, schools, the central commercial core and housing areas.
- 7.5 The Town will endeavour to cooperate with the Wolf Creek Regional Division and the Red Deer Catholic School Division regarding:
  - a. The joint use of existing school sites and lands for education and for community recreation activities; and,
  - b. The dedication of reserve land, should the need arise, to accommodate a school facility where the site would be jointly used for school and community recreation purposes.
- 7.6 When subdivision occurs, the municipality will require, through the Subdivision Approving Authority, its full reserve dedication entitlement (10%) under the Municipal Government Act. Reserves not otherwise taken will be deferred as provided for in the Municipal Government Act.
- 7.7 When Municipal Reserve is to be deferred to the balance of a parcel being subdivided as per the Act, a Deferred Reserve Caveat will be issued for the entire outstanding balance of municipal reserve owing to the parcel.
- 7.8 In residential areas, the Town will generally require that the Municipal Reserve entitlement be dedicated as land.
- 7.9 In commercial and industrial areas, the dedication of some reserve lands for buffering purposes may be approved where proximity to residential or other areas requiring some separation is desirable. Otherwise, reserves owing should be taken in the form of money-in-lieu and the funds used to enhance and upgrade other reserve lands throughout the Town, unless an Area Structure Plan or Outline Plan approved by Council requires the dedication of land for park purposes.
- 7.10 If the applicant and the Town cannot agree on a land value for the amount of Municipal Reserve owing, the applicant must provide a market value appraisal, certified by a qualified appraiser.

- 7.11 Environmental reserve dedication will be required for the features shown on Map 2, when subdivision occurs around those features. Designs for expanding development should seek to conserve major natural tree stands and maintain vegetation on areas of steeper slopes to prevent erosion.
- 7.12 Alberta Environmental Protection's Interim Guideline for the Subdivision of Land Adjacent to Steep Slopes (to define and protect the valley crest and toe of slope) will apply so that no development will be permitted within 15 metres (50 feet) from the top or bottom of a slope, which exceeds a 15 percent grade. This distance may be reduced based on a report, from a qualified geotechnical consultant, which provides a specific recommendation for a lesser distance.
- 7.13 A minimum environmental setback of 15 metres (50 feet) from the high water mark of a Crown owned water body will be applied, subject to the discretion of the Subdivision Authority.
- 7.14 Environmental setbacks should be established as part of the Area Structure Plan or Outline Plan approval process.
- 7.15 Those environmentally significant areas that link to municipal reserve parcels or are necessary to provide public access should be dedicated as Environmental Reserve at the time of subdivision.
- 7.16 Those areas not suitable for development and where public access is not desired may be protected either as an Environmental Reserve Easement or as a Conservation Easement. The control and operation of these areas should be clearly stated in the easement agreement.
- 7.17 The Town will enter discussions with Lacombe County, provincial departments, other effected authorities and landowners to explore the creation of a regional park south of Blackfalds to connect the Town to the Blindman River, and eventually the expanding City of Red Deer Trail system, especially utilizing lands disturbed by gravel operations.
- 7.18 The Town may dispose of a reserve area, other than environmental reserve, if the size or shape of the reserve area make it ineffective for use as open space and other open space performing the same function is reasonably close by. The funds gained from the sale of the reserve are to be used to expand or improve other reserve land in the Town.

## **8 COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

The maintenance and improvement of the quality of life in Blackfalds is important to community development. An important aspect of this is the provision and maintenance of a broad range of community facilities. Current growth pressures and funding increases to providers of education and other services present positive challenges to the Town and other service providers, to expand service levels and locate community facilities to meet the growing needs of the community.

**Goal: To provide a range of facilities which enhance the liveability of Blackfalds.**

**Objectives:**

- To provide quality, accessible education, recreation and facilities.
- To promote a high level of community involvement.

## **Policies**

- 8.1 The Town ultimately desires the provision within the community of school facilities for Early Childhood Education to Grade 12; whatever facilities and programs are provided for the Town's children, the Town emphasizes that the school authority needs to provide excellence in education.
- 8.2 The Town purposes to maintain and improve as necessary the quality of its existing recreation facilities (e.g. ball diamonds, arena, community hall) and will expand and diversify its range of facilities when finances become available.
- 8.3 The Town desires the library facility and library programs to be enhanced.
- 8.4 The Town will endeavour to work with the appropriate agencies and authorities to provide and maintain highly adequate emergency and protective services, including RCMP, fire protection, ambulance service, 911 and safety codes.
- 8.5 The Town will continue to seek the location of a health service office in the community.
- 8.6 The Town will continue to monitor special social service needs and to work with the applicable authorities to ensure these services are available as needed by community residents.
- 8.7 When considering plans for development of lands near the cemetery, the Town will require the plans to accommodate the future expansion of the cemetery.

## **9 TRANSPORTATION**

One of the most visible components of a community is its road system. The general degree of maintenance and road safety, together with efficient inner community road patterns and external linkages are often measures of community services and planning. Poorly maintained street patterns that do not effectively separate traffic types or promote efficient travel not only frustrate residents, but also do not serve to attract development. Therefore, a planned hierarchy of internal roads and external community linkages, all maintained in good repair, is important to residents and businesses alike. As well, with a main rail line running through Blackfalds, safe rail crossings are important.

**Goal: To provide an effective and safe transportation system.**

### **Objectives:**

- To develop a roadway network which is efficient, safe and supports orderly land use development.
- To minimize the impact of the railway on adjacent land uses while accommodating safe vehicular and pedestrian crossings.
- To ensure the provision of adequate parking in all development.

### **Policies**

- 9.1 The provision of major roads and truck routes will be guided by the generalized road network provided in Map 2. While this plan indicates the hierarchy and alignment of major roads, including major intersections, their exact location and provision are to be guided by more detailed studies, statutory plans or outline plans approved by Council or recommendations from municipal advisors.

- 9.2 The design and installation of roadways shall be subject to the requirements of the Town of Blackfalds Minimum Design Standards for Development and amendments or updates thereto, unless otherwise approved by the Town.
- 9.3 The Town supports continued upgrading of Highway 2A to eventual four lane status through Blackfalds, with appropriate treatment of the major intersections shown on Map 2.
- 9.4 In residential subdivisions, rear lanes are to be provided unless an Area Structure Plan or Outline Plan approved by Council provides for laneless lots, usually adjacent to parks and natural open spaces. Each laneless residential parcel must be of sufficient width to accommodate a driveway to the rear yard, unless an attached front garage is to be provided as part of the residence to be constructed on the parcel.
- 9.5 Noise attenuation measures should be provided to lessen sound from highways, major roads, railways and major industries on adjacent residential areas.
- 9.6 Additional development setbacks will be required for properties adjacent to highways and arterial roads, and may be required along collector roads, as identified in the Land Use Bylaw.
- 9.7 Wherever possible, when a road is being extended or rebuilt, concurrent work on upgrading and/or extending of utility services should also be undertaken.
- 9.8 The Town will continue to monitor on a periodic basis:
  - a. Road traffic, especially on collectors and arterials, to ensure adequate standards are present; and,
  - b. Road crossings over the railway to assist in ensuring safety for the traveling public.
- 9.9 The Town will assist in maintaining safe railway crossing provisions by controlling development adjacent to crossings to ensure adequate lines of view of railway traffic are maintained for motorists.
- 9.10 The Town will continue to monitor the speed of trains through Blackfalds and impress upon CP Rail and the Canadian Transport Commission that regulated standards should not be exceeded.

## 10 UTILITIES

Contemporary urban communities require modern utilities to not only meet increasingly higher standards, but also to effectively serve and guide community development. While Blackfalds has reasonably provided a broad range of utility services throughout the years, community growth is now stretching the limits of service capabilities requiring significant upgrades or extensions. In order to promote and guide cost effective urban growth, it is important to plan for the integrated expansion and upgrading of utility services. While the Town should provide overall servicing directions, and key utility infrastructure, in order to reduce the financial commitment of the Town it is important that costs are recovered through off-site levies and user fees. Site development needs are to be the responsibility of private land developers.

**Goal: To provide and maintain an effective and efficient system of municipal utilities.**

**Objectives:**

- To ensure the availability of efficient and safe municipal utilities with adequate capacities to support present needs as well as future growth.
- To promote the use of conservation practices to reduce utility consumption and impacts on the environment.

## **Policies**

- 10.1 The Town should guide the provision of utility services to expanding and redeveloping portions of the community through the appropriate updating of the Town's:
- a. Growth and Infrastructure Master Plan and,
  - b. Design Guideline Manual.
- 10.2 The design and installation of utilities shall be subject to the requirements of the Town of Blackfalds Minimum Design Standards for Development and amendments or updates thereto, unless otherwise approved by the Town.
- 10.3 Notwithstanding Section 10.2, the Town may accept industrial development on larger parcels of land not serviced by all municipal utilities. However, a condition of development in these areas will be the entering of a deferred servicing agreement whereby the subject development will be required to connect to municipal services when they are available.
- 10.4 For an area where municipal sewer or water utility services are not to be required initially, an applicant may be required as part of a land use redesignation, subdivision or development application to submit a report from a qualified consultant which identifies:
- a. Soil and groundwater conditions;
  - b. Design requirements for septic fields or, where necessary, a recommended alternate means of on-site sewage disposal;
  - c. Adequacy of potable water and the proposed method of providing water; and,
  - d. The proposed method of managing stormwater, including conveyance systems and storage facilities.
- When required, this report shall be based upon reviews of groundwater information, or through test wells when deemed necessary by the Town, and soil percolation, near surface water and other tests that may be required by the Town, all of which are to be undertaken by a qualified consultant.
- 10.5 Developers will be solely responsible for the installation to municipal standards of utilities required by the Town to service their subdivision and/or development. Additional costs to oversize utilities may be assumed by the Town and subsequently charged to future developments connecting to the oversized system.
- 10.6 The Town will coordinate the provision of utility services such that:
- a. Utility system extensions are in accordance with engineering plans for the Town;
  - b. Utility service extensions are appropriate for the staging of development in a cost effective manner; and,
  - c. The sizing of utility system extensions will facilitate future development patterns.
- 10.7 The Town shall recover from developers on a proportionate basis the costs of off-site infrastructure services.

- 10.8 The Town shall continue implementing, by bylaw, off site levies to recover the capital cost of providing sanitary sewer, water or storm water systems to developments.
- 10.9 Through an intermunicipal plan subdivision and development referrals from Lacombe County and/or annexation the Town will seek to preserve the quality and quantity of its groundwater supplies.
- 10.10 Inappropriate subdivision and development will not be permitted to encroach upon the existing and future working area of the Town's wastewater treatment facility.
- 10.11 The Town will extend and upgrade its storm water system as required to ensure an effective and environmentally responsible system.
- 10.12 The high-pressure natural gas pipeline in east Blackfalds will be protected from encroachment by development.
- 10.13 The Town will apply ERCB regulations and guidelines respecting sour gas, and other oil and gas facilities, including pipelines, when considering subdivision and/or development.

**11 INTERMUNICIPAL COOPERATION**

Blackfalds is neither an isolated island nor entity unto itself, but one surrounded by another municipality and close to others that share similar concerns and needs. By dealing with land use, economic development, the provision of roads and services and resource conservation on its own, a municipality not only increases its individual responsibilities and costs, but may often work at cross-purposes with the activities of adjoining and nearby municipalities and agencies. Consultation and cooperation should serve to more effectively blend and complement land use directions, efforts to achieve economic development and conserve resources, while promoting efficiency in the provision of roads and services.

**Goal: To undertake cooperative planning mechanisms with Lacombe County.**

**Objectives:**

- To coordinate land use policies for the fringe area of Blackfalds that is mutually beneficial to the Town and County.
- To ensure the availability of lands for the long-term growth of Blackfalds.
- To coordinate the provision of roads, facilities and services.

**Policies**

- 11.1 The Town will continue to implement the Intermunicipal Development Plan in cooperation with Lacombe County with the intention of:
  - a. Periodically reviewing the intermunicipal development plan; and,
  - b. Jointly amending the plan, as necessary, from time to time.
- 11.2 Should the County at some time withdraw from the adopted intermunicipal development plan, the Town will seek other avenues of cooperation with the County, but will insist that the County's municipal development plan embraces Blackfalds' needs and interests in future growth, development and infrastructure coordination.
- 11.3 If suitable areas within the Town are unavailable for certain development or lands adjacent to or near the Town become more logical for such development, the Town may:

- a. Seek to direct the development to lands outside the Town, but with the intent of sharing with Lacombe County the derived assessment from the development; or
- b. Seek to annex the lands in consultation with Lacombe County and the affected landowners.

11.4 Through the intermunicipal development plan and other means of cooperation with Lacombe County, the Town will encourage any landfills, high pressure pipelines and sour gas facilities be located at least 1.5 km (0.93 miles) beyond the long term growth area of the Town and any new confined feeding operation to be at least 2.5 km (1.55 miles) from the long term growth area of the Town.

## **12 IMPLEMENTATION**

**Goal: To promote the use of the Plan and the implementation of its policies.**

**Objectives:**

- To continue public participation in municipal planning processes.
- To make the Plan available in various ways to stakeholders.
- To implement the Plan through other statutory planning documents and decisions by subdivision and development authorities.

**Policies**

12.1 In accordance with the Municipal Government Act, the following shall conform with the Municipal Development Plan:

- a. Any Area Structure Plan and Area Redevelopment Plan adopted by the Town;
- b. An Intermunicipal Development Plan adopted jointly with Lacombe County;
- c. A subdivision application approved by the Subdivision Authority; and,
- d. A development decision made by the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board.

12.2 It is the intent of Council that the Land Use Bylaw be consistent with the provisions of this Plan so that any amendments to the Land Use Bylaw and decisions made by the Development Authority should conform with the Plan.

12.3 The Land Use Bylaw shall contain Land Use Districts, including lists of permitted and discretionary uses and standards appropriate to those districts, which serve to guide development in a manner consistent with this Plan.

12.4 In order to consider a redesignation, subdivision or development application, or to generally provide directions for land use change in an area, the Town may require the preparation of an Area Structure Plan or an Outline Plan, or amendments to existing plans, to provide the details of intended directions regarding land use, utility services, roads, open space and other matters pertaining to the subject lands, and where necessary the surrounding lands.

12.5 The Town will endeavour to cooperate with Municipal, Provincial and Federal agencies on matters of planning importance to the municipality, and in these undertakings the Town will pursue the policies of this Plan wherever possible.

- 12.6 The Town should guide and work with citizens, community groups and the private sector on matters of planning importance to the municipality, and in these undertakings the Town will pursue the policies of this Plan wherever possible.
- 12.7 When a hearing or other action by a government agency or board may affect the goals and policies of this Plan or the intentions these goals and policies propose to achieve, the Town may intervene in the hearing or other action to clearly make known the goals and policies of the Plan and may undertake to coordinate development of a municipal consensus.
- 12.8 As a part of the process of community growth and change, the Town will endeavour to facilitate public input on matters of general or specific interest.
- 12.9 Complementary to the above provisions, the Plan is to be implemented through:
- a. Land use and development control through administration of the Land Use Bylaw;
  - b. Development agreements;
  - c. Subdivision application decisions;
  - d. Coordination with other Town plans;
  - e. Community development initiatives; and,
  - f. Partnerships and cooperative mechanisms with other municipalities and agencies.

### **13 REVIEW AND AMENDMENT**

**Goal: To monitor the effectiveness of the Plan by undertaking timely reviews, amending the plan as necessary.**

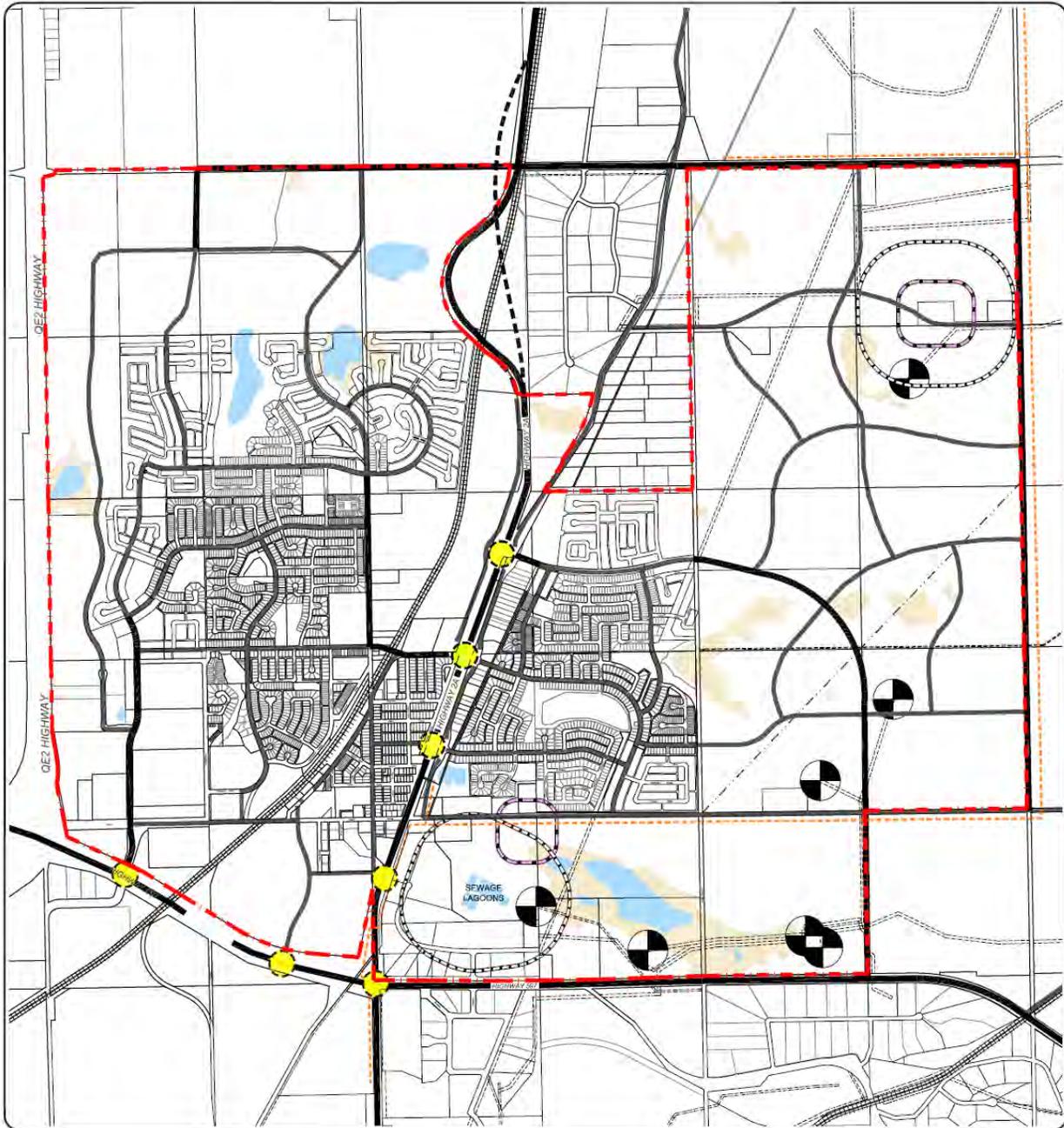
**Objectives:**

- To monitor the effectiveness of the Plan.
- To undertake periodic reviews of the Plan.
- To amend the Plan when deemed desirable or necessary.

**Policies**

- 13.1 The Town will monitor the Plan's policies and their implementation to ensure they remain current and relevant.
- 13.2 The Town will conduct a partial review of the Plan at least every three years, but will undertake a thorough review at least every six years, and during this review will consolidate all amendments.
- 13.3 An amendment of the Plan may be initiated by Council or the general public.
- 13.4 When an amendment is initiated by the general public, prior to the commencement of the bylaw amendment process, the Town may require the initiators of the amendment to provide a report and other background information to support the amendment.
- 13.5 When considering a proposed amendment to the Plan, the Town will refer the amendment to any adjoining municipality, school authority, provincial agency and any other person or agency the Town feels the amendment affects.

13.6 In considering an amendment, the provisions of the Municipal Government Act pertaining to holding a public hearing and the public notification of the hearing will be followed.



**MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

- - - MUNICIPAL BOUNDARY
- MAJOR THOROUGHFARES
- - -** FUTURE HWY 2A ALIGNMENT
- SIGNALIZED INTERSECTION
- - -** ATCO GAS PROPOSED ALIGNMENT
- - -** OIL / GAS / GLYCOL PIPELINE R-of-W
- - -** OVERHEAD POWER LINE
- |||||** RAILWAY
- - -** 300m SETBACK
- - -** NON-OPERATING LANDFILL 100m SETBACK
- OIL / GAS WELL (100m setback)
- WATER BODY
- LOW LYING AREA

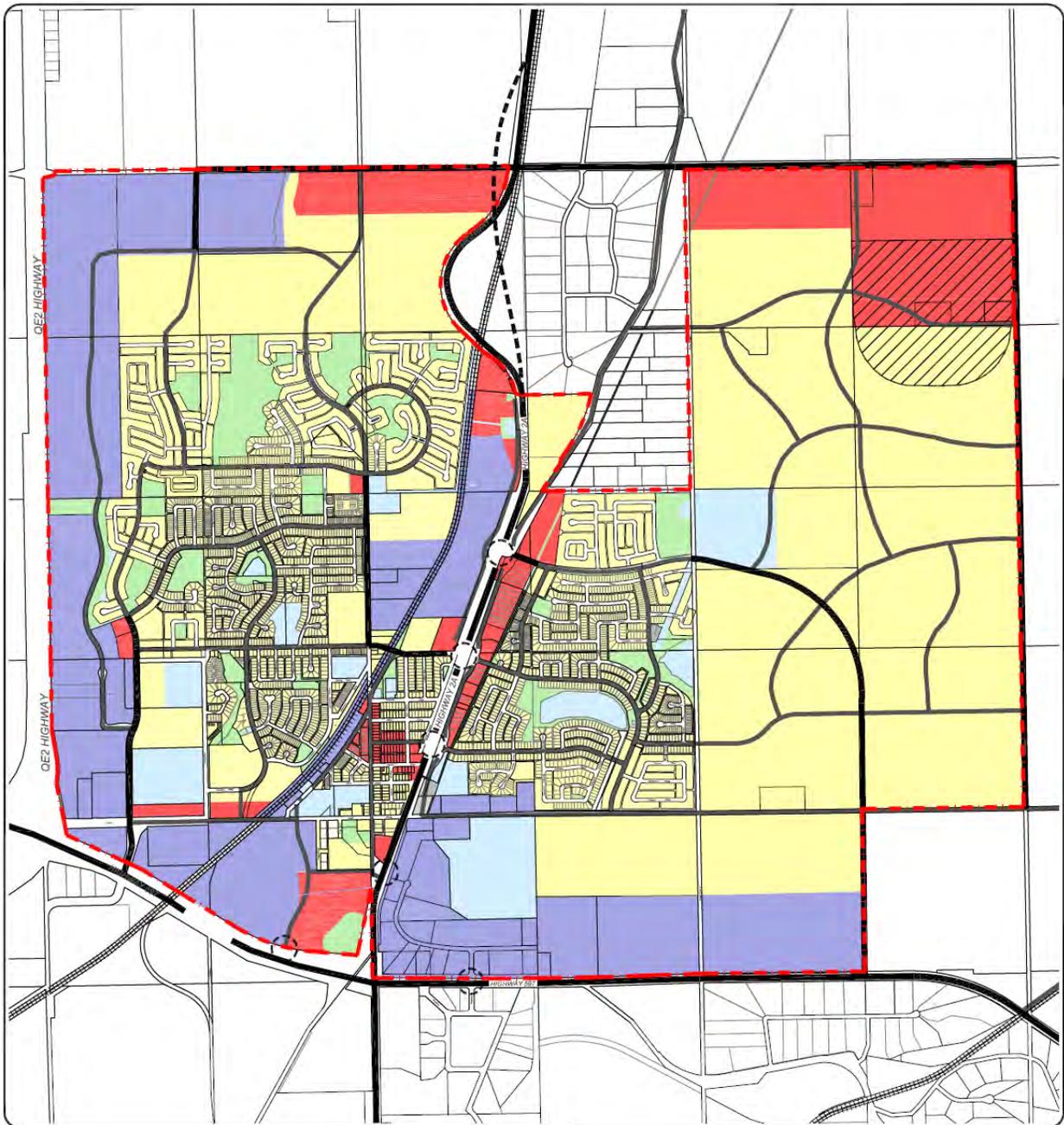
**TOWN OF  
BLACKFALDS**

**MAP 1  
SIGNIFICANT  
FEATURES**



JUNE 2009

PARKLAND COMMUNITY PLANNING SERVICES



**MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

- |                          |                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| MUNICIPAL BOUNDARY       | INDUSTRIAL             |
| MAJOR THOROUGHFARES      | PUBLIC / INSTITUTIONAL |
| FUTURE HWY 2A ALIGNMENT  | RESIDENTIAL            |
| RAILWAY                  | COMMERCIAL             |
| SIGNALIZED INTERSECTIONS | OPEN SPACE             |
| SPECIAL STUDY AREA       |                        |

**TOWN OF  
BLACKFALDS**

**MAP 2  
FUTURE  
LAND USE CONCEPT**



JUNE 2009  
PARKLAND COMMUNITY PLANNING SERVICES