



# INTERMUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (IDP) NORTHERN SUNRISE COUNTY, TOWN OF PEACE RIVER



NORTHERN SUNRISE  
COUNTY



TOWN OF  
PEACE RIVER  
ALBERTA

## DRAFT

Date Submitted: January 17, 2019

V3 COMPANIES

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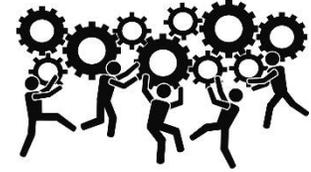


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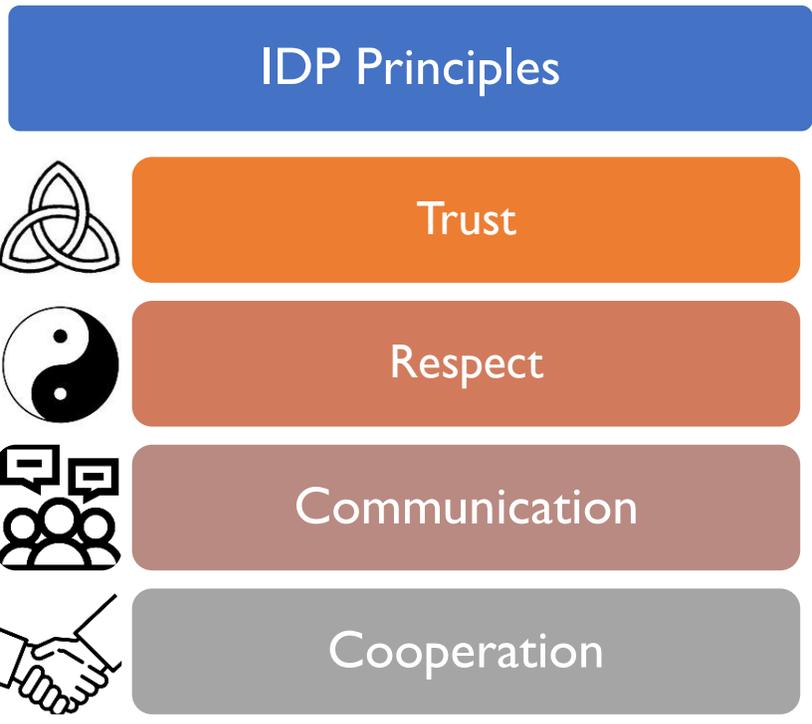
# I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the IDP between the Town of Peace River and Northern Sunrise County (hereinafter referred to as the Town and County) is to foster an environment that encourages dialogue and promotes a collaborative approach to address planning and development within the IDP boundary.



The region is well known for its oil and gas extraction, agriculture and other natural pursuits due to the abundance of natural amenities. Although the economies of the Town and County are quite different, the two complement each other by creating a region where people, commerce and natural amenities are located close to one another. The area is served primarily by a system of primary and secondary roadways. Provincial highways are the primary means of transportation in the IDP area (Highway 2 and 744) and facilitate existing and potential economic activity. Rail infrastructure, owned by Canadian National Railways, is also available through the south-western portion of the County leading to the Town.

An effective IDP is centered on principles of trust, respect, communication and cooperation. When these principles are present, a collaborative governance model is created that has the ability to support the region's vibrancy and also strengthen the local economies of participating *municipalities*. The IDP will provide a long-term mutually supported framework for future development, and the area will experience the many benefits of regional governance.





“The whole is greater than the sum of its parts”

## 1.1. CONTEXT

The Town and County share approximately 6 kilometers of border. Although their geography is common, the economic bases are distinct from one another. The Town’s economy is composed of industries such as retail trade, construction, government services and health care while the County relies primarily on oil and gas activity, industrial services and agricultural pursuits. The Town is effectively a service centre for the wider region providing shopping, government and recreational services along with a more urban living environment. There is substantial movement of both people and goods between the Town and County, making their activities inextricably linked and directly affecting one another. This IDP is a result of multiple stakeholder and Council engagements and represents a renewed commitment to cooperation and coordination between the Town and County.

### Town of Peace River



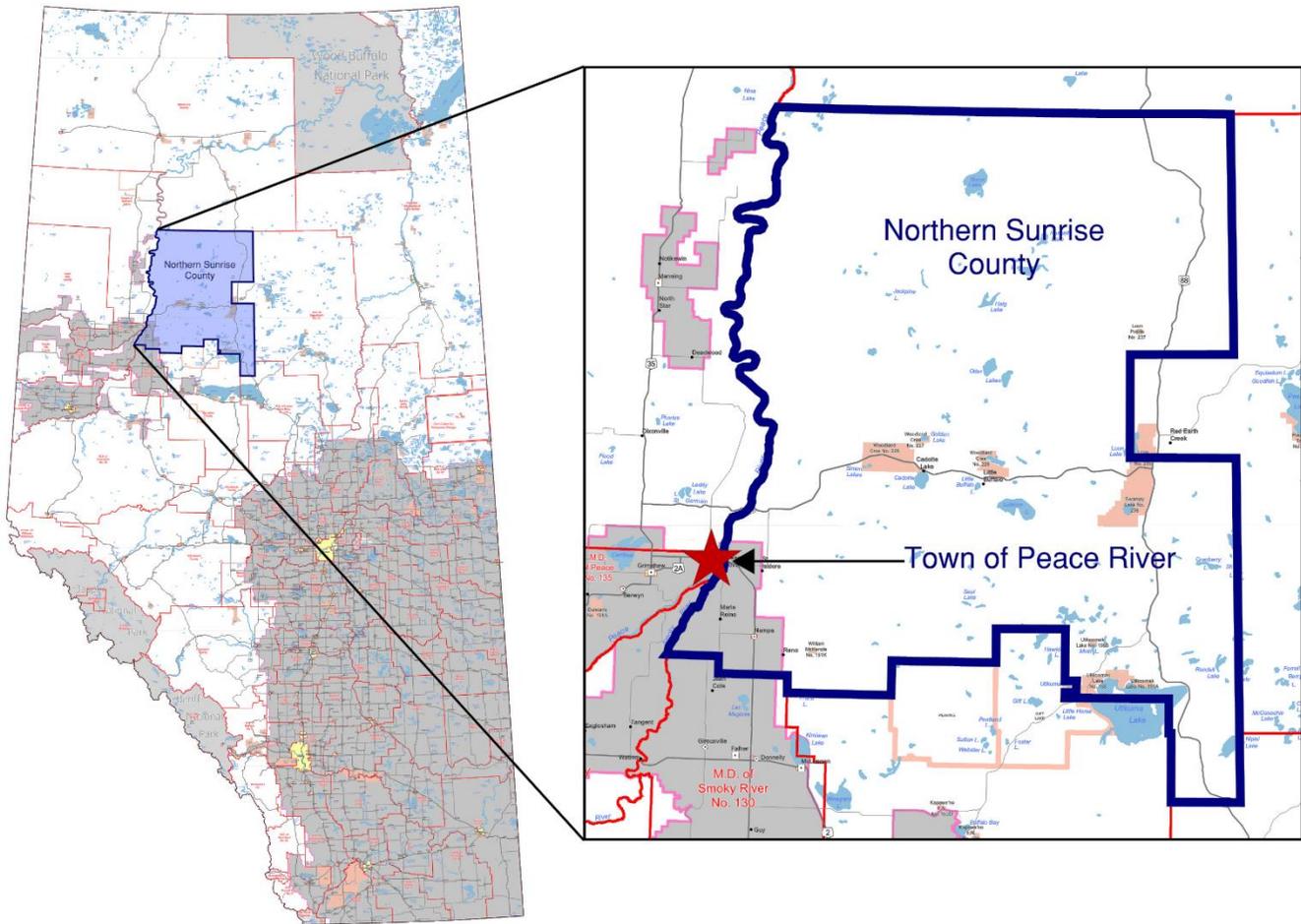
The Town covers an area of approximately 2,625 hectares (6,500 acres), with a population of 6,845 (Statistics Canada, 2016). The economy of the Town is comprised mainly of retail trade, health care and social assistance, public administration and construction.

### Northern Sunrise County



The County covers an area of approximately 2,115,100 hectares (5,226,525 acres), with a population of 1,891<sup>1</sup> (Statistics Canada, 2016). The County surrounds one *municipality* (Village of Nampa), and five First Nations reserves. The economy of the County is based primarily in oil and gas extraction.

<sup>1</sup> Population estimates indicate a slight variation depending on which source is used. The Government of Alberta’s Regional Dashboard (Population 1,891) utilizes estimates based on a number of different sources, including Statistics Canada census estimates, intercensal estimates, and municipal censuses. Municipal Affairs (population 1,933) reports a *municipality’s* own municipal census figure if available, and if unavailable, the original census estimate is used.



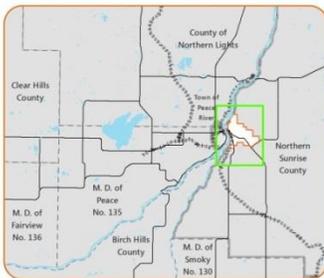
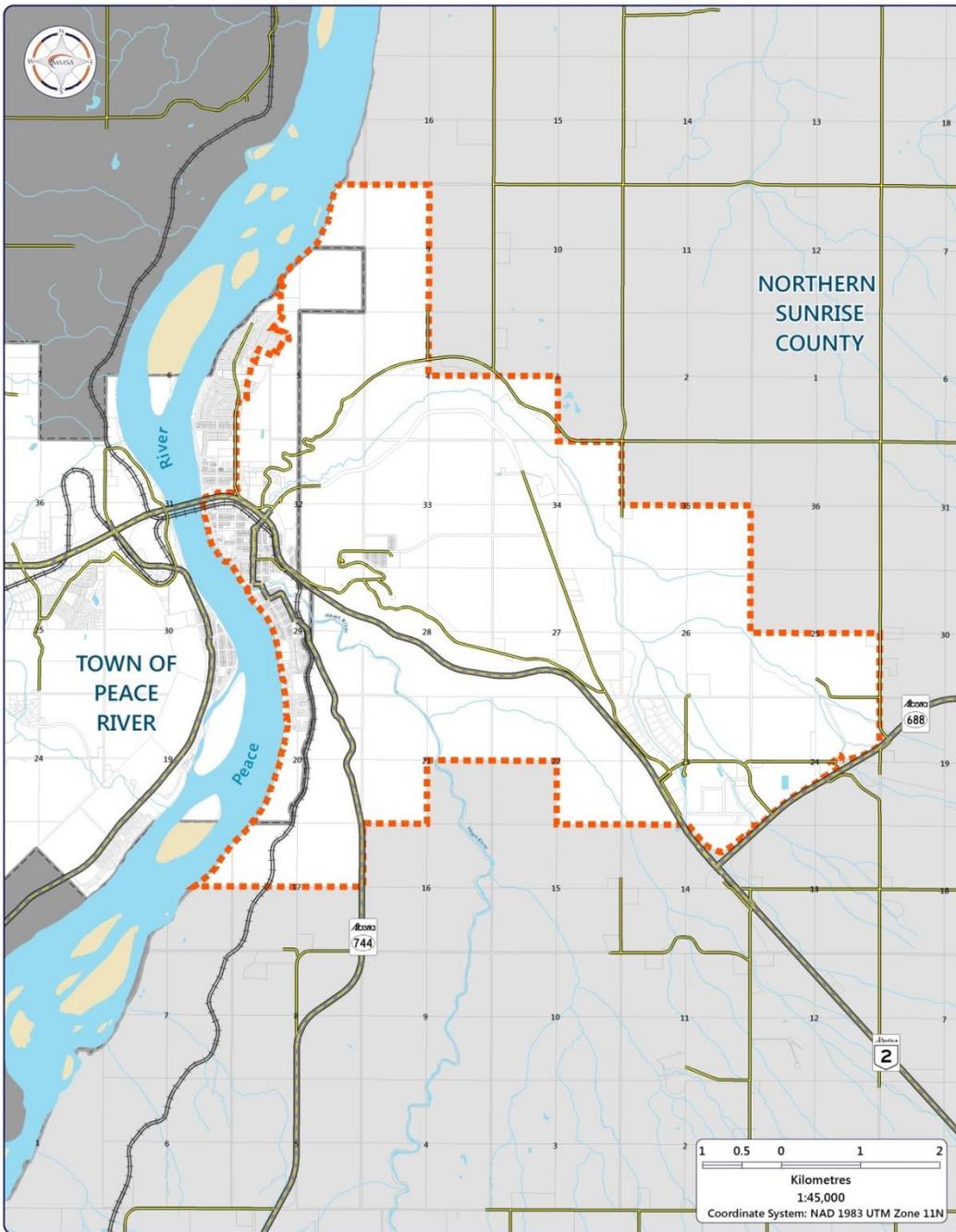
## 1.2. PLAN BOUNDARY

The Town and County are located within the Peace Country in northwest Alberta (Figure I). Both *municipalities* are within the Government of Alberta’s Land Use Framework “Lower Peace Region”. Although the Land Use Framework Plan for the Lower Peace Region has not been completed, once adopted there is the expectation that *statutory plans* such as IDPs are to be reviewed and amended to be consistent with the Land Use Framework Plan.

The IDP area encompasses approximately 40 km<sup>2</sup> of land as shown on **Map I IDP Plan Area** (page 4). Within the IDP area is the Town’s downtown and residential South End, the County’s Sunrise Gateway Business Park, the Town and County urban/rural fringe and connections to the Peace River.

Note: Full size IDP maps are attached in Appendix A.

**Map I: IDP Plan Area**



**Northern Sunrise County  
Town of Peace River**  
Plan Area Map  
Intermunicipal Development Plan



- Municipal Boundary
- IDP Plan Area
- Lake, Major River, Reservoir
- River, Creek, Stream
- Provincial Road
- Municipal Road
- Railway (C.N.R.)
- Property Line

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### 1.3. EXISTING CONDITIONS

#### (i) Existing Land Use

**Map 2: Existing Land Uses** (Page 6) identifies existing zoning districts within the IDP area. Analyzing existing land uses is needed to determine where future land use development can be compatible. Just as important when analyzing existing land uses is to identify areas in which land use conflicts could present themselves, so as to explore potential opportunities where these conflicts can be resolved.



A wide range of land uses exists within the IDP area, some of which will need special consideration to ensure compatibility for future development. Land uses within the area include: agricultural, residential, country residential, highway development, commercial, industrial and environmental/park reserve. This IDP includes policies intended to integrate compatible land uses, and to *buffer* intensive uses from sensitive developments which may be adversely impacted by these activities. The presence of the Peace River and other smaller water systems requires policies to mitigate, remedy or avoid risks such as flooding.

#### (ii) Existing Environmental Features

**Map 3: Environmental Map** (Page 7) highlights existing natural areas of environmental significance within the IDP area, including key wildlife and biodiversity zones, environmentally sensitive areas, *environmentally significant areas*, *wetlands* and surficial sand and gravel deposits.



The Peace River runs along part of the IDP area boundary and there are concerns around slumping and flooding in areas adjacent to the Peace River and near other water bodies such as creek's. Currently, the lands around the Town have not been mapped through the Government of Alberta's Flood Hazard Identification Program and there is a Peace River Flood Hazard Study underway, for which the final outcome will reveal more detail on the flooding potential within the IDP area. Policies within this plan have been drafted to address, mitigate, and avoid flooding and slumping as a result of future development.

The *environmentally significant areas* within the IDP area include *wetlands*, surficial sand/gravel deposits, and an area identified in a geotechnical study in which development cannot happen without a development-specific geotechnical report and subsequent specific conditions because of known geotechnical issues. **Map 4: Geotechnical Sensitive Area** (Page 8) highlights these areas in more detail.

#### (iii) Existing Development Constraints & Infrastructure

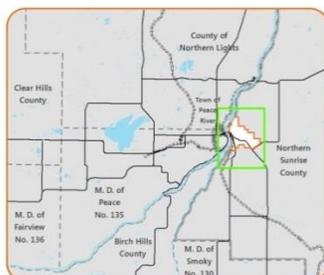
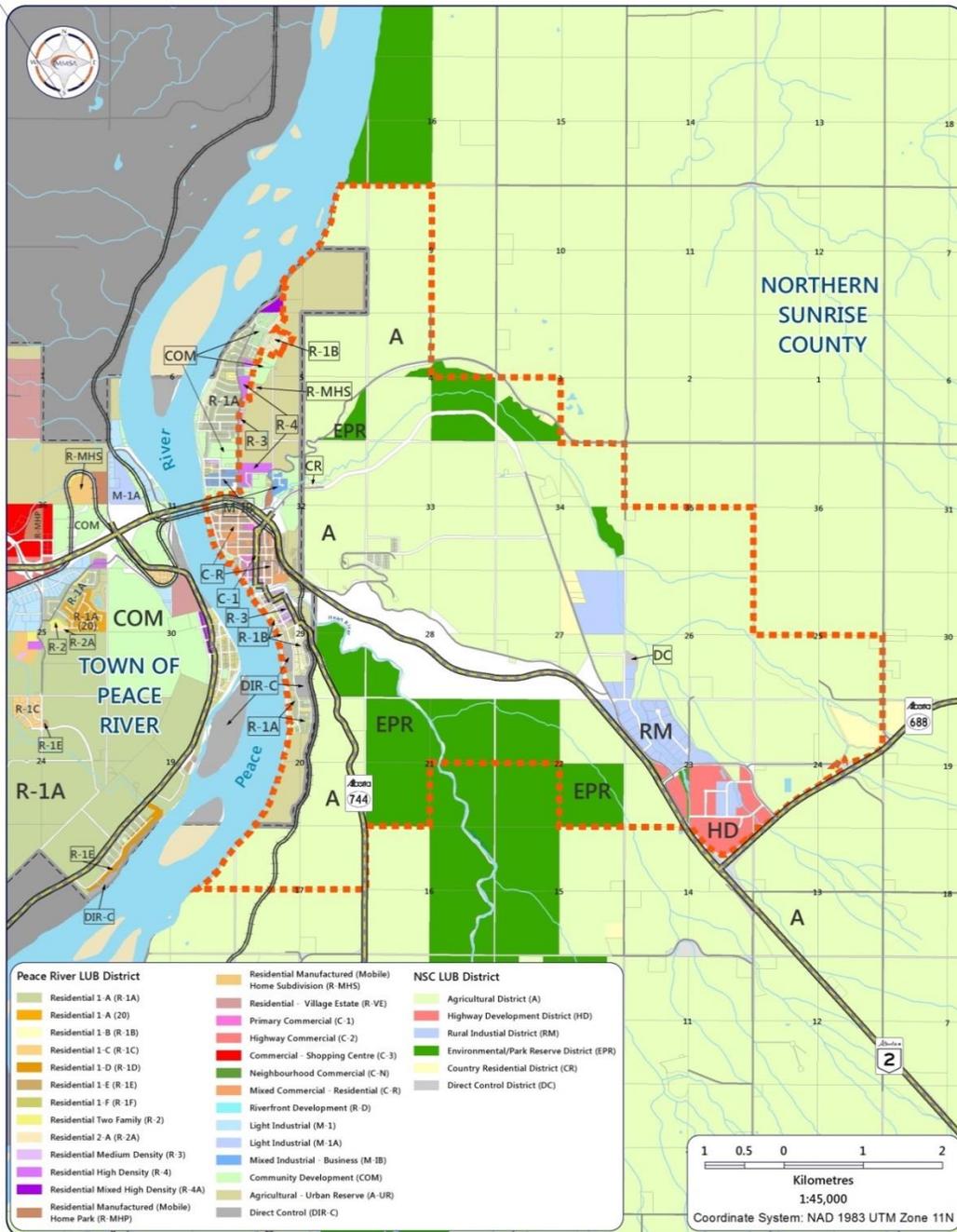
**Map 5: Infrastructure** (Page 10) highlights the location and alignment of existing energy pipelines, sanitary sewer lines, water lines, and power/utility lines within the IDP area. Also identified are water and wastewater treatment plants, culverts, and wells. Local roads & provincial highways are highlighted on **Map 1: IDP Plan Area** (Page 4).



Section 14 of the *Subdivision and Development Regulation* (SDR) states that any subdivision *proposal* within 1.6 kilometers of the centre line of a provincial highway must be referred to Alberta Transportation and is subject to the constraints on the type of subdivision set out in Section 14 of the SDR.

Due to the location of Highway 2 (including the 1.6 km *buffer*) within the IDP area, subdivisions will be required to be referred to Alberta Transportation for lands throughout the majority of the IDP area and would be subject to the regulations established in Section 14 of the SDR. Note: Full size IDP maps are attached in Appendix A.

## Map 2: Existing Land Uses



**Northern Sunrise County  
Town of Peace River  
Land Use Bylaw Districts Map  
Intermunicipal Development Plan**

**Legend:**

- Municipal Boundary
- IDP Plan Area
- Lake, Major River, Reservoir
- River, Creek, Stream
- Provincial Road
- Municipal Road
- Railway (C.N.R.)
- Property Line

**Logos:** NORTHERN SUNRISE COUNTY, PEACE RIVER

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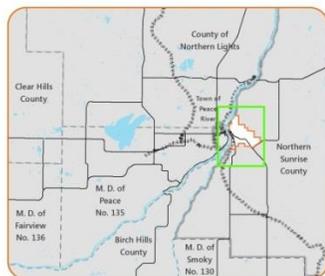
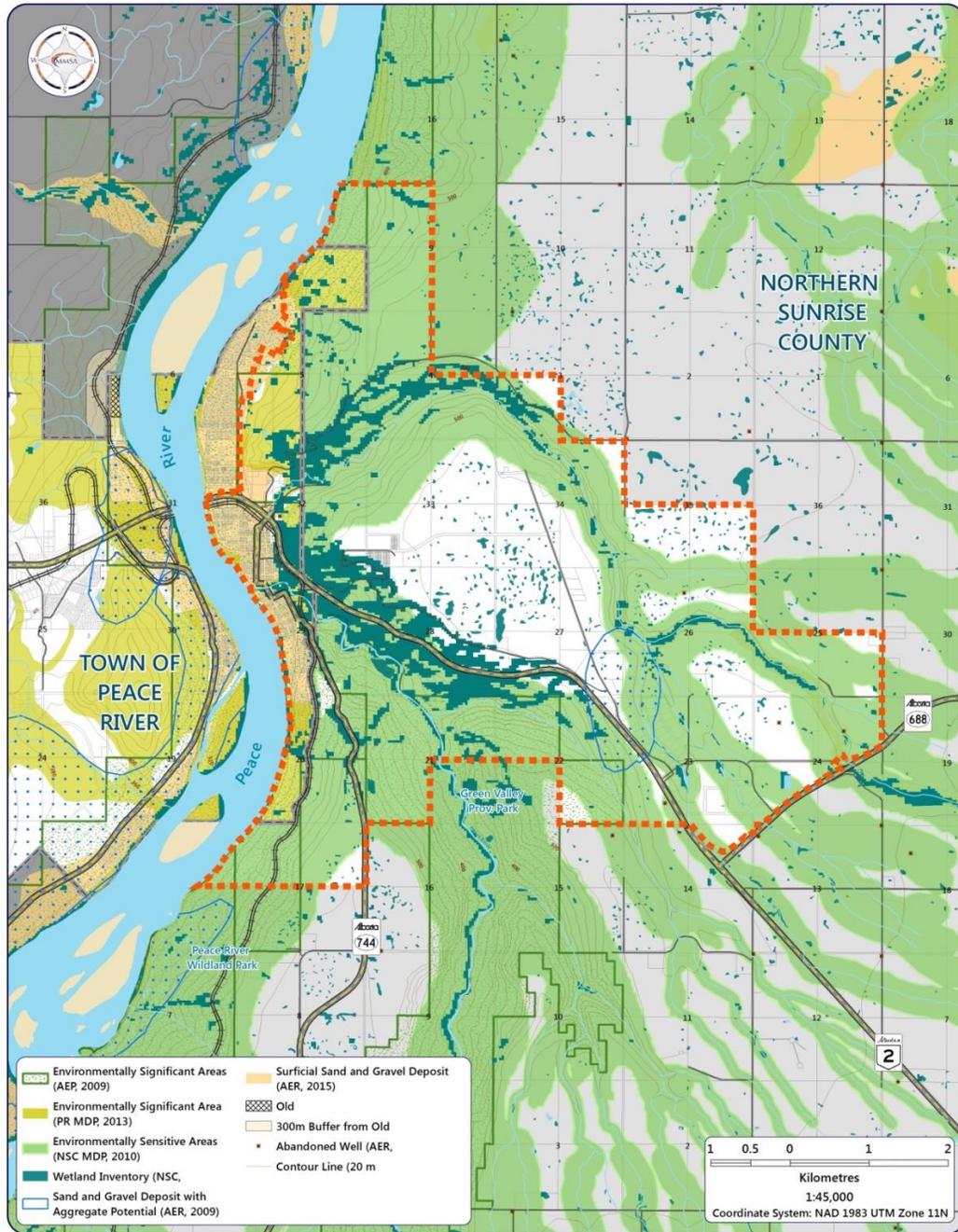
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### Map 3: Environmental



**Northern Sunrise County**  
**Town of Peace River**  
 Environmental Map  
 Intermunicipal Development Plan

**NORTHERN SUNRISE COUNTY**

PEACE RIVER

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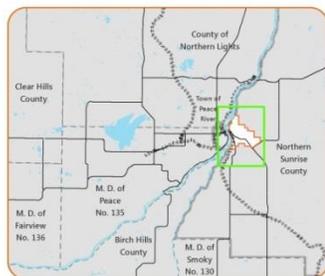
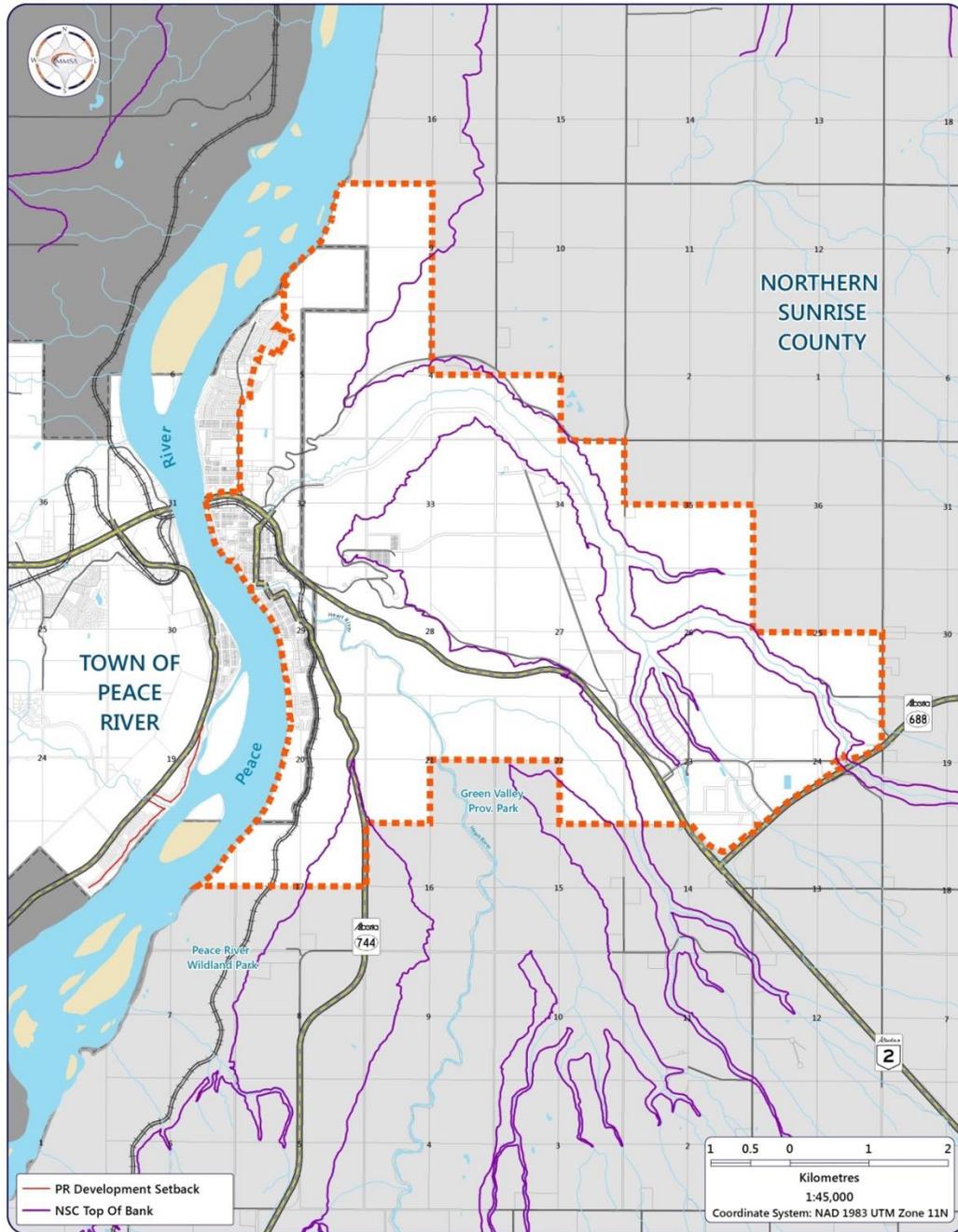
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- Municipal Boundary
- IDP Plan Area
- Lake, Major River, Reservoir
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- Provincial Road
- Municipal Road
- Railway (C.N.R.)
- Property Line

**Map 4: Geotechnical Sensitive Area**



**Northern Sunrise County**  
**Town of Peace River**  
 Geotechnical Setback Lines  
 Intermunicipal Development Plan

Municipal Boundary

IDP Plan Area

Lake, Major River, Reservoir

River, Creek, Stream

Provincial Road

Municipal Road

Railway (C.N.R.)

Property Line

**NORTHERN SUNRISE COUNTY**  
 PEACE RIVER

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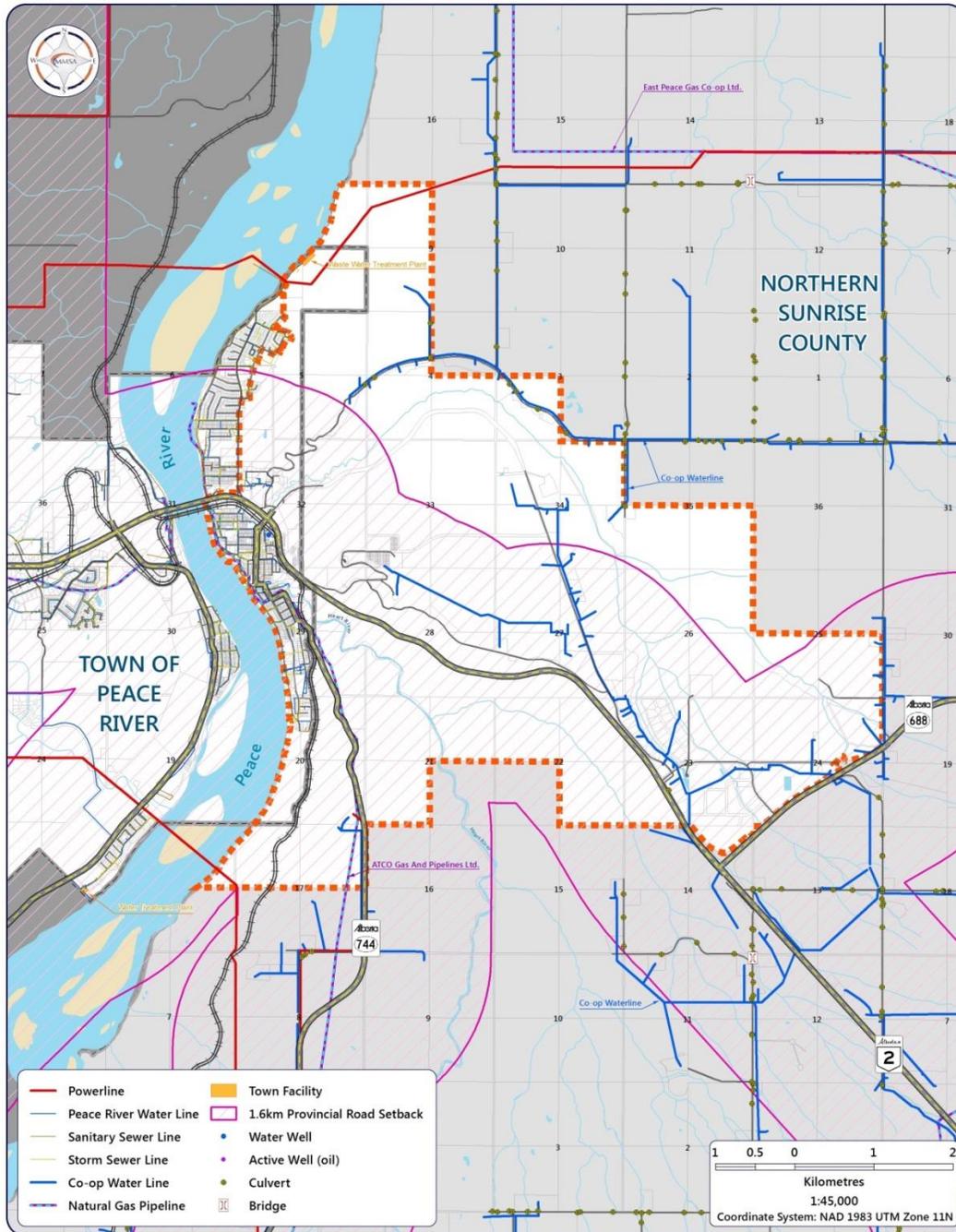
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Date: 05/30/2018

# Map 5: Infrastructure



**Northern Sunrise County  
Town of Peace River**

Infrastructure Map  
Intermunicipal Development Plan

- Municipal Boundary
- IDP Plan Area
- Lake, Major River, Reservoir
- River, Creek, Stream

- Provincial Road
- Municipal Road
- Railway (C.N.R.)
- Property Line

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## 1.4. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS



This IDP has been prepared under the legislative authority prescribed in Section 631 of the *Municipal Government Act (MGA)*. The MGA states that:

*“Two or more councils of municipalities that have common boundaries that are not members of a growth region as defined in section 708.01 must, by each passing a bylaw in accordance with this Part or in accordance with sections 12 and 692, adopt an intermunicipal development plan to include those areas of land lying within the boundaries of the municipalities as they consider necessary”.*

Section 631(2) of the MGA states that an IDP:

- (a) *must address*
  - i. *the future land use within the area,*
  - ii. *the manner of and the proposals for future development in the area,*
  - iii. *the provision of transportation systems for the area, either generally or specifically,*
  - iv. *the co-ordination of intermunicipal programs relating to the physical, social and economic development of the area,*
  - v. *environmental matters within the area, either generally or specifically,*
  - vi. *any other matter related to the physical, social or economic development of the area that the councils consider necessary, and*
- (b) *must include*
  - i. *a procedure to be used to resolve or attempt to resolve any conflict between the municipalities that have adopted the plan,*
  - ii. *a procedure to be used, by one or more municipalities, to amend or repeal the plan, and*
  - iii. *provisions relating to the administration of the plan.*

The MGA identifies the hierarchy and relationship of *statutory plans*, so that each plan will be consistent with the plans above it (see Figure 2) and, in the event of an inconsistency, which provisions in what plan will prevail. Both the Town and the County have adopted MDP's to guide future growth and development within their respective *municipality*. Once this IDP has been adopted, the Town and County will need to review their existing MDP's to determine if they are consistent with the newly adopted IDP. The IDP can only be repealed if it is being replaced by a new IDP or the Minister of Municipal Affairs has granted an exemption in accordance with the MGA.

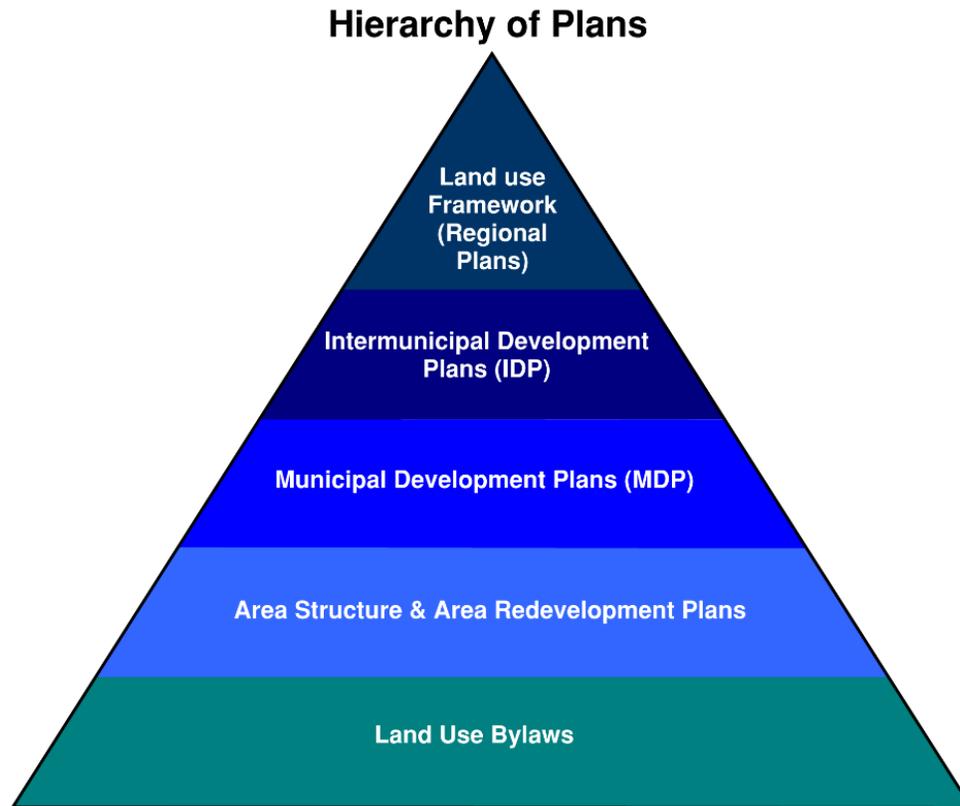


Figure 2: Hierarchy of plans in Alberta

## 1.5. PRINCIPLES AND GOALS OF IDP



The fundamental purpose of the *plan* is to provide opportunities for collaboration and communication between the two *municipalities*, to create a regional framework that has the capacity to address intermunicipal issues as they relate to planning and development to support the long-term interests of both *municipalities*. By creating a planning framework with policy directions and processes, the IDP provides more certainty for residents and potential investors when it comes to land use and development.

High-level policy direction provided in this IDP will promote land use development and growth for each *municipality* and the region, and the collaboration of services both within and around each *municipality*, intended to create efficiencies and to capitalize on shared resources and capacity.

The intent of this *plan* is to identify municipal interests relative to lands within the IDP area, and to develop policies and decision-making processes that promote collaboration, respect the interests, and reduce conflict between the Town and County.

The overall goals of the Intermunicipal Development Plan are to:

Goals	
1.	Provide a consistent approach for intermunicipal discussion.
2.	Enhance each <i>municipality's</i> means of being informed and providing input on planning and development matters within the IDP area.
3.	Meet the requirements of the MGA to include a process for resolving or attempting to resolve intermunicipal conflict and to provide a structure within which communication can occur between each <i>municipality</i> .
4.	Create a process that allows for timely resolution of differences of opinion between <i>municipalities</i> in a way that is respectful of each other's interests and concerns and avoid potentially costly litigation or arbitration from occurring.
5.	Promote well planned commercial and industrial development within the IDP area that provides services and employment locally and regionally, while also encouraging business development to locate in areas where the proposed business is complimentary to surrounding land uses.
6.	Provide opportunities for residential development within those areas zoned or developed within the IDP area for residential purposes which are able to respond to market conditions and preferences and are situated in suitable locations that exhibit a logical and contiguous pattern of growth.
7.	Support agricultural land within the IDP area, assist in protecting it from premature or inappropriate development which may negatively affect agricultural operations, while also supporting existing and new agricultural operations.
8.	Promote a strong, diversified and resilient economy that is attractive for investment and will provide each <i>municipality</i> opportunities for employment and growth within the IDP area.
9.	Create and preserve an integrated system of open greenspace and provide a variety of natural amenities which improve quality of life through opportunities for passive and active recreation.
10.	Manage the area along the Peace River where flooding and slumping may occur to prevent damage to property and impact to human life.
11.	Promote the protection of the Peace River basin and its catchment as a significant environmental resource and maintain its function as a recreational and aesthetic amenity.
12.	Develop a safe and efficient transportation network that is consistent in its condition and design standards, in order to help both <i>municipalities</i> achieve greater efficiencies and provide better services to their residents and businesses.
13.	Address <i>utilities</i> and servicing on an intermunicipal scale by establishing a process for cross-jurisdictional utility planning and rights-of-way acquisition to maximize efficiencies and avoid duplication of infrastructure.
14.	Coordinate community and emergency services at an intermunicipal level to promote consistency and efficiency, and to avoid duplication of services.



## 2. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

### 2.1. INTERPRETATION OF THE PLAN

The structure of the IDP is such that each section follows a topic, and each topic has a predominant goal where objectives are laid out along with policy directions designed to address each objective and ultimately the stated goal. This structure works best when the document is interpreted in a holistic manner where it is important to view each of the policy directions in the context of one another rather than separately. Generally, the goals of the IDP are more likely to be achieved by addressing the complete set of policy directions.

While the policies contained within this document relate to the defined IDP boundary they do not preclude the *municipalities* from expanding the applicable policy beyond the boundary or collaborating with other municipalities based on the mutual agreement of the two *municipalities* of this IDP.

This IDP contains the operative terms ‘shall’, ‘should’, and ‘may’. The interpretation of these terms is outlined below:

**Shall** – indicates that actions are mandatory.

**Should** – indicates direction to strive to achieve the outlined action but is not mandatory.

**May** – is discretionary, meaning the policy in question can be enforced if the *municipalities* choose to do so. This is typically dependent on context and individual circumstances.

**Note:** Where words are *italicized* the document provides a definition in Section 7.0.

### 2.2. INTERMUNICIPAL COOPERATION

In order to provide a consistent approach for intermunicipal discussion between administrations, Joint Council meetings shall be utilized to oversee the implementation of the IDP and serve as a forum to address any intermunicipal issues that may arise. These Joint Council meetings shall also serve as a mechanism to allow formal communication between *municipalities*.

A neutral facilitator will be engaged to coordinate and run Joint Council sessions to assist in avoiding the plan becoming redundant and to help both Councils to work together on areas of common ground.

#### Goal:

To provide a consistent approach for intermunicipal discussion.

#### Objective:

- I. To establish the means to consistently monitor the IDP, and act as a forum for discussion on intermunicipal development issues.



**Policies:**

- 2.2.1. Councils **shall** meet jointly at least once yearly or when one Council requests a joint meeting as necessary (ex. to resolve an issue or dispute with regard to the IDP). Items that **should** be covered at these meetings include the status of the IDP, implementation of policies, and whether any amendments to the IDP are necessary.
- 2.2.2. The annual Joint Council meeting **should** be held in September to align with the municipal budget process.
- 2.2.3. Joint Council meetings **shall** be chaired by an independent third-party facilitator. Both *municipalities* **should** agree upon the facilitator, or if they cannot agree, the Minister of Municipal Affairs **shall** choose a mediator. The cost of the facilitator or mediator **shall** be shared equally between the parties.
- 2.2.4. A minimum of two (2) Council members from each *municipality* **shall** be present to form a quorum. In order to make a decision, the Joint Council **should** reach a consensus on a motion and the Council members from each municipality **shall** bring forward the motion to the individual municipal Councils for a vote. In the event that the municipal Councils cannot agree the dispute resolution process outlined in Section 2.5 would be initiated.
- 2.2.5. Members of Council attending Joint Council meetings for the purpose of the IDP **shall** be responsible for:
  - i. Making recommendations on intermunicipal issues to the respective municipal Councils.
  - ii. Monitoring the progress of the IDP, including but not limited to review of planning applications that have been subject to intermunicipal referral as per Policy 2.3.1.
  - iii. Reviewing proposed amendments to the IDP and providing recommendations to each respective Council.

**2.3. CIRCULATION AND REFERRAL PROCESS**

The purpose of this section of the *plan* is to establish a clear and consistent referral process whereby each *municipality* is able to provide comments on proposed changes to statutory and non-statutory plans as well as proposed subdivision and certain development applications within the IDP area.

Communication between the two *municipalities* is the most effective means of avoiding or minimizing intermunicipal conflict. For this reason, this IDP focuses on a commitment to effective communication by establishing a process for circulation and referral of planning applications, policy, and other information essential to effectively administering the IDP.

**Goal:**

To enhance each *municipality's* means of being informed and providing input on planning and development matters within the IDP area.



**Objective:**

1. To provide a clear process for circulation and referral of planning applications and policy documents that pertain to the IDP area.

**Policies:**

- 2.3.1. Within the IDP area, the two *municipalities* **shall** refer the following to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) or their designee, of the respective *municipality*:
  - a) *Municipal Development Plans, Area Structure Plans, Area Redevelopment Plans, and any amendments thereto.*
  - b) *Outline Plans and Conceptual Schemes.*
  - c) *Land Use Bylaw amendments including redesignation/rezoning.*
  - d) Development Permit applications for:
    - i. Discretionary uses as per the Town and County's respective *Land Use Bylaws*.
    - ii. Variances for commercial or industrial development as per the Town and County's respective *Land Use Bylaws*.
    - iii. Development within Direct Control Districts as per the Town and County's respective *Land Use Bylaws*.
  - e) Applications for subdivision creating more than five (5) lots.
  - f) Applications for the disposition of environmental, conservation, municipal and/or school reserves, environmental easements, public utility lots and/or road allowances.
- 2.3.2. Within two (2) business days of receipt, the receiving municipal authority **should** acknowledge receiving the application via email.
- 2.3.3. Each *municipality* **shall** have ten (10) business days from receipt of a referral to review and comment on referrals made pursuant to Policy 2.3.1.(d), and twenty (20) business days from receipt of referral for all other referrals pursuant to Policy 2.3.1. Upon mutual agreement an extension **may** be granted, however if no response is received within one (1) business day after it is due, it will be assumed that there are no objections or comments.
- 2.3.4. The administrations of each *municipality* **shall** respectively decide which department is to be responsible for responding to intermunicipal referrals and the response timeframes outlined in this document.

## 2.4. PLAN ADMINISTRATION, APPEAL, & AMENDMENT



As the IDP is intended to be a long-range planning document, it will require regular monitoring and review in order to remain current and accurately reflect changing growth trends in the region. This requires the establishment of a clear process to allow member *municipalities* to amend the IDP when it is mutually beneficial to do so.

### Goal:

To meet the requirements of the MGA to include a process for resolving or attempting to resolve intermunicipal conflict and to provide a structure within which communication can occur between each *municipality*.

### Objective:

1. To support the IDP to remain relevant and adaptive to changing circumstances in the region including the election of new Councillors.

### Policies:

- 2.4.1. Following a municipal election, a general review of the IDP **shall** be completed within one (1) year when new Councillor(s) are elected to either *municipality*. If new Councillors are not elected to either *municipality* over a 9-year timeframe, a full review of the IDP **shall** be completed in the tenth (10) year from the date of adoption of the IDP.
- 2.4.2. Amendments to the IDP **shall** be subject to agreement by both *municipalities* and must be adopted by both Councils in accordance with the procedures established in the MGA.
- 2.4.3. An IDP **shall** only be repealed if it is being replaced by a new IDP or the Minister of Municipal Affairs has granted an exemption in accordance with the MGA.

## 2.5. INTERMUNICIPAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION



The MGA requires that an IDP must include *a procedure to be used to resolve or attempt to resolve any conflict between the municipalities that have adopted the plan* (Sec. 631(2)(b)(i)). The intent of the dispute resolution process is to facilitate mediation and a resolution at the municipal (local) level before an appeal is to be launched to the Municipal Government Board (MGB). This process is based on the assumption that each *municipality* will have differences of opinion and a resolution mechanism may be necessary. It is important that throughout the various processes of dispute resolution that all parties involved in the dispute respect each other and establish a dialogue built on trust and cooperation.

**Goal:**

To create a process that allows for timely resolution of differences of opinion between *municipalities* in a way that is respectful of each other's interests and concerns and avoid potentially costly litigation or arbitration from occurring.

**Objectives:**

- I. To adopt a dispute resolution process to address disagreements fairly and effectively.

**Policies:**

**2.5.1.** In the case of a dispute, the following process **shall** be followed:

- i. At any time during the dispute resolution process, either *municipality* **shall** be able to initiate a formal mediation process through a third-party to attempt to resolve the issue/dispute. Such costs **shall** be shared by both municipalities.
- ii. When a potential intermunicipal dispute arises regarding a technical or procedural matter, including a clerical error or any misinterpretation of this IDP or any other plans affecting lands in the IDP area, it **shall** be directed to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of each *municipality*.
- iii. If an issue relating to the IDP area or plans affecting lands in the IDP area cannot be resolved by the respective CAO's, the *municipality* who identified the issue **shall** request that a Joint Council meeting be scheduled to discuss the dispute/issue. At such time, within 14 *working days* of the Joint Council meeting being requested (or a time mutually agreed upon), the Councils **shall** meet and review the issue and attempt to resolve it through consensus. The Joint Council meeting **shall** be in accordance with Policy 2.2.2 – 2.2.3.

**2.5.2.** If a dispute arises involving the adoption of, or amendment to, a *statutory plan*, the *municipality* initiating the dispute **may** file appeal to the MGB in accordance with the MGA, in order to preserve the statutory right to file an appeal and avoid missing the timeframe which an appeal is allowed. However, the dispute resolution process contained within this IDP **shall** still be followed. An appeal to the MGB may be withdrawn if a solution is reached following the dispute resolution process outlined in Figure 3 of this document.

### Dispute Resolution Process

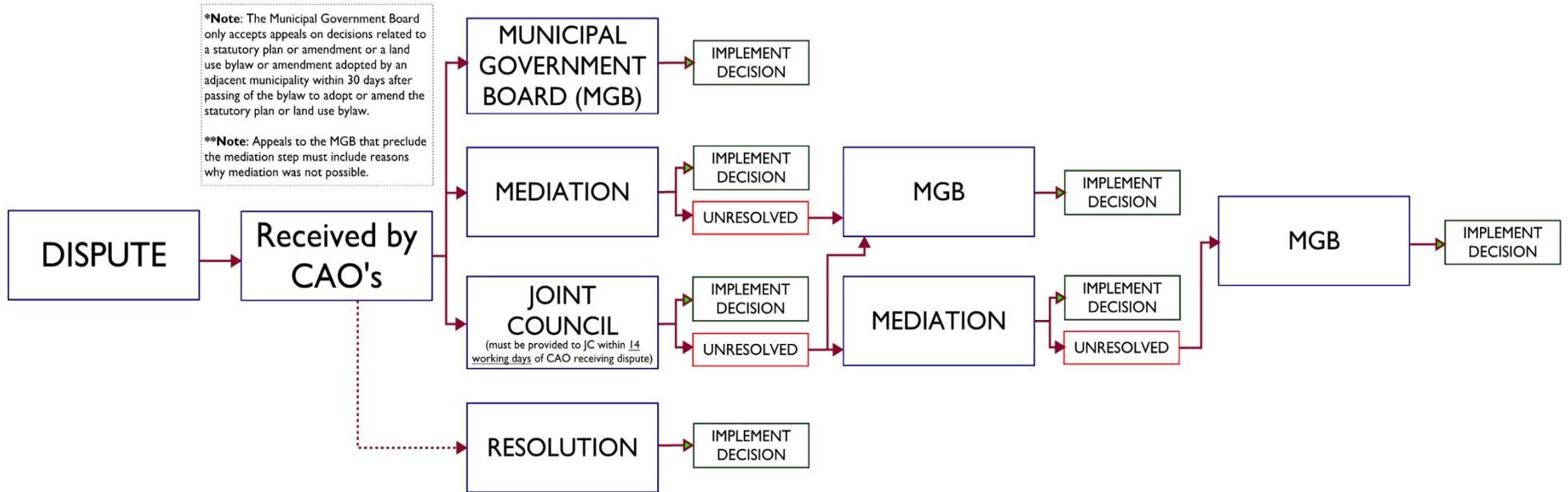


Figure 3: Dispute Resolution Process

## 3. LAND USE & GROWTH

### 3.1 GROWTH POLICIES



Based on the growth analysis carried out 2017 growth is projected at an annual average rate of 0.5% from 2016 to 2040. Based on the existing land availability within established areas that are either zoned for residential, commercial or industrial uses or have established area structure plans it is prudent to accommodate growth by working within the established planning framework.

#### Goal:

To direct growth within the IDP boundary area into those areas that have been planned to accommodate future growth as indicated Map 6.

#### Objective:

1. To direct growth into existing planned industrial and commercial zones.

#### Policy:

- 3.1.1 Both *municipalities* **should** direct development into those areas that are already planned to accommodate growth, through either an approved *area structure plan* and/or an existing land use district.
- 3.1.2 Development of new growth areas **should** not be developed until there is only a five-year supply remaining for either residential, industrial or commercial lands.

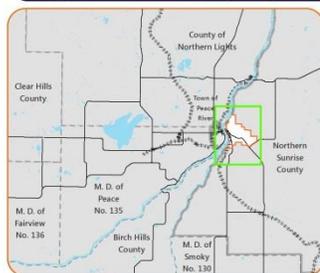
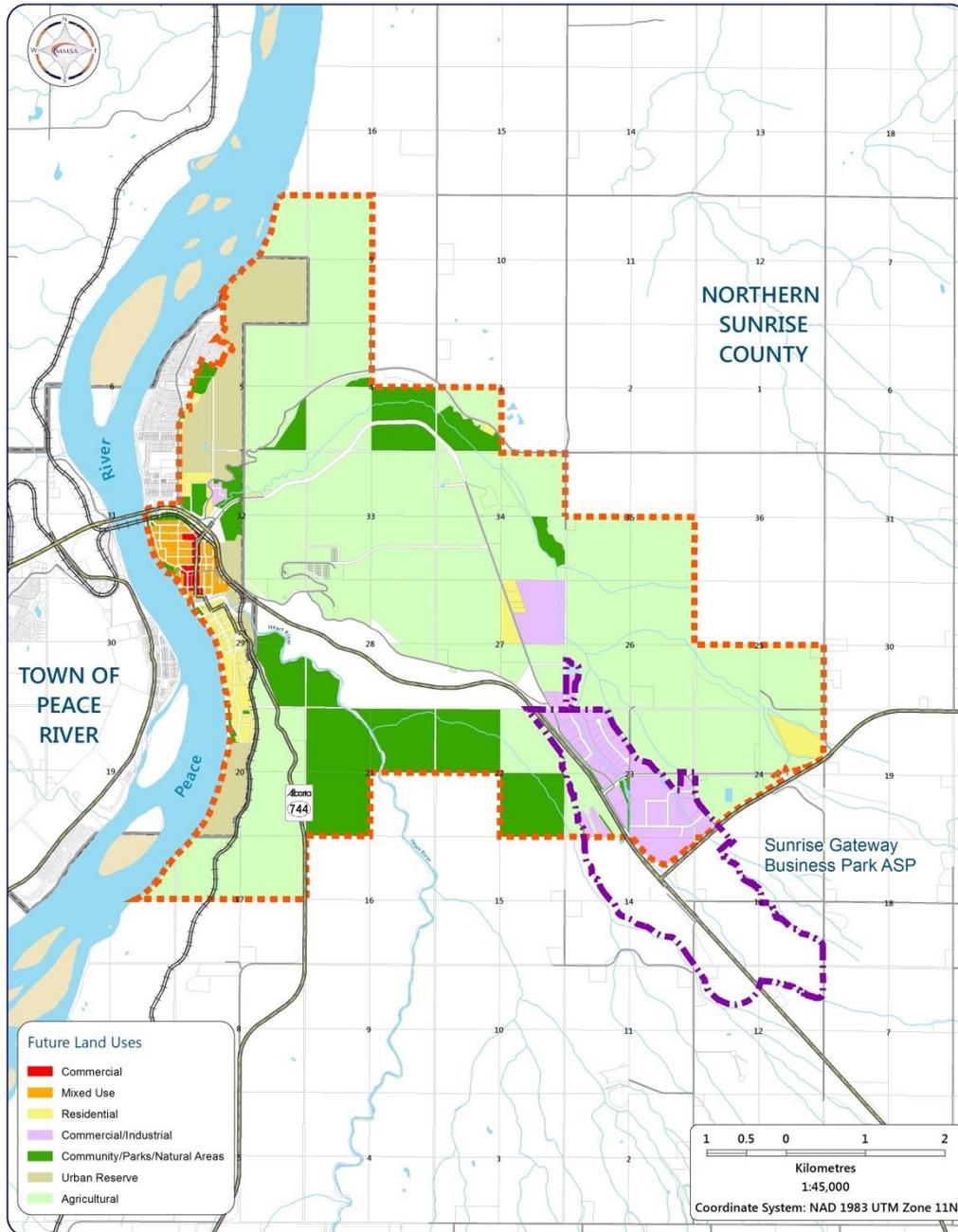
#### Objective:

2. To maximize the utilization of infrastructure when carrying out development for existing and future residents.

#### Policy:

- 3.1.3 Both *municipalities* **should** work together to maximize the return on capital investment of existing *municipal infrastructure* assets.
- 3.1.4 Both *municipalities* **should** consider the financial impact of new proposals on existing *municipal infrastructure* assets.
- 3.1.5 Both *municipalities* **should** support the financial viability of existing *municipal infrastructure* assets.

Map 6: Future Land Uses



**Northern Sunrise County  
Town of Peace River**

Future Land Use Map  
Intermunicipal Development Plan

**Legend:**

- Municipal Boundary
- IDP Plan Area
- Lake, Major River, Reservoir
- River, Creek, Stream
- Provincial Road
- Municipal Road
- Railway (C.N.R.)
- Property Line

**NORTHERN SUNRISE COUNTY**

**PEACE RIVER**

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Prepared by: A. M.  
Reviewed by: N. P.  
Date: 09/28/2018

**MMSA**

### 3.2 COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

Commercial and Industrial development provides a higher per capita portion of a community’s tax revenue than other uses such as residential, is responsible for providing many jobs, and has a significant impact on the liveability of a community. Thus, it is important to successfully plan for a vibrant and robust commercial and industrial sector.

**Goal:**

To promote well planned commercial and industrial development within the IDP area that provides services and employment locally and regionally, while also encouraging business development to locate in areas where the proposed business is complimentary to surrounding land uses.

**Objective:**

1. To support the provision of adequate *buffering* or mitigation measures where proposed residential development abuts any non-residential land uses.

**Policy:**

- 3.2.1. Uses that produce negative nuisances should not be permitted adjacent to residential land uses.
- 3.2.2. Residential land uses **should** not be permitted adjacent to industrial or commercial development which produce negative nuisances.
- 3.2.3. Both *municipalities* **shall** consider any potential negative nuisances arising from an activity (emissions, sound, light) before permitting development near established properties within the IDP area.
- 3.2.4. *Buffers* **should** be used to mitigate potential conflict between commercial/industrial and other uses where necessary (ex. Auto-wrecker or uses that produce noise or smell).

### 3.3 RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES



The viability of a community is heavily reliant on the provision of adequate and affordable housing, and it is important to prevent the provision of housing from displacing other important community factors such as agriculture. Thus, it is important to properly plan and provide for the housing needs of current and future generations of inhabitants.

**Goal:**

To provide opportunities for residential development within the IDP area which are able to respond to market conditions and preferences and are situated in suitable locations that exhibit a logical and contiguous pattern of growth.

**Objective:**

1. To manage and plan appropriate residential developments to contribute to an orderly settlement pattern and efficient utilization of municipal services and infrastructure within the IDP boundaries, through the use of existing zoning or development of *Area Structure Plans*.

**Policies:**

- 3.3.1. Support for different types of residential development **shall** be encouraged within and around the Town of Peace River that minimize costs relating to extending servicing infrastructure.
- 3.3.2. Each *municipality shall* outline in their *Municipal Development Plan* when an *Area Structure Plan* is required.

**Objective:**

2. To prevent uses within and around residential neighbourhoods that detract from the neighbourhood and produce negative nuisances such as emissions, light pollution, and noise.

**Policy:**

- 3.3.3. Incompatible uses such as the storage of *large vehicles* **should** not be permitted within residentially zoned areas.

**Objective:**

3. To promote affordable housing in the region.

**Policies:**

- 3.3.4. Both *municipalities should* jointly monitor the availability of residential lots within both

jurisdictions to understand supply vs. demand and how it may impact lands within the IDP area.

- 3.3.5.** Both *municipalities* **may** jointly monitor housing trends that determine the types of housing needed in the region (i.e. aging population, mobile workers, immigration) and coordinate planning and priority setting to confirm that current planning documents enable diversification of housing formats.

### 3.4 RURAL & AGRICULTURAL POLICIES



The County is traditionally an agricultural community and places a high value on the lifestyle and livelihood of agricultural operators in the region.

#### Goal:

To support agricultural land within the IDP area, assist in protecting it from premature or inappropriate development which may negatively affect agricultural operations, while also supporting existing and new agricultural operations.

#### Objective:

1. To avoid premature subdivision and conversion of agricultural land within the IDP area.

#### Policy:

- 3.4.1** Agricultural uses within the IDP area **should** be encouraged in accordance with the regulations of the land use district contained within the *Land Use Bylaw*.

## 4. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### 4.1. INTERMUNICIPAL ECONOMIC COLLABORATION POLICIES



The Town and the County recognize the importance of economic development, namely its role in providing employment opportunities, a variety of services, economic diversity and tax revenues. A coordinated economic development strategy can increase the development opportunities that could provide benefits to all through an increased profile of the region at the national and/or global scale. To achieve this objective will require coordinated efforts. Challenges exist in achieving this objective and therefore the intermunicipal economic policies focus on creating a framework for continued dialogue between the *municipalities* to explore opportunities for future collaboration that benefit all parties.

#### Goal:

Increase economic investment within the IDP area that benefits both *municipalities*.

#### Objective:

1. To promote cooperation between the *municipalities* to enable economic growth within the IDP area.

#### Policies:

- 4.1.1. Both *municipalities* **should** consider as a part of their individual economic development initiatives, how to increase the profile of the *municipality* and the region at the national and/or global scale.
- 4.1.2. Both *municipalities* **should** explore, during Joint Council sessions, how to create a fair and reasonable regional framework for shared economic benefit focused on how to attract new businesses located within the IDP boundary, and which **may** be extended to include the Town's other rural municipal neighbours. This framework **should** be focused on attracting new businesses that represent a net gain for both *municipalities*, and shared investment and return.
- 4.1.3. Based on the positive outcomes of policy 4.1.2. both *municipalities* **may** jointly consider creating an Economic Development Authority or other entity with other *municipalities* in the region that could assist in increasing economic opportunities within the IDP boundaries .
- 4.1.4. Both *municipalities* **should** jointly explore opportunities to support and develop secondary products from regional resources including natural resource extraction and agricultural operations.
- 4.1.5. Both *municipalities* **should** work together to promote the region as a tourist-destination capitalizing on the strengths of the region including the river, hunting and outdoor activities.
- 4.1.6. Innovative ideas and technology **should** be explored and capitalized on that could enhance services in the region and provide greater economic opportunity.

**Objective:**

2. To protect and maximize the economic viability of regional facilities.

4.1.7. Both *municipalities* **should** work together to identify key *regional facilities* that will be considered in context to the following policies.

4.1.8. Both *municipalities* **should** work together to establish what activities would be viewed as undermining the viability of *regional facilities* and establish a process to avoid permitting such activities.

4.1.9. Both municipalities **should** work together to maintain and capitalize on key *regional facilities* identified in 5.1.1.

## 5. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT, RECREATION & WATER

### 5.1. PARK, OPEN SPACE & RECREATION POLICIES



Parks, open spaces, recreation, and cultural opportunities are vital to the wellbeing and enjoyment of individual residents and the community as a whole, and provide incentive for persons outside of the region to visit.

**Goal:**

To provide a high quality recreational environment through an integrated system of open greenspace, that takes advantage of the area's natural amenities, and the provision of recreational and cultural facilities to support quality of life

**Objective:**

1. To work collaboratively to maintain parks and open spaces, to identify appropriate lands for future parks/open spaces, and to provide active transportation (trail) connections to and between each.

5.1.1. As part of a wider program a Master Recreation Plan **may** be jointly developed to manage recreational activities such as recreational vehicles (ex. snowmobiles, quads, etc.), programming of existing facilities and identifying linkages between uses and facilities.

5.1.2. If either *municipality* undertakes creating a new recreation plan, they **should** refer it to the other *municipality* as per the policies within Section 2.3.

**Objective:**

- 2. To protect *environmentally significant areas* from development.

**Policy:**

- 5.1.3. *Environmentally significant areas* **shall** be identified within municipal documents such as the *Municipal Development Plan, Area Structure Plans, Outline Plans, and the Land Use Bylaw.*

**Objective:**

- 3. To support the opportunity for recreational and cultural facilities.

**Policy:**

- 5.1.4. Both *municipalities* **should** develop and carry out a Master Recreation Plan. The *municipalities* **may** consider carrying out these projects jointly.
- 5.1.5. Through the Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework (ICF) process, both *municipalities* **may** develop a shared agreement on recreational facilities and how to work together to fund new or renovated facilities of regional benefit.

5.2. FLOODING, SLUMPING & WATERSHED MANAGEMENT POLICIES



The IDP area includes lands that are located on the eastern bank of the Peace River and lands sloping towards the river and the town site, including the toe of the hills. Concern has been expressed about the impact of water runoff and slumping within the hills and along the Peace River, the Heart River, as well as the area around Pat’s Creek.

The Town and the County are situated within the Peace/Slave River Water Basin, which is the largest water basin area in Alberta covering an area of about 180,000 km<sup>2</sup>. Both *municipalities* recognize that as development occurs, the watershed needs to be managed for water quality and quantity as it is important for safe drinking water supply, healthy ecosystems, and the operation of agricultural systems.



**Goal:**

To manage the area along the Peace River where flooding and slumping may occur to prevent damage to property and impact to human life.

**Objective:**

- 1. To promote development not prone to future flood damage or slumping as well as appropriate measures to protect existing properties in the IDP area.

**Policies:**

- 5.2.1. Both *municipalities* **should** adopt consistent regulations that promote standards which reduce risk of slumping, and the impacts of flooding on land use and development.
- 5.2.2. The *municipalities* **may** jointly develop an information package to inform residents of the risks of and mitigation strategies for development near areas where flooding and slumping may occur.
- 5.2.3. Preventative measures such as voluntary planting programs to assist in stabilizing river banks **should** be explored by each *municipality*.
- 5.2.4. Both *municipalities* **shall** share geotechnical information within the IDP area with each other so both decision-makers have the information needed to ensure future development does not negatively affect slope conditions.

**Goal:**

To promote the protection of areas identified as significant environmental resources.

**Objective:**

- 2. To responsibly manage and protect watersheds and other *environmentally significant areas* to protect against flooding and slumping.

**Policies:**

- 5.2.5. Both *municipalities* **shall** recognize the importance of *environmentally significant areas* such as riparian and wetland areas and **may** work together when reviewing *proposals* containing *environmentally significant areas* within the IDP area.
- 5.2.6. The Town and County **should** cooperate with the Government of Alberta's Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils (WPACs) plans for the region, and work co-operatively with the Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance (MPWA) on regional watershed planning and adopting best practices in watershed management.
- 5.2.7. The *municipalities* **should** jointly develop a Storm Water Management Plan to assist in protecting infrastructure, housing and businesses from flooding.
- 5.2.8. Both *municipalities* **shall** implement a process to effectively share water testing and other water related information about the watershed within the IDP area.
- 5.2.9. Both *municipalities* **may** support the Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance's initiatives including but not limited to watershed education programs.

## 6.0 INFRASTRUCTURE & SERVICES

### 6.1. TRANSPORTATION POLICIES



The *plan* area contains several key components of the provincial, regional and local transportation systems for each *municipality*. The *plan* area contains a major provincial highway (Highway #2) and a railway within close proximity. When transportation networks cross municipal boundaries, communication, coordination and long-range planning are essential to support efficiency and functionality of the system and maximize its benefit to the community.

#### Goal:

To develop a safe and efficient transportation network that is consistent in its condition and design standards, in order to help both *municipalities* achieve greater efficiencies and provide better services to their residents and businesses.

#### Objective:

1. To encourage integrated and efficient transportation systems designed to standards that meet the needs of residents and support the prosperity and economic attractiveness of the region through efficient movement of people and goods.

#### Policies:

- 6.1.1 The Town and County **may** jointly review their municipal design standards and maintenance programs for roadways that connect or link between the two *municipalities* and seek to obtain consistency so the transportation network is consistent throughout the IDP area.
- 6.1.2 Where a road that connects or links between the two *municipalities* is planned for construction or major repair within the IDP area, the *municipality* undertaking the work **shall** advise the other *municipality* in order to provide them the opportunity to coordinate projects, obtain economies of scale, and reduce municipal costs of construction.
- 6.1.3 The Town and County **should** inform the other if a new rail spur is developed, or when a realignment of the rail line is needed due to changing slope conditions.
- 6.1.4 Both *municipalities* **should** adhere to the “*Guidelines for New Development in Proximity to Railway Operations*” when developing adjacent to the rail network, all setbacks and approvals should be met before development.

**Objective:**

2. To identify requirements for improvements to the existing municipal road system within the IDP area and cooperate on cost-sharing of maintenance of roads where efficiencies in doing so exist.

**Policy:**

- 6.1.5 The Town and County **should** investigate where opportunities exist in which public works can collaborate across boundaries to assist in reducing operating costs.

**6.2. UTILITIES POLICIES**



The provision of affordable *utilities* throughout a community is imperative to its liveability and its ability to grow and prosper.

**Goal:**

To address *utilities* and servicing on an intermunicipal scale by establishing a process for cross-jurisdictional utility planning and rights-of-way acquisition to maximize efficiencies and avoid duplication of infrastructure.

**Objective:**

1. To facilitate communication between the Town and the County respecting utility infrastructure matters that affect lands in the IDP area or matters of intermunicipal interest.

**Policies:**

- 6.2.1. Both *municipalities* **may** jointly identify and explore opportunities to collaborate in the planning of intermunicipal infrastructure and/or services in order to provide cost efficiency for the extension of utilities (ex water, wastewater, sanitary, etc.).
- 6.2.2. Both *municipalities* **may** jointly investigate the use of alternative forms of energy production such as solar and wind and implement where possible.
- 6.2.3. Both municipalities, in collaboration with other municipalities in the region, **may** jointly work to promote the enhancement of telecommunications in the region.

**Objective:**

2. To cooperate in securing necessary utility easements and right of way agreements in the IDP area.

**Policy:**

- 6.2.4. When expanding or developing new utility networks within the IDP area, the Town and County **shall** work in conjunction with the Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) and the Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC).

6.3. PROGRAMS AND SERVICES POLICIES

The provision of needed and desired services is vital to attracting new as well as keeping existing residents. Existing and new residents will also demand a safe community through the provision of emergency services which cross jurisdictional boundaries.



**Goal:**

To coordinate community and emergency services at an intermunicipal level to promote consistency, and efficiency, and to avoid duplication of services.

**Objective:**

1. To coordinate, where mutually agreed, in the intermunicipal planning and provision of community services including but not limited to: libraries, parks maintenance, weed management and recreation facilities, as well as the provision of necessary new facilities.

- 6.3.1. The Town and County, through the ICF process **shall** collaborate to support the provision of services. Services **may** include, but are not limited to: recreation, family and community support services programs, cemeteries, recycling centres, library services, emergency services and water services.

## 7.0 DEFINITIONS

**Adjacent** – adjacent means contiguous or contiguous if not for a public roadway, lane, railway, river or stream.

**Area Redevelopment Plan** – means a plan adopted by a Council, in accordance with the requirements of Section 634 & 635 of the MGA, for the purpose of providing a framework for subsequent subdivision and development of an area of land in a *municipality*.

**Area Structure Plan** – means a plan adopted by a Council, in accordance with the requirements of Section 633 of the MGA, for the purpose of providing a framework for subsequent subdivision and development of an area of land in a *municipality*.

**Buffer** – means a row(s) of trees or shrubs, a berm or fencing to provide visual screening and separation and/or a sound mitigation barrier between site or incompatible land uses.

**Conceptual Scheme** – see “Outline Plan”.

**Existing Development** – means a development lawfully existing prior to the date of passing of this Intermunicipal Development Plan.

**Environmentally Significant Areas (ESA)** – means areas containing rare or unique elements, or areas that include elements that may require special management consideration due to their conservation needs. ESAs are more generally defined as areas that are important to the long-term maintenance of biological diversity, physical landscape features and/or other natural processes, both locally and within a larger spatial context.

**Fragmentation** – Occurs when once contiguous agricultural areas become divided into separate fragments isolated from each other by other, non-agricultural land uses. Fragmentation can also occur within a given agricultural parcel of land by access roads, oil and gas developments and/or linear infrastructure.

**Land Use Bylaw** – the bylaw that divides a *municipality* into land use districts and establishes procedures for processing and deciding on development application. It contains rules that affect how each parcel of land in a *municipality* may be used and developed.

**Large Vehicle** – refers to vehicles used for commercial and industrial purposes, typically bigger than a three-ton truck.

**Lot** - means 'lot' as defined under Part 17 of the *Municipal Government Act*.

**Municipal Development Plan** - means a plan adopted by a Council, in accordance with the requirements of Section 632 of the MGA.

**Municipal Infrastructure** means infrastructure owned or operated by a municipality that provides service to the municipality’s ratepayers. Examples include municipal sanitary systems, municipal water systems, municipal storm systems, municipal road systems.

**Municipality** – refers to one of either the Town of Peace River or Northern Sunrise County.

**Municipalities** – refers to the Town of Peace River and Northern Sunrise County collectively.

**Natural Resource Extraction Industry** – means a primary industry, whose location is governed by natural geological features, such as gravel, limestone, shale, coal, petroleum or natural gas.

**Outline Plan** – means a non-statutory land use plan adopted by resolution of Council that provides a detailed land use, transportation and servicing concept for the future subdivision and development of land within the area encompassed by the plan boundaries.

**Plan** – refers to the Town of Peace River/ Northern Sunrise County Intermunicipal Development Plan.

**Proposal** – can mean a land use redesignation (rezoning) application, an Area Structure Plan or amendment to, conceptual scheme or amendment to, or amendment to this plan. In addition, “proposal” may refer to a broader planning issue between the Town and the County.

**Regional Facility** means a facility that is owned or operated by one or more municipalities that provides service to the residents and businesses of more than one municipality. This may include municipal infrastructure that provides benefit across municipal boundaries. Examples include the Peace River Agricultural Society Grounds, the Peace Regional Recreation Centre, and the Peace River Regional Airport.

**Riparian Area** – means an area of land characterized by vegetation growing on or near the banks of a stream or other watercourse that is dependent on water from the stream or other watercourse and where sufficient soil moisture supports growth of moisture-loving vegetation.

**Statutory Plan** – means a Joint Plan, an Intermunicipal Development Plan, Municipal Development Plan, or Area Structure Plan prepared and adopted in accordance with the MGA.

**Utilities** – refer to natural gas, sanitary, storm and water services, telephone/cable/internet and electricity.

**Wetlands** – means an area of land that shows a presence of shallow water or flooded soils (or saturated) for part of the growing season, has organisms adapted to this wet environment, and has soil indicators of this flooding, such as hydric soils.

**Working Days** – means Monday to Friday, excluding general holidays as outlined in the government of Alberta’s employment standards.

\*All other words or expressions shall have the meanings respectively assigned to them in the MGA, the Subdivision and Development Regulation, and the Alberta Land Use Framework.

## 8.0 SOURCES

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APPENDIX A – IDP MAPS