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Diamond Valley;
a beautiful and
eclectic community
rooted in nature.

DRAFT

Bylaw No. XX-XXX

Town of Diamond Valley

Municipal Development Plan

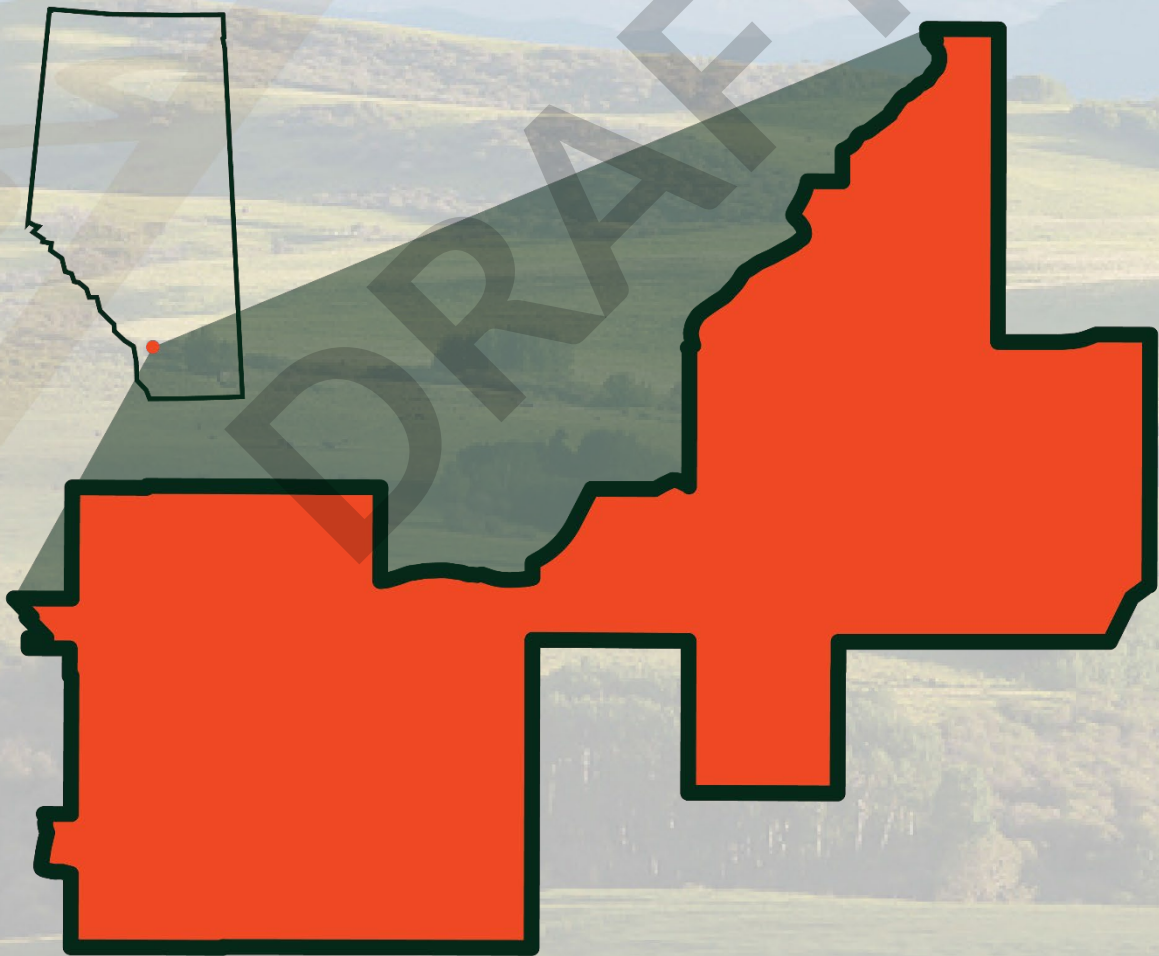
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Bylaw Page

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Land Acknowledgement

The Town of Diamond Valley acknowledges the traditional territories of the people of the Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta, which includes Blackfoot Confederacy members Siksika, Piikani, and the Kainai First Nations, the Stoney Nakoda of Bearspaw, Chiniki and Wesley First Nations, the Dene of Tsuu T'ina First Nations, the Metis Nation Region 3, and all those that made Treaty 7 lands their home.



Mayor and Council Remarks

Text will be provided in the final draft.

DRAFT

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Executive Summary

The Diamond Valley Municipal Development Plan (MDP) sets forth a vision for the future of the Town that is vibrant and fiscally resilient. The MDP establishes a framework to guide decision-making on growth, land use, and development and sets the stage for where we are now, to where we are going over the next 20+ years. This Plan marks a significant milestone for the Town as it is the first community-wide plan for the new Town of Diamond Valley.

Why we have this MDP

Alberta's Municipal Government Act (MGA) requires all municipalities to have a Municipal Development Plan (MDP). This plan is a comprehensive framework for future development, outlining the municipality's vision for land use, growth patterns, transportation systems, and municipal services. The MDP must address key elements such as future land use, development proposals, transportation infrastructure, and essential services, creating a well-coordinated approach to municipal development.

Who Implements the MDP

The implementation of the MDP is a collective responsibility of the citizens, businesses, developers, municipal staff, and Council of the Town. Everyone has a key part to play in the creating the Town's desired future. Citizens can help implement policies that impact them through caring for their community and aligning what they do on their property with the MDP. Businesses can support the MDP as they grow, and developers must follow the MDP when they apply for new projects. Council and municipal staff also have very important roles for implementation. Council must align their decision-making, including budgeting and land use decisions with the MDP. Municipal staff are responsible for ensuring Town administrative decisions follow the MDP and that policies requiring actions are completed. Strong collective actions that are aligned with the MDP vision, goals and policies will implement the MDP and help realize the Town's future vision.

Growth in general is driven by developers and landowners, as landowners consent to development taking place on their lands.

How to Read This MDP

After this section, the MDP is divided into distinct sections.

OUR TOWN

- [Section 1 Our Foundation](#) establishes the historical context for the MDP.
- [Section 2 Our Future](#) shares the MDP vision and goals for the Town.
- [Section 3 Our Challenges](#) introduces the known challenges that guide the policy direction.

POLICY AREAS

- [Section 4 Foundational Policies](#) outlines policies that guide overall decision-making and implementation of the MDP.
- [Section 5 Development Constraints](#) identifies the constraints that must be acknowledged in future planning.
- [Section 6 Growth Strategy & Land Use](#) introduces policies around future land uses and the strategy for managing growth, ultimately driving the MDP to achieve its vision and goals.
- [Section 7 Quality of Life & Community Infrastructure](#), [Section 8 Parks & Environment](#), [Section 9 Emergency Preparedness](#), and [Section 10 Reserve Dedication](#) include supportive policies related to infrastructure, well-being, service provision, environment, and emergency preparedness.

IMPLEMENTATION

- [Section 11 Implementation](#) outlines the implementation process and MDP Action Plan to activate the Plan.

DEFINITIONS

- [Section 12 Definitions](#) outlines the technical terms used in this MDP.

Levels of Direction

In the MDP, the terms “may”, “should”, “must/will”, and “must not”, are used intentionally to convey different levels of direction, ranging from optional actions to mandatory requirements:

MUST/WILL: The words “must” or “will” are considered mandatory when used in a policy.

SHOULD: The word “should” in a policy means that the policy is strongly encouraged but can be varied where unique or unforeseen circumstances provide for courses of action that would satisfy the general intent of the policy.

MAY: Where “may” is used in a policy, it means there is a choice in applying the policy, and it denotes discretionary compliance or the ability to vary the requirements as presented.

MUST NOT: The words “must not” are considered prohibitory when used in a policy.

Plan Interpretation & Graphics

- In this document, “Town” refers specifically to the incorporated municipality of the Town of Diamond Valley, while “town” is used in a general sense and does not refer to the municipal corporation.
- Words that are in *italics* are defined terms, outlined in [Section 12 Definitions](#)
- Revisions to MDP graphics, descriptions, and appendices may be undertaken without an MDP amendment.
- Action items in this MDP are marked with diamond icons and categorized as

IMMEDIATE ♦

SHORT-TERM ♦

LONG-TERM ♦

More information on action items is detailed in [Section 11.4 Achieving the Future State](#).

Callout boxes with supplementary information are scattered throughout the MDP to provide context and explanations for the policies. These callouts look are shown in a green box, similar to this.

MDP Components

The core components of the MDP include the following:

VISION

This vision sets the overall direction for where the Town wants to go in the next 20+ years. **Core values, Objectives, Policies** and **Actions** should all play a role in achieving the MDP Vision.

CORE VALUES

Values emerge from the MDP Vision, and are the individual pillars upon which the Town will work towards meeting the MDP Vision.

OBJECTIVES

Objectives relate back to the Core Values, and MDP Vision. The Objectives clarify what the Town aims to achieve and are the building blocks to meeting the vision and core values.

POLICIES

Each Policy is developed to achieve one or more of the Objectives. Policies are statements that set priorities, directions, or rules for how the MDP will affect governance and actions taken by the Town or developers and citizens.

ACTION ITEMS

Actions summarize the specific tasks the Town needs to carry out over the next five years to work towards achieving the objectives and policies. Actions form the Implementation Plan for the MDP.



OUR TOWN



1 OUR FOUNDATION

We cannot plan a joint future without acknowledging the paths that brought us here. The Towns of Turner Valley and Black Diamond have grown side by side, each with its own character, stories, and strengths. These histories are not just part of our past but a foundation of what Diamond Valley is today. Now, as one community, we can shape our future together.

This is the first Municipal Development Plan that marks the beginning of the path moving forward together. It is a chance to build smarter and create a place that reflects the best of what we have been and all we can become. By embracing our shared values and celebrating our unique heritage, Diamond Valley can grow as a welcoming, resilient community honouring its roots while looking ahead.



TOWN OF DIAMOND VALLEY

OUR TOWN

1.1 Turner Valley

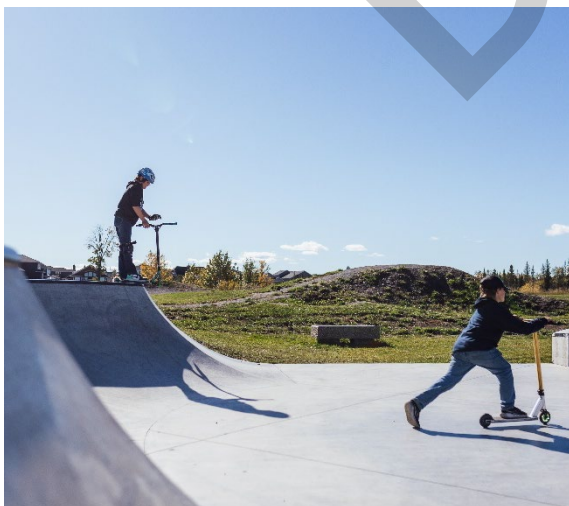
Turner Valley has a rich history deeply intertwined with the oil and gas industry. It was named after Robert and John Turner, who settled there in 1886. Turner Valley gained prominence in the early 20th century when it became the site of Alberta's first significant oil and gas discovery.

On May 14, 1914, the Dingman No. 1 well struck wet natural gas, marking the beginning of the Turner Valley oilfields. This discovery heralded the start of Alberta's oil boom, which would later shift to other regions. For several decades, Turner Valley was a major supplier of oil and gas, contributing significantly to the local and national economy.

The town was incorporated as a village on February 23, 1930, and later as a town on September 1, 1977. Over time, the town has attracted amenities catering to residents and visitors, including specialty businesses and recreational areas for outdoor leisure activities and a quiet, serene lifestyle cherished by residents.

Today, Turner Valley's historical significance is still visible through sites like the Turner Valley Gas Plant, which has been designated both a provincial and national historic site. This plant serves as a reminder of the town's pivotal role in developing Alberta's oil and gas industry.





1.2 Black Diamond

Black Diamond's history is rooted in the coal industry. The town was named after the coal deposits discovered in the area in the late 1800s by government land surveyor James A. McMillan. By 1899, a coal mine was established near the Sheep River, producing high-grade coal for local use.

The town took shape in 1907 by establishing its first post office and constructing key buildings. Black Diamond was officially incorporated as a village on May 8, 1929, and later as a town on January 1, 1956. The discovery of oil and gas in nearby Turner Valley in 1914 spurred significant growth, with many oilfield workers settling in the area.

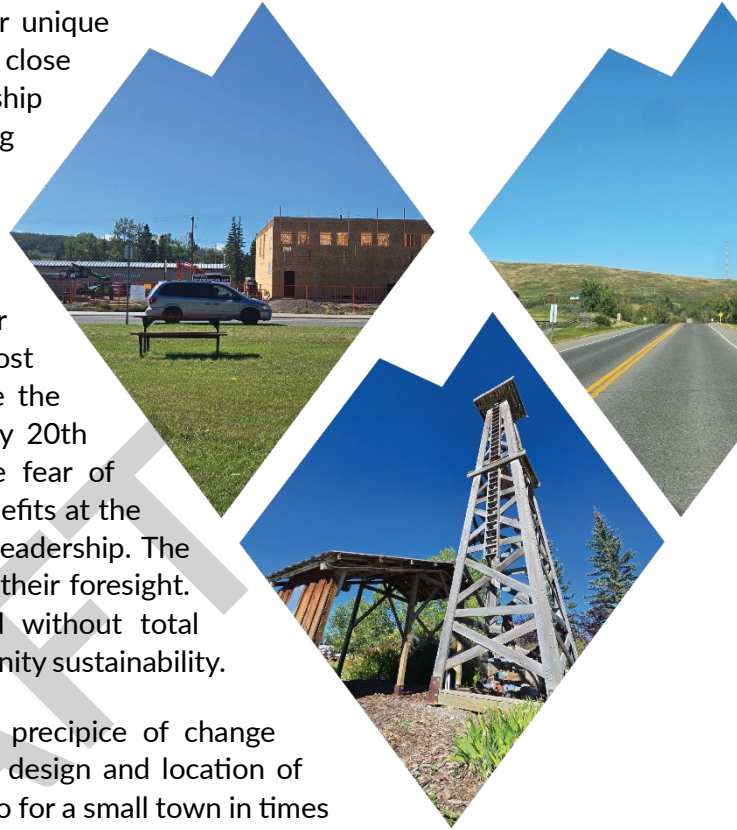
Over time, Black Diamond developed amenities, including schools, a hospital, shops, and recreational facilities. As the town grew, the range of development expanded to enhance the quality of life for its residents and visitors, including outdoor opportunities, shops, grocery stores, and dining options. The town offered a blend of small-town appeal and modern convenience, which the town continues to provide. Today, its history is visible through its historical buildings and community projects aimed at maintaining its unique heritage. The town also grew arts and culture programs and events that highlight the talents of local artists and performers.

1.3 Forging a New Path Together

Turner Valley and Black Diamond are shaped by their unique histories and proximity to one another, sharing close economic and social ties for decades. This relationship culminated in amalgamation on January 1, 2023, forming the new Town of Diamond Valley.

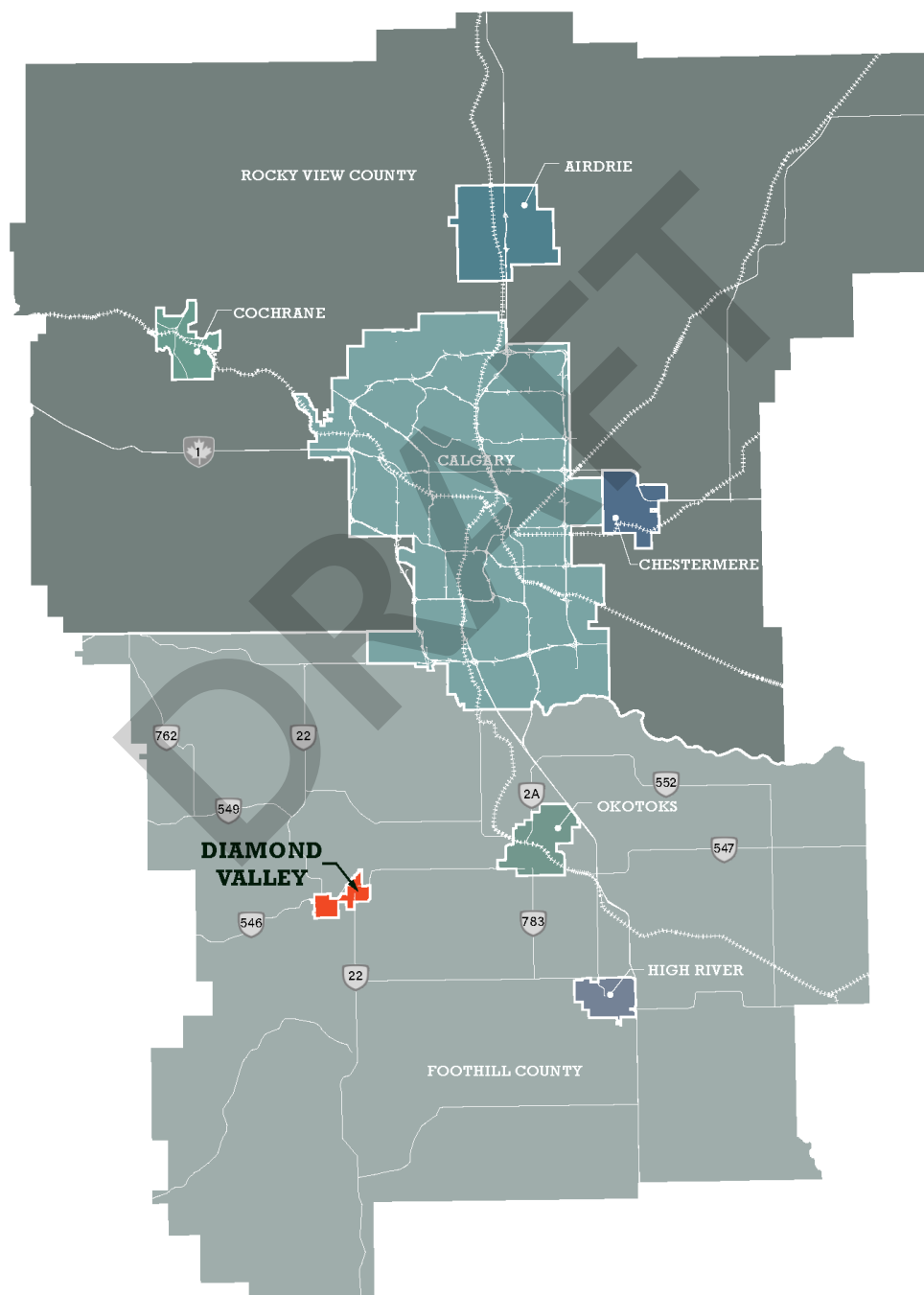
The MDP envisions the collective future of Diamond Valley following amalgamation, building upon the unique character that shaped Black Diamond and Turner Valley. The decision to amalgamate is arguably the most impactful decision undertaken by both councils since the incorporation of the two previous towns in the early 20th century. Generally, people resist change due to the fear of uncertainty. Making decisions that yield long-term benefits at the expense of short-term costs demands discipline and leadership. The Councils' decisions to amalgamate are a testament to their foresight. Although the decision to amalgamate was reached without total consensus, it was the right choice for long-term community sustainability.

This MDP contemplates the Town as being on the precipice of change resulting from amalgamation and considers the pace, design and location of growth. The expressed desire to maintain the status quo for a small town in times of fiscal uncertainty and the consequences of deferred infrastructure upgrades affect the Town's ability to prioritize alternative growth strategies. This MDP has been created based on developing objectives and policies that shift the town to a more fiscally resilient community.



1.4 Diamond Valley

The amalgamation of Black Diamond and Turner Valley resulted in the Town of Diamond Valley being Alberta's newest municipality in 2023. Both communities had fewer than 3,000 residents, and their boundaries were nearly adjoining, separated by the shallow river valley of the Sheep River. Given Diamond Valley's proximity to Calgary, the fastest-growing major city in Canada and a gateway to the mountains, population growth is expected over the next decade.



DEMOGRAPHICS AND GROWTH

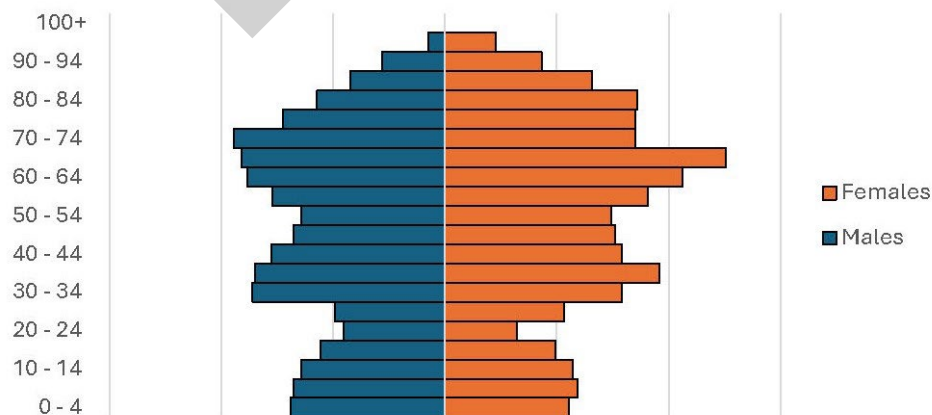
Black Diamond and Turner Valley (now Diamond Valley) have historically experienced similar growth patterns, as shown in [Table 1](#). The fastest growth period was between 2006 and 2016, with a slowdown between 2016 and 2021. Future growth projections estimate the population based on specific assumptions. The MDP considers a cohort model projection (shown in [Table 1](#)), which provides a more sophisticated alternative to a simple growth rate calculation. This method models the age-sex structure of populations, not just their size, accounting for demographic changes based on fertility, mortality, and migration. For example, it considers age groups likely to start families, influencing future population growth and the proportion of seniors. Based on this model, the town is anticipated to grow between 1-2%, reaching a population of 7,433 by 2051.

Table 1. Diamond Valley population projections.

	1% GROWTH	COHORT MODEL	2% GROWTH	3% GROWTH
2026	5,613	5,740	5,897	6,192
2031	5,900	6,124	6,511	7,178
2036	6,201	6,495	7,188	8,321
2041	6,517	6,846	7,936	9,646
2046	6,849	7,158	8,762	11,183
2051	7,199	7,443	9,674	12,964

Diamond Valley is experiencing an increase in the proportion of people aged 60+ due to people aging in place and the in-migration of seniors. While younger age groups, especially 20 to 30-year-olds, have declined, there is a subsequent rise in populations in their mid- to late 30s and early 40s.

Figure 1. Population Pyramid (2046 Projection)



2 OUR FUTURE

2.1 Guiding Vision

Diamond Valley aspires to be a vibrant and fiscally resilient community where natural beauty and modern charm coexist harmoniously.

We envision a safe, friendly, and connected town that nurtures unity and pride among our residents, creating a healthy environment that supports active lifestyles and local businesses and offers a peaceful escape from the hustle and bustle.

The town will continue to be a unique and attractive gathering place that respects its heritage and embraces an inclusive, welcoming environment for our families and neighbours.

2.2 Our Core Values



Small-Town Feel

We believe in community and preserving our small-town feel.



Fiscally Responsible

We will govern in a fiscally responsible way, making the tough decisions now to create a brighter future for the next generations.



Safe & Inclusive

We will create safe, inclusive places for our residents and visitors.



Diversified Employment

We will prioritize establishing diversified employment opportunities that support a resilient local economy.



Strategic Growth

We will pursue strategic growth that respects our past while planning for the needs of future generations.



Environmentally Conscious

We are environmentally conscious and hold space for our natural environment in our decision-making.



Government Transparency

We will be transparent in our communications and create opportunities to educate residents about municipal projects and initiatives.

3 OUR CHALLENGES

Ignoring the Town's challenges in the MDP would do a disservice to the Town, its residents, and the planning process. Confronting the challenges initiates the shaping of solutions, and the solutions guide the actions. The Action Plan in this MDP will outline the first important steps to address the various challenges and their combined effects.

3.1 Infrastructure

Diamond Valley faces significant challenges with aging infrastructure, including critical water, stormwater, and sewer systems, as well as public buildings, roads and utilities. Much of this infrastructure is decades old and requires substantial maintenance, upgrades, or replacement, which the Town's reserves currently cannot fully cover.

Old infrastructure poses several risks:

- **Water Systems:** Leaking and breaking pipes can waste water, reduce quality and capacity, and cause contamination, which can pose health risks.
- **Stormwater Systems:** Poor maintenance can lead to flooding, damaging properties and disrupting daily life.
- **Sewer Systems:** Outdated systems can cause backups and overflows, leading to pollution and health hazards.
- **Roads:** Roadways must be maintained for the safety and protection of drivers and pedestrians.

Public buildings, such as the community center and Town Hall, also suffer from wear and tear. Without proper maintenance, these buildings can become unsafe and unusable, depriving the community of essential services and gathering spaces. Deferring maintenance only increases the costs and the problem, which has occurred in the past because the *tax base* (i.e. the total taxes collected each year) does not generate enough revenue to cover the costs of the work that needs to be carried out. Over the years, the accumulation of continued deferred maintenance and lack of monitoring has resulted in infrastructure and facilities needing major upgrades and replacements. Solving this challenge requires money, namely, revenue generated through taxes. There are two key elements linked to land use decision-making:

1. Attracting and increasing a non-residential *tax base* that generates greater revenue per hectare than residential and generally has less demand on infrastructure services.
2. Capitalize on existing infrastructure rather than developing new infrastructure, which means utilizing existing land with access to services, particularly housing.



Proactive planning and preventative infrastructure maintenance are key to a safe and healthy community.

See how the MDP tackles this challenge in Sections:

- [Section 4 Foundational Policies](#)
- [Section 5 Development Constraints](#)
- [Section 6 Growth Strategy and Land Use](#)
- [Section 7 Quality of Life and Community Infrastructure](#)

3.2 Taxes

Residents of Diamond Valley are understandably concerned about rising property taxes and financial uncertainty, caused mainly by the infrastructure challenges described above. While developers initially fund new infrastructure, the Town eventually bears the maintenance and replacement costs through property taxes. The tax revenue from existing buildings and development is insufficient to cover these maintenance and replacement costs.

Non-residential development, which typically pays a higher tax rate than residential and generally requires less infrastructure, is crucial to balancing the Town's fiscal situation. However, Diamond Valley has an unhealthy ratio of taxes coming from residential versus non-residential development. A healthy tax ratio for municipalities in Alberta typically means that no more than 70% of taxes come from residential property, with the remainder (30% or greater) coming from non-residential property (commercial and industrial). Diamond Valley generates only 12% of its taxes from non-residential development and 88% from residential development as of 2024. This often results in high residential taxes, which burden homeowners, especially retirees or others on a fixed income. This imbalance means residential property owners' taxes are the key source of municipal revenue in maintaining municipal infrastructure and facility costs, with a projection for residential taxes needing to continue to climb as infrastructure ages.

Rising costs for infrastructure repairs and replacements, driven by inflation and other externalities, exacerbate the issue. Without increasing taxes to generate more revenue, the Town must rely on reserves or debt, leaving no funds for essential projects, services, or amenities, leading to potential service cuts.

See how the MDP tackles this challenge in Sections:

- [Section 4 Foundational Policies](#)
- [Section 6 Growth Strategy & Land Use](#)
- [Section 11 Implementation](#)

3.3 Climate Change

Climate change continues to shape the landscapes in which we live and can devastate human life, property, and the natural environment. Fires, floods and droughts are no longer things that only happen on the news but are realities for Alberta communities as storm events continue to intensify, shaping our thinking about future planning and land use. The Town's location poses risks for floods, droughts, wildfires, hail¹, extreme temperatures, damaging winds, and even tornadoes². The nearby Sheep River is subject to flooding and droughts due to its dynamic nature, while the surrounding grasslands and foothills forests are at risk of wildfire. Higher temperatures over longer periods create changes in our weather that lead to more prevalent extreme climatic events, such as droughts, wildfires, and intense thunderstorms.

To address these issues, Diamond Valley is focusing on making infrastructure more resilient, managing water sustainably, planning for emergencies, and preserving natural landscapes that can help protect against future climate events.

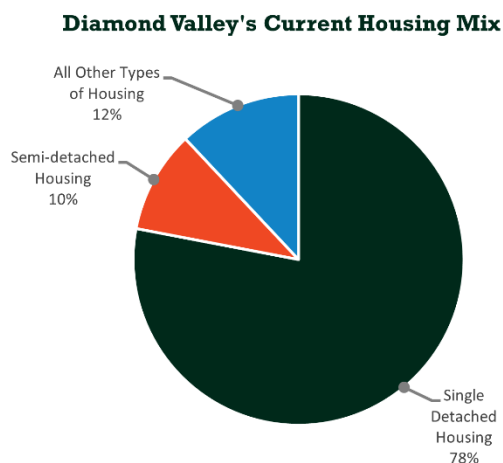
See how the MDP tackles this challenge in Sections:

- [Section 7 Quality of Life & Community Infrastructure](#)
- [Section 8 Parks & Environment](#)
- [Section 9 Emergency Preparedness](#)

3.4 Housing

Housing in Diamond Valley is a challenge as it lacks diversity and options for the Town's different ages, incomes and demographics, making it hard for people to find homes that meet their needs. Housing in Diamond Valley is primarily single-detached homes (78%) and semi-detached homes (10%). Other dwelling types are present but in limited numbers. Rising property prices and rental costs are no longer just a concern for low-income families—young professionals, middle-income families, and retirees are also struggling with affordable rentals and homeownership.

Based on demographic data, there is a growing need for senior and multi-generational housing. The average age in Diamond Valley in 2021 was 44.9, with a median age of 47.9³. This compares to a provincial average that is younger by six years at 39.0 and a median age of 38.4. Compared to the entire population, in 2021, 31% of Black Diamond's population and 23% of Turner Valley's population were over 65 years old. Diamond Valley is seeing an increase in the proportion of people aged 60+ due to aging in place and the in-migration of seniors. With a large senior population, the demand for affordable and accessible housing for seniors increases. However, there are not enough



suitable homes for seniors, which might force them to leave town, adding to the stress of aging and reducing the locals with long-time knowledge and history of the community⁴.

While local housing challenges are significant, broader pressures also impact affordability and availability. Federal immigration policies, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) regulations, financial systems (including mortgage lenders), property insurance requirements, global supply chain disruptions affecting building materials, and the availability of skilled trades locally all contribute to the issue. None of these factors are within the Town's control, but they play a critical role in shaping the housing market. What matters is not just the challenge itself, but how the Town responds to it.

Recognition that the Town is not in a financial position to take on new infrastructure costs from greenfield development and has limited water capacity must accompany decision-making for the building of new homes and be regularly monitored closely by the Town.

See how the MDP tackles this challenge in Section:

- [Section 6 Growth Strategy & Land Use](#)

3.5 Demographics & Talent Attraction

A healthy local economy is strongly linked to the presence of a talented, trained, and educated workforce. Unfortunately, the local economy has seen a continued out-migration of young people in their 20s and early 30s. This leads to challenges for local businesses in finding entry-level labour and an aging workforce that may not have the skills needed in today's technology-focused economy. Furthermore, the absence of young adults makes it more difficult to attract that demographic as housing, shopping opportunities, and other amenities are not often built to accommodate their wants, needs or values. This can result in a downward spiral effect that is challenging to overcome and results in an ever-aging population, a declining local economy, and an increased tax burden on the remaining population.

See how the MDP tackles this challenge in Section:

- [Section 6 Growth Strategy & Land Use](#)

3.6 Alberta Transportation

Diamond Valley's location along Highways 7 and 22 challenges its ability to foster a pedestrian-friendly downtown environment due to the high traffic volumes, speeds and noise generated on these highways. Developing land or improving downtown streetscapes along these highways is complicated by the influence of Alberta Transportation, which holds responsibility for provincial highways. To improve the downtown area, Diamond Valley will continue to build on its existing relationships and initiatives, working closely with Alberta Transportation to balance the needs of businesses, pedestrians, and vehicles.

See how the MDP tackles this challenge in Section:

- [Section 7 Quality of Life & Community Infrastructure](#)

3.7 Contaminated Lands

A *brownfield* property is land that was previously developed and holds the potential for pollution from past activities. Culprits of contamination can include factories, oil and gas infrastructure, gas stations, or dry cleaners. Cleaning up these sites can be expensive and requires thorough environmental checks and treatments, like digging up soil and treating groundwater, to meet safety standards. This makes redevelopment costlier.

However, redeveloping *brownfield* sites can have significant benefits. It can bring new life to unused land and capitalize on existing infrastructure, reducing the need to develop greenfield lands. Environmentally, cleaning up these sites stops further pollution and supports biodiversity. While some remediation work has been completed in the town, predominantly on the former Turner Valley Gas Plant, much work remains.

See how the MDP tackles this challenge in Sections:

- [Section 5 Development Constraints](#)
- [Section 6 Growth Strategy & Land Use](#)

Some contaminated lands in the Town are known and shown in [Figure 2. Development Constraint](#).

3.8 Topography

The presence of the Sheep River defines Diamond Valley's landscape (see [Figure 2. Development Constraint](#)). While development is generally avoided in these areas through the preservation of environmental areas, the Town's natural features — including ravines and rolling hills — create challenges for establishing efficient infrastructure connections. Sustainable practices like green infrastructure and low-impact development can help address these challenges, making the area more resilient.

See how the MDP tackles this challenge in Sections:

- [Section 5 Development Constraints](#)
- [Section 7 Quality of Life & Community Infrastructure](#)
- [Section 8 Parks & Environment](#)
- [Section 10 Reserve Dedication](#)

3.9 Amalgamation & Governance

The amalgamation of Turner Valley and Black Diamond transition has been challenging, involving integrating new administrative systems, aligning policy, and managing high staff turnover. The process has suffered from a lack of a formalized change management plan to guide the merger. Furthermore, the process has been hampered by the lack of clearly defined objectives, responsibilities, and communications, leading to inefficiencies and delays in decision-making and implementing process improvements.

Despite these issues, the importance of amalgamation should not be overlooked. It offers a sustainable approach by using resources more efficiently, streamlining services, and creating a unified development strategy. With a combined population of less than 6,000, amalgamation was a logical step from geographical, political, developmental, and operational perspectives. It required political will, compromise, and decision-making over several years. The commitment of both Town councils to look ahead and plan for the future is commendable. However, it is recognized that there is more to be done to get back on the right track, and tough decisions to be made.

The MDP process has shown the need for greater transparency in governance. Clear communication and involving residents in decision-making when they have a say are crucial to rebuilding trust. This includes openly sharing and communicating plans, progress, and challenges, and actively seeking community input and effective public engagement when possible and properly resourced.

See how the MDP tackles this challenge in Sections:

- [Section 4 Foundational Policies](#)
- [Section 11 Implementation](#)





POLICY AREAS



4 FOUNDATIONAL POLICIES

The Town is committed to rebuilding a trusting relationship with its residents after years of disruption resulting from amalgamation and a high staff turnover. The Town is also committed to building on its core values of transparency and fiscal resilience through this MDP and the future decision-making of Council.



**Building Trust
Through
Transparency,
Resilience, and
Community Voice.**

4.1 Transparency

Transparency means the openness, accessibility, and accountability of municipal decision-making, policies, and operations. It means that residents, businesses, and other affected groups can clearly see how decisions are made, understand the rationale behind them, and easily access relevant information.

Since amalgamation, the Town has recognized the need to increase transparency in governance and share the “why” behind decisions. This starts with the framework of this MDP, which includes a purpose statement to support each policy and is further distilled into everyday practice.

Transparency Core Values



**Government
Transparency**



TRANSPARENCY OBJECTIVES

- A Foster transparent and inclusive governance practices that build citizen trust through strong communication and openness in information sharing.
- B Create opportunities to engage citizens on important topics, while being transparent about how feedback is used.
- C Communicate regularly with residents about municipal decisions, projects and initiatives.

TRANSPARENCY POLICIES

- 4.1.1 The Town **will** review its Public Participation Policy at least once every four (4) years to consider whether the Policy requires updates, including compliance with legislation, municipal policies, and the spirit and intent of public participation. ♦

Achieves Objectives: A, B

- 4.1.2 The Town **will** seek opportunities for meaningful engagement with residents and stakeholders.

Achieves Objectives: A, B, C

- 4.1.3 The Town **will** clearly communicate how resident feedback will inform decision-making during public engagement.

Achieves Objectives: A, B, C

Engagement without intention devalues the purpose. Meaningful engagement does not mean listening to the loudest people in the room or the most people opposing; it means creating equitable opportunities to hear perspectives from everyone impacted by a

- 4.1.4 The Town **must** review its External Communications Policy at least once every three years, in accordance with the Policy, to ensure it complies with legislation, other municipal policies, and adequately outlines how the municipality **will** consistently and effectively communicate information about important issues, projects and services with citizens and stakeholders. ♦

Achieves Objectives: A, C

- 4.1.5 The Town **may** consider adopting new communication tools to promptly respond to resident concerns and requests and, where possible, implement improvement actions.

Achieves Objectives: A, B

4.2 Fiscal Resilience

[Section 3 Our Challenges](#) introduced the town's challenges, which relate predominantly to the physical and fiscal health of the community. However, municipalities have few choices on how to balance their finances. They can cut or streamline the services they provide, defer maintenance/replacement of infrastructure, raise user fees, raise taxes, or they can try to generate more taxes. All options typically have some adverse side effects that must be mitigated.

With aging infrastructure and limited reserves, careful financial planning is important to balance necessary upgrades with long-term sustainability. Fiscal resilience enables the Town to weather economic uncertainties, direct investment where needed most, and provide essential services with minimal interruption. While there is no silver bullet for achieving fiscal resilience based on the Town's current financial state, the Town can prioritize actions to address challenges and implement measures to prevent worsening conditions. Without thoughtful growth and strategic investment, the gap between infrastructure costs and available funding will widen.



The following topics are important in the Town's fiscal resilience. More information on each topic can be found in [Appendix A: Fiscal Resilience](#).



Taxes

The Town relies heavily on residential taxes to fund infrastructure and services, and must attract more non-residential land uses and manage growth efficiently to achieve long-term fiscal resilience.



User Fees and Service Charges

User fees help recover the costs of specific services while reducing reliance on property taxes, and should be regularly reviewed to maintain fairness and affordability.



Development Charges and Off-Site Levies

While development charges are essential in funding initial infrastructure for growth, they do not cover long-term maintenance, requiring careful evaluation of new greenfield development to avoid future financial strain.



Business Licenses

Business licenses generate modest revenue and support regulation and economic development, and should be managed to balance oversight with minimal administrative burden.



Grants

Grants are a critical but unpredictable funding source, requiring proactive applications and advocacy for stable support to reduce dependence on local taxation.



Cost-Sharing Arrangements

The Town must strengthen cost-sharing agreements with enforceable terms to enable fair contributions and protect local taxpayers from unpaid regional service costs.



Infrastructure Maintenance and Capital Projects

Proactive investment and asset management are essential to address significant deferred maintenance and prevent long-term infrastructure deterioration and financial pressure. Deferring maintenance only results in greater costs in the future.



Employee Salaries and Benefits taxes

While amalgamation brought some savings, growing workloads demand strategic staffing and investment in efficiency to sustainably maintain service quality.



Protective Services

The Town must balance the rising cost of protective services with the need to create safety through thoughtful planning and regional collaboration.



Recreation and Community Services

Given deteriorating facilities and budget pressures, the Town must prioritize essential recreation services and explore partnerships to maintain other services sort by the community.



Debt Servicing and Financial Reserves

The Town must carefully manage upcoming debt and protect reserves by limiting their use to critical priorities that support long-term financial stability.

Fiscal Resilience Core Values



**Fiscally
Responsible**



**Strategic
Growth**

FISCAL RESILIENCE OBJECTIVES

- A Prioritize actions that create long-term financial stability in Diamond Valley.
- B Strengthen the Town's commitment to fiscal resilience.
- C Explore partnership opportunities to fund infrastructure and amenities.

FISCAL RESILIENCE POLICIES

- 4.2.1 The Town **will** maintain an updated *Infrastructure Management Plan*, including an annual review of new conditions, assets, and maintenance efforts. ♦

Achieves Objectives: A, B

- 4.2.2 The Town **must** conduct an annual review of the current tax structure, including current tax revenues, rates, and frameworks, and identify potential opportunities to adjust existing rates or introduce new taxes without overburdening residents. ♦

Achieves Objectives: A, B

- 4.2.3 The Town **should** conduct a Cost of Servicing Analysis to reassess the cost for each new municipal service in relation to revenue streams. ♦

Achieves Objectives: A, B

- 4.2.4 The Town **should** explore provincial or federal funding or potential private sector partners that could support the cost-effective provision of services such as recreation, public safety, transportation, or social services.

Achieves Objective: C

Infrastructure Management Planning allows the Town to maintain a comprehensive inventory of municipal assets and systematically track deferred maintenance. This allows the Town to prioritize funding for repairs and replacements to prevent costly emergency fixes and extend the lifespan of infrastructure, including facilities.

Conducting a Cost of Servicing Analysis for each municipal service, including direct and indirect costs, provides a clear understanding of the financial implications of service delivery. By comparing these costs with regional benchmarks and adjusting fees accordingly, service fees are fair and reflective of actual costs.

4.3 Informed Decision-Making

The MDP has stressed the importance of transparent decision-making in [Section 4.1 Transparency](#). Communicating the “why” behind decisions is key to achieving this goal. Decisions should be based on tangible and factual evidence distilled from data. By leveraging data-driven approaches, the Town can optimize resource allocation, enhance service delivery, and plan for future needs more precisely. The reasoning behind decisions shared with residents can be clearly articulated through data, visuals and other communication tools.

Informed Decision-Making Core Values



**Strategic
Growth**



**Government
Transparency**



POLICY A

INFORMED DECISION-MAKING OBJECTIVES

- A Establish a culture of data-driven decision-making.
- B Create municipal systems that support data-driven decision-making.

INFORMED DECISION-MAKING POLICIES

- 4.3.1 The Town **will** publicly share data used by municipal departments in decision-making to garner public support and understanding for decisions.

Achieves Objective: A

- 4.3.2 Council decisions on land use and infrastructure **must** be based on a comprehensive understanding of the Town's long-term financial situation.

Achieves Objective: A

- 4.3.3 Proponents of a proposed development **will** provide the Town with data to support the decision-making process. Data **should** include financial analysis, environmental analysis, infrastructure and asset management, and an analysis of the impact on the Town's water licensing and availability.


Achieves Objectives: A, B

- 4.3.4 The Town **should** regularly update and advertise its public WebMap to include relevant and up-to-date data that effectively communicates land use, economic investment opportunities, infrastructure, and environmental information. ♦

Achieves Objectives: A, B

- 4.3.5 The Town **should** adopt key performance indicators (action items shown in [Section 11.4 Achieving the Future State](#)) from this MDP that are measured, tracked, and presented on the Town website. ♦

Achieves Objective: B



By sharing its approach to data-driven decision-making (e.g., financial data, service usage data, demographic and socioeconomic data, public safety data, and environmental data), the Town can clearly articulate the reason for its decisions.

5 DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS

The lands within Diamond Valley include various manmade and environmental constraints, including *brownfield* sites, flood hazard areas, steep slopes, and oil and gas infrastructure. These constraints can limit development potential and increase development costs. See [Figure 2. Development Constraint](#).

5.1 Brownfield

Brownfield sites are previously developed lands that have known or suspected contamination. Contamination is caused by previous land uses with noxious substances, such as gas stations, laundromats, or previous oil and gas activity. These sites present both a challenge and opportunity for future growth in the Town. The challenge is the cost and difficulty of clean-up while the opportunity is for infilling of vacant lands that typically adjoin existing infrastructure resulting in capitalizing on the existing town resources and additional tax revenue.

There are a significant number of *brownfield* sites in Diamond Valley. Some are known contaminated lands, however, there are likely more that will require appropriate study and reclamation. The location of these sites along major transportation corridors makes them optimal for non-residential redevelopment. While *brownfield* sites often require environmental remediation and infrastructure upgrades, redevelopment supports efficient land use, economic revitalization, and environmental sustainability, leveraging existing infrastructure to transform underused properties into productive spaces. A key to enabling this is seeking funding from other government agencies to support the reclamation.

Brownfield Core Values



**Fiscally
Responsible**

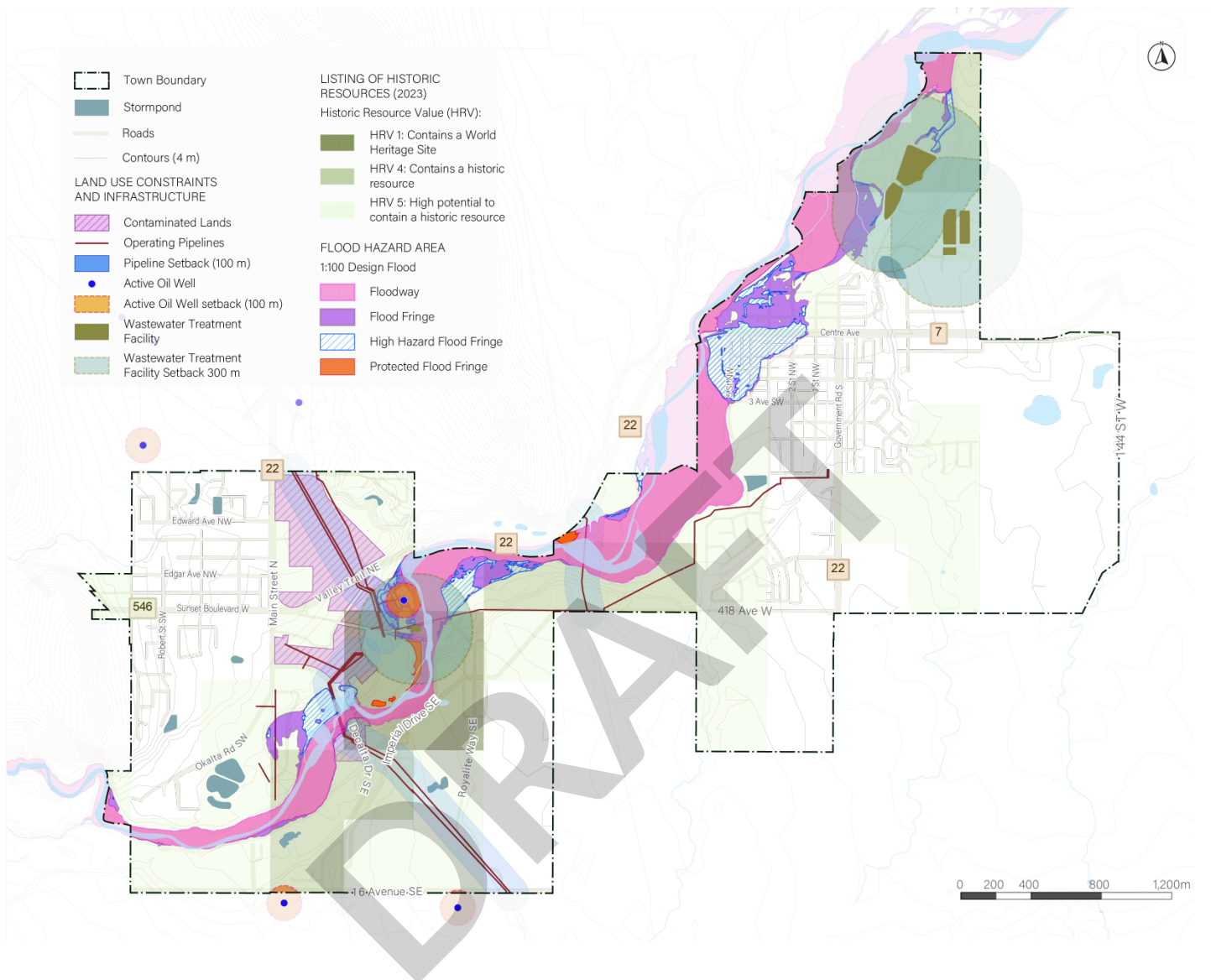


**Strategic
Growth**

BROWNFIELD OBJECTIVES

- A Work with landowners of contaminated sites who are seeking to remediate their lands in accordance with provincial requirements.
- B Seek funding from other government agencies to reclaim *brownfield* lands with known contamination.
- C Explore interim uses for *brownfield* lands until development is possible.

Figure 2. Development Constraints



BROWNFIELD POLICIES

- 5.1.1 The Town **will** pursue grant funding to support the remediation of contaminated *brownfield* sites.

Achieves Objective: B

Remediating land is costly and reduces its attractiveness for development. Seeking funding from the provincial or federal government can hasten the remediation process.

- 5.1.2 All development proposed on *brownfield* sites **must** undergo, at minimum, an *Environmental Site Assessment* Phase 1 or Phase 2 (ESA) conducted by a *qualified professional*. Depending on the results of the Phase 1 ESA, further site assessments **may** be necessary.

Achieves Objective: A

- 5.1.3 Development of all contaminated *brownfield* sites **must not** proceed until all required plans of remediation and development are prepared, reviewed, and approved by Alberta Environment, Alberta Energy Regulator, or other required regulatory agencies and boards.

Achieves Objective: A

- 5.1.4 The Town **should** work with landowners to identify opportunities to incentivize and promote the remediation of contaminated sites and *brownfields* for redevelopment purposes.

Achieves Objective: A

- 5.1.5 The Town **may** explore the possibility of allowing appropriate interim uses, such as non-intrusive, low risk uses such as outdoor events, markets, pop-up installations or on-site storage, for *brownfield* lands until remediation is complete.

Achieves Objective: C

Completing a Phase I and / or Phase 2 Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) on brownfield lands will identify any potential environmental contamination from past or present activities that could pose risks to public health or the environment, allowing for informed decision-making and necessary remediation before development occurs.

The Town wishes to have contaminated lands cleaned up and developed. However, it does not have the authority to initiate remediation on privately owned contaminated lands. Unless the landowner chooses to proceed with remediation, the Town's role is limited to supporting and facilitating the process in alignment with provincial regulations.

Until studies and required remediation are done, brownfield sites remain stagnant and undeveloped. Reviewing Land Use Bylaw regulations for interim or temporary uses that may be appropriate for brownfield sites, such as parks, or parking lots, allows the Town to utilize these lands while awaiting remediation.

5.2 Development in Flood Hazard Areas

The Sheep River is known as a freestone river, which means it comes down from a mountain environment uninterrupted by any dams or flood mitigation structures. Freestone rivers can have extreme fluctuations in water flows, from peaks during spring run-off to lows in the heat of summer or cold of winter.

The multi-year Sheep River Flood Study identifies various river-related hazards that could impact properties in Diamond Valley. When this MDP was written, updated flood mapping had not been released. Without updated flood hazard maps, the Town must continue to proactively monitor risks and consider flood mitigation measures in known affected areas.

Flood Hazard Areas are generally shown on [Figure 2. Development Constraints](#). To understand what steps the Town is taking to mitigate flooding hazards, refer to [Section 12.3 Flooding Hazard](#).

The Province of Alberta identifies two key flood-prone areas of rivers: the *floodway* and the flood fringe. The *floodway* is the highest hazard, where flows are the deepest, fastest, and most destructive. The flood fringe is where water is typically shallower and flows more slowly. Flood definitions from the Province are provided on the next page.

Development in Flood Hazard Areas Core Values



**Safe &
Inclusive**



**Strategic
Growth**



**Environmentally
Conscious**

DEVELOPMENT IN FLOOD HAZARD AREAS OBJECTIVES

- A Limit or minimize future development investment within flood hazard areas to prevent the loss of life, property, and infrastructure in flood prone areas.
- B Continue to implement flood mitigation measures.

FLOOD HAZARD AREA: The flood hazard area is the area of land that will be flooded during the 1:100 design flood. The flood hazard area is typically divided into two main zones, the floodway and the flood fringe, and may include additional flood fringe sub-zones.

.....

FLOODWAY: When flood hazard maps are produced for the first time, the floodway typically represents the area of highest hazard where design flood flows are deepest, fastest, and most destructive, where no structures can be built in this area. When flood hazard maps are updated, the new floodway might not change and can be the same size as the previous floodway, even when the flood area gets larger, to help maintain regulatory certainty for landowners.

.....

FLOOD FRINGE: The flood fringe is the part of the flood hazard area outside of the floodway. When flood hazard maps are produced for the first time, water in the flood fringe is typically shallower and flows more slowly than in the floodway. Depending on when a flood study was conducted, the flood fringe can also include high hazard flood fringe, protected flood fringe, or overland flow (flood fringe) sub-zones.

.....

HIGH HAZARD FLOOD FRINGE: The high hazard flood fringe identifies areas within the flood fringe with deeper or faster moving water than the rest of the flood fringe. High hazard flood fringe areas may be more prevalent in communities with updated flood hazard maps, but they are included in flood hazard maps from all newer flood studies.

.....

OVERLAND FLOW (FLOOD FRINGE): The overland flow (flood fringe) is a legacy flood fringe sub-zone that identifies areas where flooding is expected but where there is uncertainty about flood levels and water depths. These areas are only defined in a small number of older flood studies and will be phased out as those studies are updated and replaced.

.....

PROTECTED FLOOD FRINGE: The protected flood fringe identifies areas that could be flooded if dedicated flood berms fail or do not work as designed during the 1:100 design flood. These areas are not expected to be flooded but reflect areas of residual risk. Protected areas can be different for floods smaller or larger than the design flood.

.....

DESIGN FLOOD: The minimum design flood standard in Alberta is the 1:100 flood, which is defined as a flood whose flow has a 1% chance of being equaled or exceeded in any year. The design flood can also reflect 1:100 ice jam flood levels if they are more severe than 1:100 open

DEVELOPMENT IN FLOOD HAZARD AREAS POLICIES

- 5.2.1 Permanent structures **must not** be permitted within the *floodway* of any river or stream.

Achieves Objective: A

- 5.2.2 Development of new dwellings in the flood fringe **must** provide a certificate from a qualified, registered professional engineer to confirm that the required flood-proofing mitigation measures have been applied.

Achieves Objectives: A, B

- 5.2.3 The Town **will** update municipal figures, maps, and regulations based on Provincial Flood Plain mapping to inform land-use planning and emergency response strategies.

Achieves Objectives: B

- 5.2.4 As the Town continues to implement flood mitigation measures, the Flood Risk Map **will** be updated accordingly. Once mitigation measures are completed, the updated map **will** be applied and used to guide planning and development decisions.

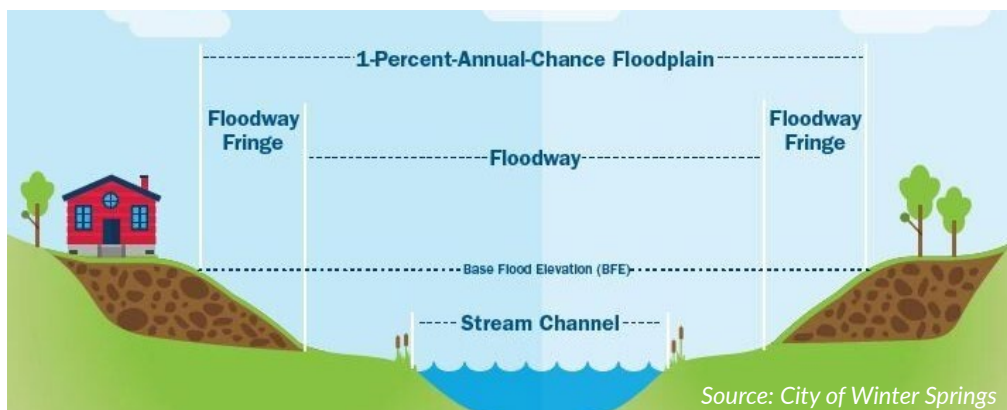
Achieves Objective: A

- 5.2.5 The Town **will** evaluate current flood berms and explore additional measures to enhance and protect at-risk areas within the identified flood fringe. This **may** include the Town considering strategic withdrawal of structures and at-risk infrastructure within the flood fringe to mitigate flood risks.

Achieves Objectives: A

Buildings in the floodway pose a risk to life and property, and allowing new development in the floodway may result in insurance or liability issues.

Development in the flood fringe is technically allowed if structures are built above the 1:100-year flood levels. However, any development in the flood fringe should be discouraged due to the changing nature of flood hazard areas over time.



- 5.2.6 New permanent dwellings or expansion of existing homes within the flood fringe of any river or stream **should** be avoided, unless an assessment prepared by a *qualified professional* determines that the flood fringe does not impact the development. If the assessment determines that the development **will** not result in increased risk to downstream or upstream properties, and proper flood proofing techniques are applied, development **may** be permitted if it is compliant with other Town Bylaws and policies, including the *Land Use Bylaw*.

Achieves Objectives: A, B

5.3 Steep Slopes

The rolling hills and ravines of Diamond Valley create a picturesque landscape that can be the envy of nearby prairie towns. However, development on or adjacent to slopes requires special consideration to prevent impacts caused by erosion and potential slope failure over time. Slopes are generally shown on [Figure 2. Development Constraint](#).

Steep Slopes Core Values



Safe &
Inclusive



STEEP SLOPES OBJECTIVE

- A Guide or prohibit development on or adjacent to areas with steep slopes to protect property, human life, and the natural environment.

STEEP SLOPES POLICIES

- 5.3.1 The Town's *Land Use Bylaw* regulations **will** regulate development on and near slopes 15% or greater.

Achieves Objective: A

5.4 Oil & Gas Infrastructure

Oil and gas infrastructure plays a significant role in the Town's landscape and economic history. While oil and gas activities have, and continue to, contribute to the Town's economy, land and infrastructure left behind create challenges for land use planning, which must consider the safety of development and people nearby. As a result, these areas are subject to development setbacks and environmental management requirements mandated by the Alberta Energy Regulator (AER). The Town is committed to aligning development standards near oil and gas infrastructure with provincial regulatory standards to balance growth and public safety. The Town does not approve any subdivision or development if the setback distance is less than the setbacks outlined by the AER, unless written consent is received from the AER for approval of a lesser setback distance, and will refer any *Area Structure Plan* or *Outline Plan* to the AER and the operator(s) of any known infrastructure for input and feedback.



Oil & Gas Infrastructure Core Values



**Safe &
Inclusive**



**Strategic
Growth**

OIL & GAS INFRASTRUCTURE OBJECTIVES

- A Guide land use planning and development decisions to minimize risks associated with oil and gas infrastructure and meet all provincial legislation and regulations.
- B Work with industry and relevant regulatory bodies to achieve compliance with developments near oil and gas infrastructure.

OIL & GAS INFRASTRUCTURE POLICIES

- 5.4.1 Development **must** conform with provincial regulations for setback distances for sour gas facilities, pipelines, and oil and gas wells.

Achieves Objectives: A, B

- 5.4.2 The Town **should** advocate to the province and industry to clean-up abandoned oil and gas wells and infrastructure.

Achieves Objectives: A, B

5.5 Wastewater Treatment Plant

Development near the wastewater treatment plant is constrained by infrastructure limitations, land use compatibility, and potential nuisance factors such as odour and noise. Development in proximity to the facility is limited in distance to maintain public health, safety, and compatibility with surrounding uses. Provincial legislation and regulations require a 300 metre setback for residential uses, schools, food services and other similar land uses. For more policies on the growth and development of wastewater facilities and infrastructure, see [Section 7.3 Wastewater](#).

Wastewater Treatment Plant Core Values



Safe &
Inclusive

WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT OBJECTIVES

- A Permit development near wastewater treatment facilities only if it aligns with applicable provincial regulations and standards.

WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT POLICIES

- 5.5.1 All development proposals within 300 metres of the Town's wastewater treatment lagoons **must** demonstrate how they meet all provincial legislation and regulations.

Achieves Objective: A

6 GROWTH STRATEGY & LAND USE

The Diamond Valley growth strategy provides the key directions for how the Town will grow and develop in the future in alignment with the MDP vision for a vibrant and fiscally resilient community. The growth strategy prioritizes fiscally responsible development that aligns with community values. Fiscally responsible development results in a net long-term financial benefit to the Town. Examples include:

- Commercial and industrial development;
- *Mixed-use* development; and
- Medium (or higher) density residential development.

Did you know that industrial development typically generates 2x the amount of net revenue per acre for the Town than low density residential uses?

Lower density residential development supports the Town's small-town charm; however, its current built form cannot fiscally support all the infrastructure required to service these forms of development. Lower density residential development has additional costs; however, enabling smaller lots or different housing forms creates an opportunity to capitalize on the existing infrastructure while obtaining revenue without the need for new infrastructure.

The growth strategy will take place incrementally and is intentional in its goals and purpose. [Figure 4](#) is a visual representation of the Growth Strategy. The guiding principles of the Town's growth strategy are:



Prioritizing the development of *Infill* Areas, particularly on vacant lands, to capitalize on the existing infrastructure resources (e.g., sanitary/water/storm and roads).



Encouraging remediation of *brownfield* lands to enable re-development of existing serviced lands that can add vibrancy to these areas.



Encouraging a mixture of land uses in *Infill* Areas, where appropriate, to address housing needs and business opportunities.



Enabling sufficient land for the long-term growth of business, *light industrial*, commercial, and employment uses that will provide long-term net positive property taxes.



Embracing the community's desire for maintaining small town scale through implementation of sensitive urban design initiatives.



Balancing non-residential and residential growth, to prevent one type of growth from outpacing the other and striving for fiscal sustainability.

[Figure 4. Growth Strategy](#) is a visual display of the Town’s approach to growth, which is more specifically implemented through the Land Use Concept. The Growth Strategy is a conceptual playbook for future decisions, while the Land Use Concept is a more prescribed blueprint for growth linked directly to MDP policies.

[Figure 5. Land Use Concept](#) is enabled through policies within various sections of the MDP. The Growth Strategy and Land Use Concept are intended to guide all future land use decisions made by the Town. All subordinate statutory and non-statutory plans and policies must align with the MDP and demonstrate alignment with the Land Use Concept and this MDP. Hence, one of the actions following adoption will be updating other planning documents, such as existing *Area Structure Plans* and the *Land Use Bylaw*, to align with the new MDP.

[Figure 4. Growth Strategy](#) is implemented by the Land Use Concept in [Figure 5](#), which designates specific areas for residential, commercial, industrial, and public purposes.

Figure 3. Growth Strategy

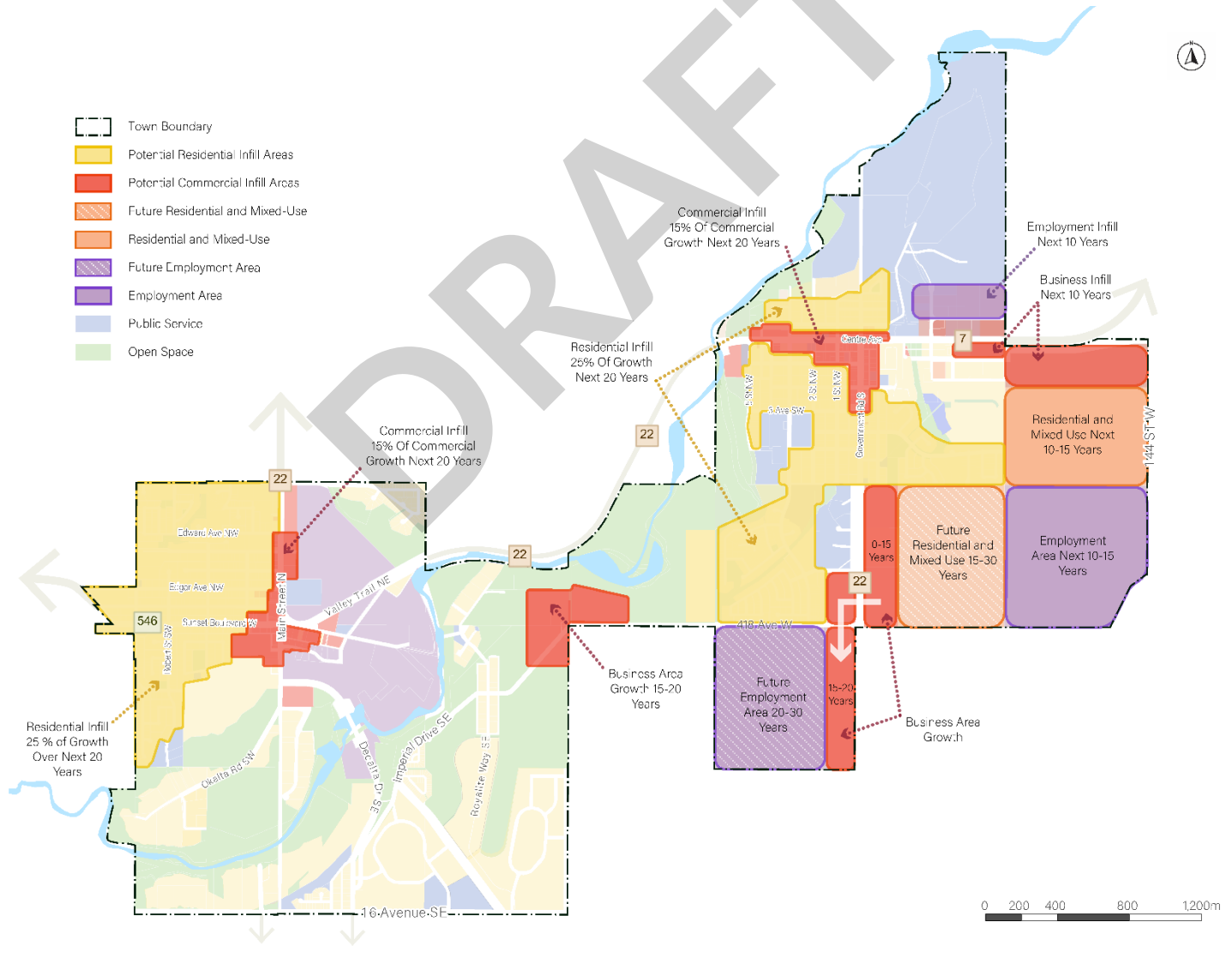
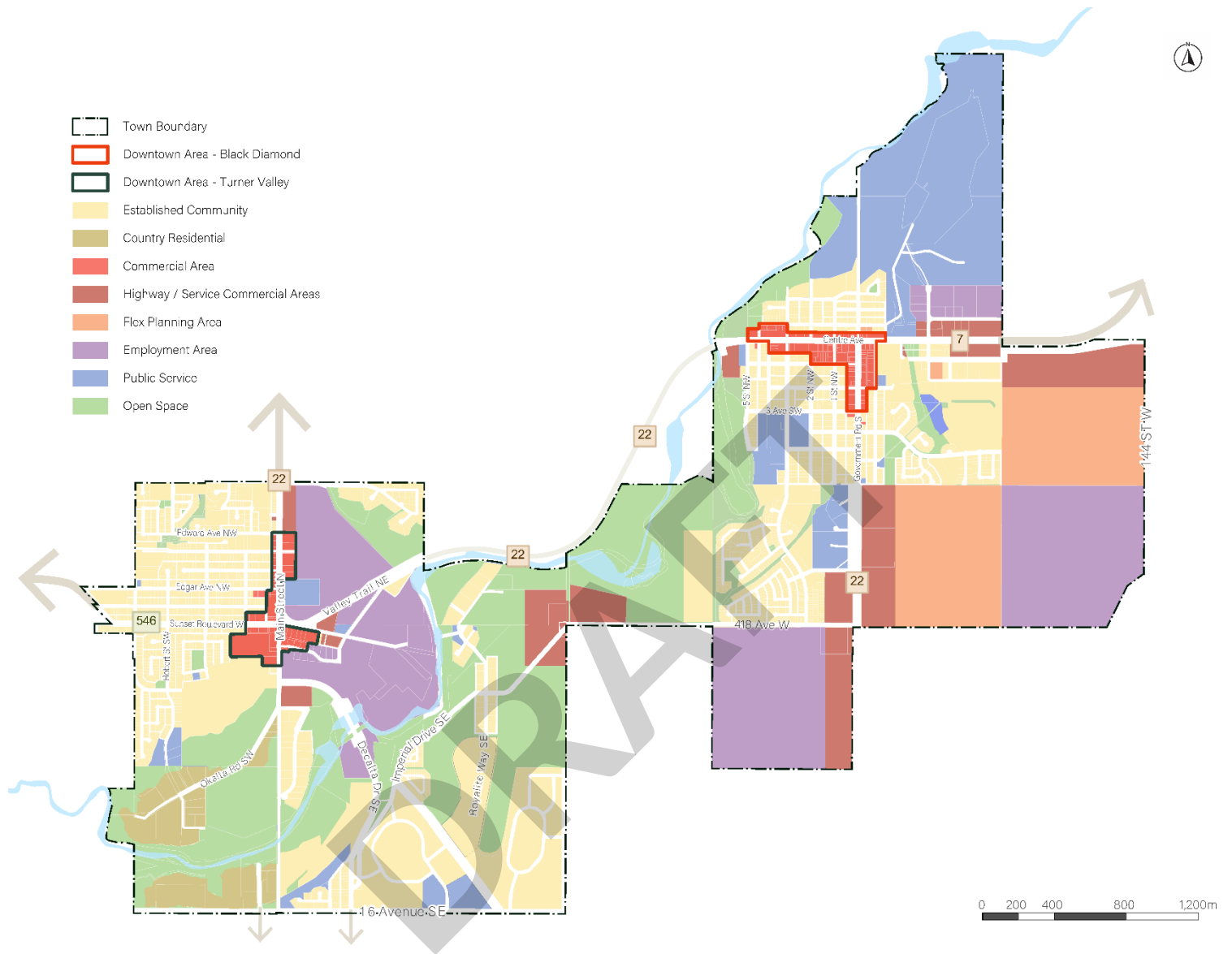


Figure 4. Land Use Concept



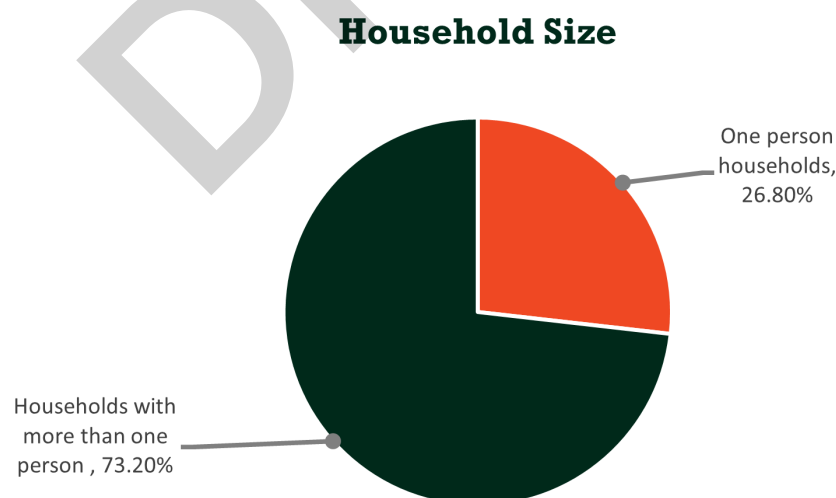
OUR HOMES, OUR NEIGHBOURHOODS

The Town of Diamond Valley is characterised by a mix of traditional grid neighbourhoods extending from Downtown Turner Valley and Downtown Black Diamond, pockets of suburban residential development areas, and country residential parcels. The town's neighbourhoods have convenient access to existing parks and open spaces, amenities, and services, and regional transportation networks.

The existing housing stock in Diamond Valley is predominantly single-detached, low-density development (78%). Often, these homes are large or sit on large pieces of property (such as 510 m² lots). Only 22% of housing in the town is comprised of other housing types. While this housing composition is typical of small urban municipalities in Alberta, it does not necessarily meet the needs of the town's current residents, or what future generations may be able to afford.

The town's recent demographic data suggests a trend in decreasing household size, an older population, and more people living alone. Averaging Turner Valley's ⁵ and Black Diamond's ⁶ 2021 statistics, 26.8% of private households were one person households. The town's median age is also increasing. Single people, smaller families, and seniors are not well served by traditional single-detached housing with large yards, and would benefit from affordable options for smaller homes, different forms of housing and parcel sizes or risk being pushed out of the community.

Housing diversity and choice are not just beneficial for these groups—they strengthen the entire community. A broader mix of housing types enables people at all stages of life and income levels to find a place to call home. During community engagement, local residents shared stories of having to purchase a larger than necessary home or property because it was “the only thing available”. By expanding housing options, the town can better meet the evolving needs of its population, support aging in place, and foster a more inclusive, resilient community.



6.1 Established Community Areas

The Town values its neighbourhoods in the Established Community Areas. Often these areas are characterized by tree-lined streets and quaint homes within walking distance of downtown amenities and town services. Inevitably, as houses in established neighbourhoods age and reach the end of their lifecycle, they will increasingly be renovated, replaced, or redeveloped with *infill* housing, evolving to meet the needs of residents. Neighbourhoods will begin to experience a transition, and the Town is positioned to clearly articulate how new development will occur to enhance established neighbourhoods while creating spaces and places that can accommodate a diverse demographic with different housing needs.

Established Neighbourhoods are located as generally illustrated in [Figure 5. Land Use Concept](#).



Established Community Areas Core Values



**Small-Town
Feel**



**Diversified
Employment**



**Strategic
Growth**



**Fiscally
Responsible**

ESTABLISHED COMMUNITY AREAS OBJECTIVES

- A Enable a variety of housing types in established neighbourhoods that meet the current and future needs of residents with sensitive design to enhance the character of the town.
- B Allow flexibility in the types of non-residential uses in Established Community Areas, such as limited neighbourhood commercial development, home-based businesses, *mixed-use* buildings, and parks and open spaces that contribute to complete communities.
- C Support initiatives and partners in the delivery of affordable and attainable housing.
- D Align housing with the needs of its people and future generations that is fiscally manageable on the services the Town can provide.

ESTABLISHED COMMUNITY AREAS POLICIES

- 6.1.1 All Established Neighbourhood Policy Areas **must** support residential transitioning to enable housing diversity and choice with a sensitive urban design framework.

Achieves Objectives: A, D

- 6.1.2 The Town **will** maintain sufficient water, sewer and storm water infrastructure service capacity within Established Neighbourhood Policy Areas for *infill* and re-development.

Achieves Objectives: A, B, D

- 6.1.3 The Established Neighbourhood Policy Areas **will** support a complete neighbourhood, including a mix of residential development, neighbourhood-scale commercial in strategic locations, parks and open space and educational facilities.

Achieves Objectives: A, B, C

- 6.1.4 Redevelopment of large sites or comprehensive developments (≥ 1.0 ha) within the Established Neighbourhood Policy Area **must** meet a minimum density of 30 residential dwelling units per gross developable hectare.

Achieves Objectives: A, D

- 6.1.5 The Town **will** review and amend *Land Use Bylaw* regulations to permit two units (in a variety of forms, including secondary suite, garage suite, duplex/semi-detached) as of right on all residential parcels in Established Community Areas, subject to their conformity with the regulations of the *Land Use Bylaw*. ♦

Achieves Objectives: A, C

- 6.1.6 The Town **will** collaborate with partners and support initiatives seeking to deliver affordable and attainable housing in the community.

Achieves Objectives: A, C

Municipalities play an important part in housing delivery, and should support organizations or agencies seeking to increase the number of attainable and affordable homes, such as by enabling regulation, site selection, or an expedited permitting process.

While the Black Diamond Housing Needs Assessment was completed in 2022, the assessment of Diamond Valley as a whole has not been completed, and would provide data-driven recommendations to respond to current housing needs.

- 6.1.7 Redevelopment within the Established Neighbourhood Policy Area **must not** result in a net loss of residential dwelling units.

Achieves Objectives: A, D

- 6.1.8 Within the Established Neighbourhood Policy Areas, the Town **should** support and incentivize the infilling of vacant lots and/or redevelopment of existing serviced lots to support efficient use of services and infrastructure. ♦

Achieves Objectives: A, B

- 6.1.9 Neighbourhood commercial uses **should** be located on corner parcels at intersections with sufficient parking and pedestrian access, and be designed to complement the general building design, form, and massing of the neighbourhood.

Achieves Objective: B

- 6.1.10 The Town **should** investigate providing incentives for the infilling of vacant lots, including fast-tracking of applications, reduced application fees, or priority application queuing.

Achieves Objectives: B, C

- 6.1.11 The Town **should** conduct a *Housing Needs Assessment* to inform land use decisions and bylaw and regulation changes to housing. ♦

Achieves Objectives: A, C, D



Housing Affordability

Allowing a secondary suite, backyard suite, or a duplex on all residential lots gives landowners additional options when developing their land, and supports affordability as it allows their property to become an income generator.

6.2 Country Residential Areas

Country Residential Areas in southwest Turner Valley are expected to remain (e.g. Okalta Flats area) in their current built form with less redevelopment potential. Due to the challenging topography surrounding these areas and extending municipal services to these areas is unlikely in the near future. These areas offer a more rural lifestyle characterized by larger lots, limited on-site services, and a dispersed, low-density built form, with the benefits of close proximity to town amenities. Where redevelopment is proposed in Country Residential Areas, especially in locations closer to existing municipal infrastructure, connection to Town services may be explored, but only where appropriate and feasible.

Country Residential Areas Core Values



**Small-Town
Feel**



**Strategic
Growth**



COUNTRY RESIDENTIAL AREAS OBJECTIVES

- A Recognize the continued existence of Country Residential Areas as a distinct and lower-density residential form, acknowledging their dispersed nature makes municipal servicing for redevelopment not currently feasible.

COUNTRY RESIDENTIAL AREAS POLICIES

- 6.2.1 The Town **will** support logical and coordinated growth in Country Residential Areas.

Achieves Objective: A

- 6.2.2 The Country Resident Area **should** remain primarily residential in character. Complementary land uses, including home-based businesses, education, parks, and recreation uses, are also supported.

Achieves Objective: A

- 6.2.3 Due to servicing limitations, connection to municipal infrastructure **should** not be expected for existing Country Residential Areas. Where landowners propose redevelopment that increases density or scale, the Town **may** explore the feasibility of connecting to municipal water, wastewater, or stormwater services subject to the fiscal implications on the town.

Achieves Objective: A

- 6.2.4 Developers **should** use innovative stormwater, wastewater, potable water and fire protection strategies to the satisfaction of the Town.

Achieves Objective: A

- 6.2.5 An *Area Structure Plan (ASP)*, *Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP)* or amendment to an existing ASP or ARP **may** be considered where necessary within the Country Residential areas. An ASP, ARP or an amendment to an existing ASP or ARP **may** be initiated by the Town or by a landowner, or group of landowners, and **shall** follow Town process and the legislated bylaw process.

Achieves Objective: A

WHERE WE WORK, HOW WE WORK

A thriving local economy is the foundation of Diamond Valley's long-term fiscal sustainability. By strategically planning for downtown redevelopment and commercial expansion, protecting employment lands, and encouraging home-based and *light industrial* enterprises, the Town can grow its non-residential *tax base* and reduce the financial burden on residential property owners. Non-residential development has a higher tax rate than residential, often with lower demands for amenities and infrastructure, thereby helping fund essential municipal services, maintain infrastructure, and invest in community amenities.⁷

6.3 Downtown Areas

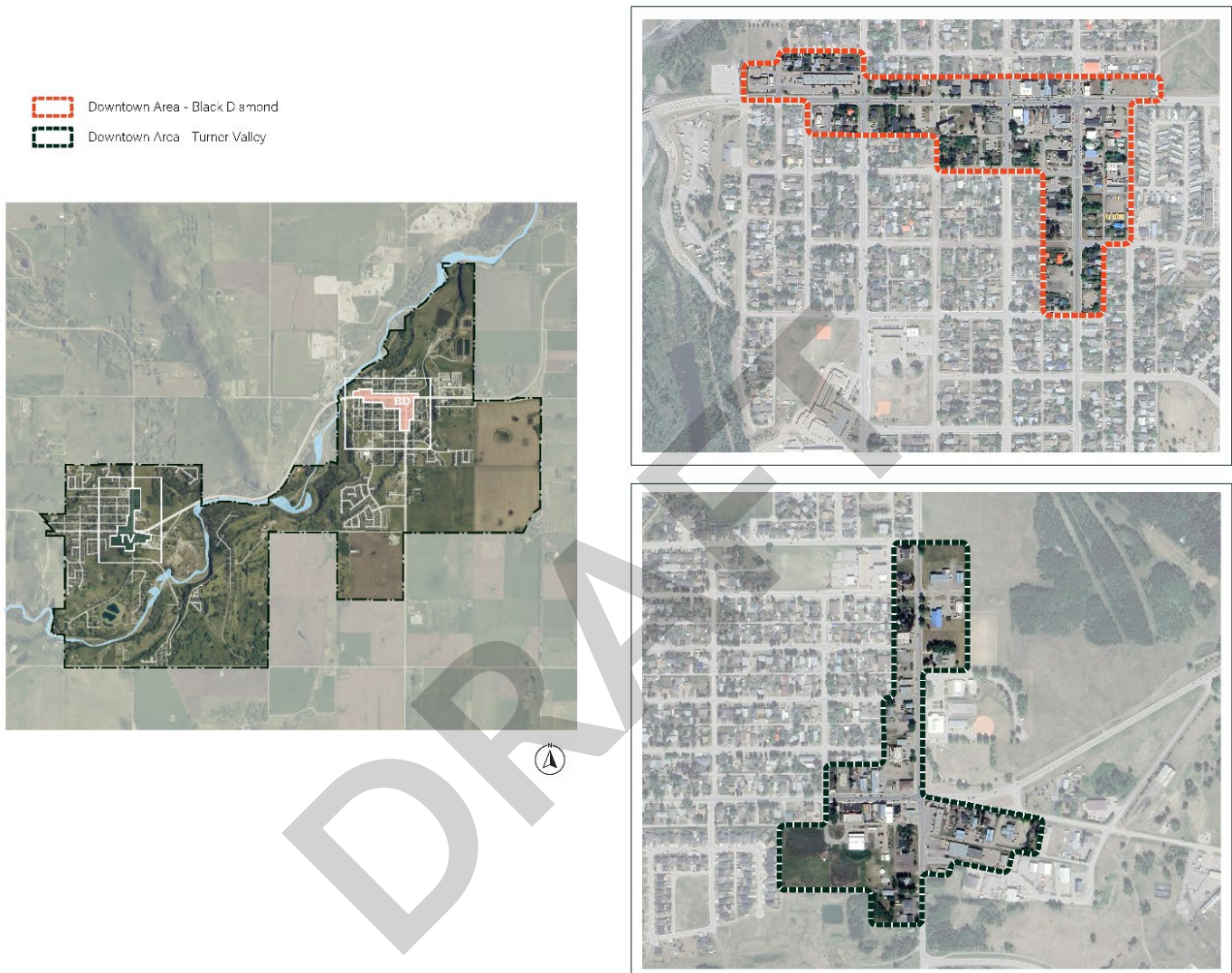
Diamond Valley has the unique opportunity of having two downtowns. The Turner Valley Downtown area blends vintage architecture and modern amenities, creating a nostalgic yet forward-looking atmosphere. Visitors and residents enjoy the unique gift shops, craft manufacturing/food and beverage, and cultural landmarks that celebrate Turner Valley's past.

The Black Diamond Downtown area offers a more artistic and eclectic vibe, with galleries, artisan shops, several local eateries, and staple businesses that attract tourists from the surrounding region.

As Diamond Valley moves forward, Turner Valley Downtown and Black Diamond Downtown are anticipated to thrive together, creating a cohesive and unique small-town experience while retaining their distinct characters. Downtown Areas are challenged by their positioning on Highway 22 and Highway 7, which are operated and regulated by the province, limiting the ability to apply attractive streetscape features to enhance walkability and other related urban design elements. However, thoughtful planning plays a critical role in designing the future of the Downtown Areas to establish strong placemaking and functionality, offering a quality of life and new enterprise opportunities. Further, the two downtowns provide an opportunity for special events, such as art tours or tasting tours, where participants get the best of both downtowns. As the downtowns continue to evolve, Downtown Design Standards or Master Planning are tools the Town can use to guide the look and feel of Downtown Areas over time.

Downtown Areas are located as generally illustrated in [Figure 5. Land Use Concept](#) and shown in [Figure 6. Downtown Areas](#).

Figure 5. Downtown Areas



Downtown Areas Core Values



**Small-Town
Feel**



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DOWNTOWN AREAS OBJECTIVES

- A Create two thriving downtown areas that celebrate their unique identities and connections.
- B Establish Downtown Design Standards that guide the form and character of development in the Downtown Areas.
- C Foster equitable growth and development between the Downtown Areas.
- D Activate Downtown Areas by enhancing public spaces, beautification initiatives, activating vacant lots, supporting events, and promoting local businesses.

Downtown design standards require that new development maintain and promote the unique individual character of Downtown Turner Valley and Downtown Black Diamond, and consider architecture, landscaping, and the pedestrian experience.

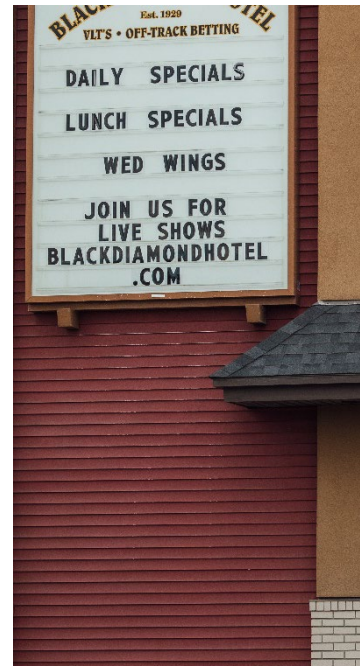
DOWNTOWN AREAS POLICIES

- 6.3.1 The Downtown Areas **will** support the following land uses: commercial, *mixed-use* developments, institutional, home businesses in residential buildings, and parks and open space. Craft manufacturing is also supported where there is a retail component. Commercial uses **should** be focused on retail, food services, community uses, or other active uses that **will** draw vibrancy to the downtown areas.

Achieves Objectives: A, C

- 6.3.2 Existing *light industrial* uses adjacent to the Downtown Area **will** continue to be supported as they contribute to the Town's artisan and creator economy. The Town **should** support the connection between these artisan areas and the Downtown Area through walking tours and other special events.

Achieves Objectives: A, D



POLICY AREAS

- 6.3.3 The Town **will** develop Downtown Design Standards for Downtown Turner Valley and Downtown Black Diamond. Downtown Design Standards for Black Diamond **should** consider the existing Black Diamond *Area Redevelopment Plan*. ♦

Achieves Objectives: A, B

- 6.3.4 The Town **will** complete a review and update of the Black Diamond *Area Redevelopment Plan* to evaluate its effectiveness and whether a separate *Area Redevelopment Plan* or a joint *Area Redevelopment Plan* to include Downtown Turner Valley **should** be initiated. ♦

Achieves Objectives: B, C

Area Redevelopment Plans are an important tool that establish a vision for a particular area. Since the Black Diamond Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan was created, the town has amalgamated. It is important to look at both downtowns holistically in future planning, which merits a review of what has been done, and how Downtown Turner Valley can be incorporated.

- 6.3.5 The Town **will** review its bylaws to enable temporary uses such as pop-up shops, markets, retail, art exhibitions, or community events to utilize vacant spaces downtown. ♦

Achieves Objective: D

- 6.3.6 The Town **will** examine the potential benefits of a Community Revitalization Levy Bylaw to support municipal actions that encourage private development downtown. ♦

Achieves Objectives: A, B, C

- 6.3.7 Active frontages **will** be encouraged and supported in the Downtown Areas. This includes patios, display areas, and glazing that allows views into buildings.

Achieves Objectives: B, D

- 6.3.8 New *vehicle-oriented building* forms and designs **must not** be allowed in the Downtown Areas unless supported by an *Area Redevelopment Plan*.

Achieves Objectives: B, C, D

- 6.3.9 Retail stores, restaurants, personal service and professional uses **must** be easy to access, with parking prohibited between the sidewalk and the entrance from the street face.

Achieves Objectives: B, D

- 6.3.10 For new buildings, residential uses in the Downtown Area **must** only be considered above or behind ground-level commercial uses.

Achieves Objectives: B, D

- 6.3.11 *Mixed-use* development in Downtown Areas **should** be encouraged to support economic growth and enhance the downtown public realm in Downtown Areas. Where residential is included in development, it **must** be located above the ground level floor when facing the main street.

Achieves Objectives: B, C

- 6.3.12 The Town **should** explore opportunities to incentivize beautification in the Downtown Areas, such as upgrades to public-facing private property through building design or landscaping.

Achieves Objectives: B, D

- 6.3.13 The Town **may** explore opportunities to incentivize development and redevelopment applications within the Downtown Areas. Incentives **may** include priority queuing or application fee reductions, or deferred taxes.

Achieves Objectives: A, D

- 6.3.14 The Town **should** investigate incentives to encourage property owners to develop or sell vacant land or buildings in Downtown Areas to enable redevelopment.

Achieves Objective: D

- 6.3.15 Utilities within the Downtown Areas **should** be relocated underground subject to feasibility based on proposed development and cost.

Achieves Objective: B

- 6.3.16 A wayfinding strategy with signage that guides visitors between Downtown Areas, integrated with Town branding, **should** be developed. ♦

Achieves Objectives: C, D

- 6.3.17 The Town **may** support community-initiated art programs, such as the installation of murals, sculptures, or other art to enhance the visual appeal of both downtowns and reflect the community's artistic spirit.

Achieves Objectives: A, B, D



6.4 Highway/Service Commercial Areas

The Town offers a range of commercial services and will continue to provide areas for commercial expansion. Highway/Service Commercial Areas are predominantly located along major provincial highways outside Downtown Areas, with goods or service offerings geared to locals and travellers. These areas are gateways to the community, and should demonstrate a high quality of appearance from the highway to create a welcoming entrance. Highway / Service Commercial Areas are key contributors to the Town's economy and also attract and retain residents who have convenient access to the things they need. They also have the potential to integrate other uses, such as public and residential, in a *mixed-use* capacity. The town may also benefit from exploring ways to fill the “missing middle” of commercial areas characterized by small-scale, flexible, innovative and integrated commercial buildings and uses.

The Town will continue to grow its commercial *tax base* and can leverage land within its current boundary to achieve its needs. The location of other commercial uses needs to be carefully considered so as not to hinder Diamond Valley's core commercial sectors. Development and access within the vicinity of Highway 22 and Highway 7 will be subject to the approval of Alberta Transportation and Economic Corridors in accordance with provincial legislation and regulations.

The following objectives and policies apply to those lands identified as Highway/Service Commercial Areas, as generally illustrated in [Figure 4 Land Use Concept](#).



HIGHWAY/SERVICE COMMERCIAL AREAS OBJECTIVES

- A Maintain a 10-year inventory of serviceable commercial lands for commercial development.
- B Accommodate and encourage a variety of flexible and diverse commercial opportunities.
- C Foster innovation and entrepreneurship in commercial areas.
- D Explore ways to enable the commercial “missing middle.”
- E Require a high standard of design for commercial developments.
- F Minimize conflicts between industry and existing or future land uses.

HIGHWAY/SERVICE COMMERCIAL AREAS POLICIES

- 6.4.1 The Highway / Service Commercial Areas **will** support the following land uses: commercial uses, *mixed-use*, institutional uses, and light-industrial uses that have minimal off-site impacts, and complementary parks and open space.

Achieves Objectives: A, B, C, F

- 6.4.2 The Town **will** review *Land Use Bylaw* regulations to support the development of *missing middle commercial* forms, including regulations to support smaller industries, live-work, or co-working spaces in Commercial Areas. ♦

Achieves Objectives: A, B, C, D

- 6.4.3 The Town **will** maintain a 10-year supply of districted commercial lands.

- 6.4.4 **Achieves Objective: A** Commercial development adjacent to sensitive uses, such as residential districts, **must** demonstrate mitigation measures to reduce potential visual impacts, noise, odour, traffic or lights in transition areas.

Achieves Objectives: E, F

- 6.4.5 Commercial parking areas **must** accommodate safe pedestrian movement, which **may** include a combination of raised and/or separated pedestrian sidewalks/pathways, painted crosswalks, and a mix of hard and soft landscaping.

Achieves Objective: E

- 6.4.6 The Town **should** review *Land Use Bylaw* regulations to consider design standards for commercial development along Highway 22 and Highway 7 to encourage a positive gateway entrance experience. ♦

Achieves Objective: E

Alberta Transportation and Economic Corridors (TEC) regulates Highway 22 and Highway 7 and can also regulate development within the vicinity of the Highways. TEC has specific requirements related to access, including the number and spacing of accesses from a highway that must be met.

- 6.4.7 Commercial Areas adjacent to residential districts **should** be planned in conjunction with amenities that encourage activation and vibrancy, including public plazas and parks.

Achieves Objectives: B, C, E, F

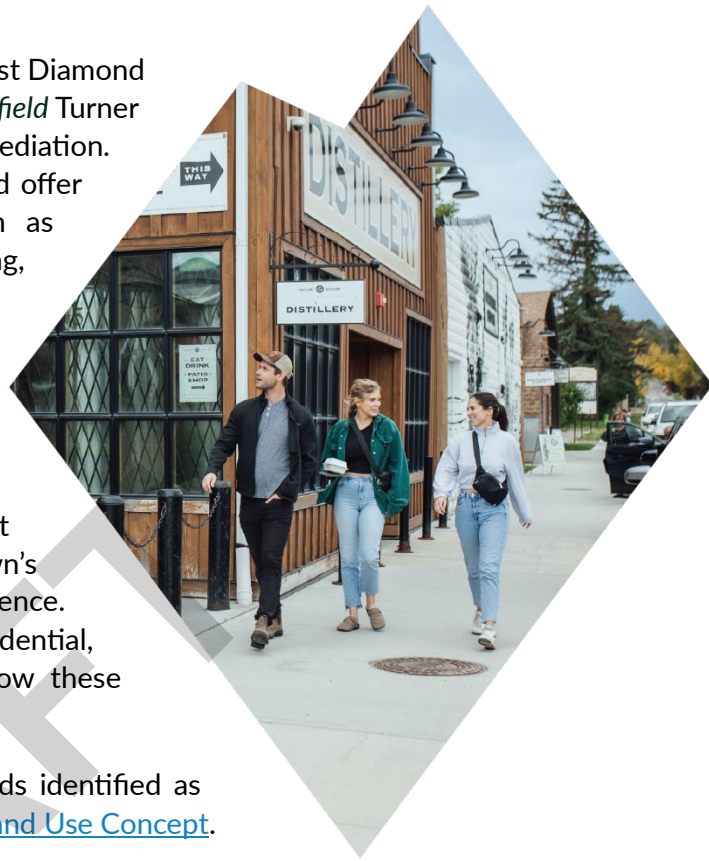
- 6.4.8 Pedestrian pathways and sidewalks in adjacent residential areas **should** be connected into adjacent commercial sites.

Achieves Objectives: B, C



6.5 Employment Areas

Employment Areas in the town are limited to lands in east Diamond Valley with proximity to Highway 7, as well as the *brownfield* Turner Valley Gas Plant lands, which require environmental remediation. These lands have significant development potential and offer opportunities to attract a range of industries such as professional offices, healthcare, retail, and manufacturing, which will provide new employment opportunities and help contribute to the strength of the local economy. It is imperative that the Town preserves Employment Areas to enable and attract potential businesses. Employment Areas are comprised of *light industrial* uses and business parks and may include complementary commercial uses that provide important economic opportunities while contributing to the town's economic diversity, employment, *tax base*, and resilience. Careful site planning and effective transitions to residential, commercial, or surrounding agricultural areas will allow these areas to contribute positively to the Town's character.



The following objectives and policies apply to the lands identified as Employment Areas as generally illustrated in [Figure 5. Land Use Concept](#).

Employment Areas Core Values



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Employment**



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EMPLOYMENT AREAS OBJECTIVES

- A Encourage industrial development by supporting existing industries and businesses while attracting new industries to balance the Town's tax ratio between residential and non-residential land uses.
- B Protect the Town's industrial and commercial land supply from pressure to convert it to other residential land uses to maintain and enhance the Town's local employment base and economy.

- C Minimize conflicts between industry and existing or future land uses.
- D Enable the development of a business park to attract professional offices to locate in Diamond Valley.

EMPLOYMENT AREAS POLICIES

- 6.5.1 Employment Areas **will** support the following land uses: light to medium industrial uses, business/office parks, and complementary commercial uses. *Heavy industrial* and residential uses are not supported.

Achieves Objectives: C, D

- 6.5.2 The Town **will** maintain a 10-year inventory of developable and serviceable Employment Area land. The conversion of Employment Area lands to other uses is strongly discouraged in order to maintain financial sustainability and an adequate supply of non-residential land without requiring additional annexation.

Achieves Objectives: A, B

- 6.5.3 *Light Industrial* land uses **should** be designed to minimize conflict with adjacent land uses, including residential, commercial, and agricultural uses.

Achieves Objective: C

- 6.5.4 Employment Areas **should** be located near major transportation networks. Where possible, *light industrial* areas **should** have separate road access from residential neighbourhoods.

Achieves Objectives: A, C

- 6.5.5 Employment Areas **should** enable the colocation of complementary land uses.

Achieves Objectives: A, C

- 6.5.6 The Town **should** support and encourage innovative industrial and commercial ownership models, including industrial and commercial condos that can be individually owned by operators.

Achieves Objectives: A, B, D

- 6.5.7 Employment Areas **may** accommodate a business and *light industrial* park allowing for vertical expansion and efficient land use of *light industrial* land, subject to an approved *Area Structure Plan* application.

Achieves Objectives: A, B, D

- 6.5.8 *Low-impact industrial* development **may** be supported on larger lots (≥ 5 acres / 2 hectares) without connection to Town wastewater services, provided on-site servicing is feasible and the development does not require significant municipal infrastructure.

Achieves Objective: A

- 6.5.9 The Town **may** refuse to approve a land use that is higher in water usage to enable sufficient future capacity for its overall needs and growth vision as outlined in this MDP, where average water usage is outlined in Town standards. Proposed development **may** be required to provide additional details on water usage at the time of development approval, land use redesignation or subdivision.

Achieves Objective: C

- 6.5.10 Commercial uses in *mixed-use* industrial buildings **may** be supported in Employment Areas where they are complementary or supportive of *light industrial* uses, such as manufacturing in association with retail or shared workspaces.

Achieves Objective: A

- 6.5.11 The Town **may** explore financial incentives, such as industrial revitalization tax incentives, to support existing businesses and encourage new industrial investment.

Achieves Objectives: A, B, D

Business parks typically help attract other businesses, where co-locating is mutually beneficial. Allowing for vertical expansion helps promote efficient use of land and resources, and creates flexibility in building developments.



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SPECIAL PLANNING AREAS

6.6 Flex Planning Area

A Flex Planning Area is an undeveloped future planning area intended to provide for the long-term needs of the community in a way that is financially sustainable for the Town. The Flex Planning Area is shown within [Figure 5. Land Use Concept](#). Lands in the Flex Planning Area are east of Diamond Valley.

The Town has sufficient room within its current *infill* areas to support anticipated population growth, and the priority focus of the Town is growing its non-residential *tax base*. However, the Flex Planning Area is intended for a mix of land uses, including medium to higher density residential development, complementary commercial, parks and open space, with flexible development options, should the need for additional residential arise in the future. The Flex Planning Area is envisioned to integrate residential, commercial, *mixed-use*, and public uses. This area is intended to provide for long-term needs of the community. Development in the Flex Planning Area will be further determined through the submission of an *Area Structure Plan*.

Requirements for *Area Structure Plans*, *Area Redevelopment Plans*, or *Outline Plans* relating to the Flex Planning Area can be found in [Section 11.2 Subordinate Plan Alignment](#).

The Flex Planning Area is generally illustrated on [Figure 5. Land Use Concept](#).

Flex Planning Area Core Values



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FLEX PLANNING AREAS

- A Provide an area with development flexibility for residential or *mixed-use* commercial, and public land uses.
- B Support development that has sufficient density, mix of land uses, and amenities that is financially sustainable for the Town over the long-term to manage new infrastructure and services.

FLEX PLANNING POLICIES

- 6.6.1 The Flex Planning Area **should** accommodate a mix of land uses, including residential, commercial, or public to be developed using concepts of a *complete community*, accommodating a mix of uses, open space and parks, and recreation opportunities for future residents.

Achieves Objective: A

- 6.6.2 The Flex Planning Area **must** meet a minimum average density of 30 residential dwelling units per gross developable hectare. This density **will** be calculated across the entire lands that form part of the *Area Structure Plan*. ♦

Achieves Objectives: A, B



GROWTH STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

6.7 Infill Development

The concept of *infill* is the development of vacant or underused parcels within existing urban areas or the redevelopment of buildings that have exceeded their lifecycle. *Infill* Areas include both residential neighbourhoods and commercial areas. *Infill* Areas in Town include any existing established neighbourhoods, and may contain *brownfield* sites. *Infill* is a fiscally responsible alternative to growing outward in undeveloped greenfield sites.

Growing through infill is important for several reasons. First, it efficiently capitalizes on existing infrastructure capacity, such as roads, utilities, and public services, where the majority of municipal funding is directed, reducing the need for costly new infrastructure investments that the Town would be responsible for maintaining and servicing.

Secondly, it helps to preserve natural landscapes and agricultural lands by limiting urban expansion into these areas.

Additionally, *infill* development can revitalize older neighbourhoods, bringing new life and economic opportunities to existing areas. Vacant land within the town boundaries can support infill, including new residential, neighbourhood-scale commercial, or *mixed-use* buildings.

Infill Development Core Values



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INFILL DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

- A Encourage development or redevelopment on *infill* areas, such as on vacant lands, to prioritize the use of existing infrastructure.
- B Encourage *infill* development that is complementary to the architectural style and scale of the surrounding area.

INFILL DEVELOPMENT POLICES

- 6.7.1 The Town **will** review *Land Use Bylaw* regulations for opportunities to expand residential development potential of *infill* areas, including residential building types. ♦

Achieves Objective: A

- 6.7.2 The Town **will** encourage *infill* development where development can demonstrate its compatibility with existing development, including considerations for:

- a. Compatibility in height and scale;
- b. Continuity with existing laneways, and streetscapes;
- c. Integration with buildings considered to have historical significance; and
- d. Capacity of municipal utilities and infrastructure.

Achieves Objectives: A, B

- 6.7.3 The Town **should** develop Infill Design Standards. Infill Design Standards **will** outline ways to address sensitive transitions between different uses and densities through landscaping buffers and site planning, to mitigate impacts on neighbours. ♦

Achieves Objective: B



Infill Development

To gain public support for infill development, it must enhance existing neighbourhoods by establishing compatibility with surrounding built form, preserving key community characteristics, and maintaining infrastructure capacity.

6.8 Mixed-Use Development

Mixed-use development is a vertical or horizontal mixture of land uses within a building or buildings. This is typically done with commercial on the ground floor and residential or offices on upper storeys. *Mixed-use* development contributes to a resilient local economy by providing opportunities for small businesses to thrive while offering residents and workers convenient access to amenities. Historically, small towns had many buildings with stores on the main floor, operated by people living on the upper floor. Integrating *mixed-use* is a nod to history and is a tactic for strategic growth, meeting the Town's need for safe, inclusive, and affordable housing options, and flexible business opportunities.

Mixed-Use Development Core Values



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MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

- A Support and incentivize *mixed-use* buildings.
- B Promote human-scaled, pedestrian-friendly design in *mixed-use* buildings to encourage social interaction and community connection.
- C Promote the location of *mixed-use* buildings near public and open spaces to establish a sense of community.
- D Promote *mixed-use* buildings that complement and benefit the surrounding built form.

MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

- 6.8.1 The Town **will** review its *Land Use Bylaw* regulations for opportunities to enable and support *mixed-use* development in Established Community, Highway / Service Commercial Areas, and Downtown Areas. ♦

Achieves Objective: A

- 6.8.2 The Town **will** support *mixed-use* developments that maximize infrastructure efficiency, encourage having more people in appropriate areas, and provide long-term economic and social value to the town.

Achieves Objective: A



- 6.8.3 *Mixed-use* developments **must** be designed to include pedestrian-oriented streetscapes, active frontages, and human-scaled design elements that promote walkability and social interaction.

Achieves Objective: B

- 6.8.4 Residential uses in Commercial Areas **must** be provided in the form of *mixed-use*, multi-storey buildings that:
- a. Are located above or behind ground-oriented commercial uses; and
 - b. Are integrated with the surrounding neighbourhood.

Achieves Objective: D

- 6.8.5 The Town **should** develop Mixed-Use Design Standards. Mixed-Use Design Standards **will** provide clear direction on urban design, so that mixed-use developments contribute to a pedestrian-friendly and cohesive environment. ♦

Achieves Objectives: B, D

- 6.8.6 *Mixed-use* developments **should** be collocated with public and open space amenities, or near commercial areas to provide access to community amenities encourage interaction with commercial uses in the building.

Achieves Objective: C

- 6.8.7 The Town **may** explore incentives (financial or other) to encourage *mixed-use* development.

Achieves Objective: A

6.9 Business Attraction

Dedicated efforts in attracting and retaining businesses directly contribute to the Town's employment base, shopping opportunities, and overall resilience. The Town should endeavour to create an environment where businesses can thrive by supporting local entrepreneurs and home-based businesses and promoting the Town as a destination for commerce and tourism. The top three sectors that employ Diamond Valley residents are construction, retail, and healthcare. Second-tier employment is in professional/scientific/technical services, waste management, education, and transportation and warehousing.

The Town has done significant work establishing a path for success through its *Economic Development Strategy*. Still, many of its initiatives have not been actioned and administrative capacity is limited. Building upon previous work in the landscape of current market conditions, the Town can now bolster its reputation as a good place to do business.

Business Attraction Core Values



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BUSINESS ATTRACTION OBJECTIVES

- A Strengthen Diamond Valley's investment readiness.
- B Diversify the local economy through targeted initiatives.
- C Grow the Town's non-residential tax ratio.

D Initiate actions from the Black-Diamond Turner Valley Intermunicipal *Economic Development Strategy*.

E Leverage partnerships to promote tourism as an economic development generator.

BUSINESS ATTRACTION POLICIES

6.9.1 The Town **should** complete a *Targeted Investment Strategy*. ♦

Achieves Objectives: A, B

6.9.2 The Town **should** review and update its *Economic Development Strategy* to identify updates and revisit progress on actions. ♦

Achieves Objectives: A, D

6.9.3 The Town **should** review and update its investment guide annually to showcase its non-residential land inventory, infrastructure services, capacity, contact information and parcel and building size. ♦

Achieves Objectives: A, D

6.9.4 The Town **should** maintain a data inventory of vacant lands within *infill* areas, updated annually.

Achieves Objectives: A, D

6.9.5 The Town **should** explore opportunities to streamline the approval process for non-residential development.

Achieves Objectives: A, B

6.9.6 The Town **should** endeavour to achieve a non-residential assessment ratio target of 20% that aligns with the rate of growth. ♦

Achieves Objective: C

- 6.9.7 The Town **should** prioritize becoming business ready by establishing resources, processes, and supports in place to attract, retain, and grow businesses.

Achieves Objectives: A, E

- 6.9.8 Home-businesses **should** be supported as the core of business incubation through flexible *Land Use Bylaw* regulations, and business support.

Achieves Objectives: B, D

- 6.9.9 The Town **should** explore the creation of a micro-investment fund to support small business start-ups and encourage innovative commercial ventures within Diamond Valley.



Achieves Objectives: A, B

- 6.9.10 The Town **should** identify regional partners to collaborate on tourism infrastructure and experiences to share resources (financial or human capital), and promote and attract local tourism that is mutually beneficial for neighbouring municipalities.

Achieves Objective: C

- 6.9.11 The Town **may** review its *Land Use Bylaw* regulations to add land uses that enable key target sectors and conduct a regional *Land Use Bylaw* review and comparison to be competitive with development regulations and flexibility.

Achieves Objectives: A, B, C, D, E

7 QUALITY OF LIFE & COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Diamond Valley's quality of life is tied to its ability to provide secure and reliable services and maintain infrastructure and amenities. Residents benefit from a wide range of amenities, including recreational facilities, parks, and cultural activities, encouraging active and healthy lifestyles. Access to quality healthcare, education and emergency services further supports the health, development, and success of individuals and families in Diamond Valley while also being a key to attract new people. Diamond Valley's infrastructure systems for water, wastewater, and stormwater underpin and support the community's everyday operation. An *Infrastructure Master Plan* is currently underway, and as the town continues to develop, planning for the maintenance and lifecycle of these systems and services is critical to maintaining and protecting their integrity.



7.1 Strengthening Infrastructure Systems

Infrastructure maintenance for pipes, roads and other Town infrastructure comes with significant costs, and the Town is experiencing financial difficulty keeping up with essential repairs and upgrades due to revenue and required capital and operating costs. Years of underfunding and deferred maintenance have left critical systems—water, wastewater, stormwater, roads, and utilities—vulnerable to unexpected failures that could disrupt daily life and result in expensive emergency repairs. This funding gap strains the Town’s ability to invest proactively in its infrastructure, leaning towards a reactive approach that addresses issues as they arise rather than preventing them in the first place. As the Town continues to grow, its infrastructure systems must evolve to meet increasing demands while minimizing environmental impacts. Proactive planning, strategic investments, and regional collaboration are necessary to enable reliable service and reduce the risks associated with aging infrastructure. The Town is actively moving towards full cost recovery for water and wastewater. This is based on “user-pay” and puts a greater burden on heavier users who put more strain on our systems versus being charged through taxes.

Strengthening Infrastructure Systems Core Values



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STRENGTHENING INFRASTRUCTURE SYSTEMS OBJECTIVES

- A Proactively plan for budgeting for the maintenance and upgrading of aging infrastructure.
- B Regularly inspect and evaluate infrastructure performance to reduce risk and mitigate impacts from service interruptions.
- C Maintain sustainable and resilient water, wastewater, and stormwater systems.
- D Follow asset management best practices.

STRENGTHENING INFRASTRUCTURE SYSTEMS POLICIES

- 7.1.1 The Town **will** review and update its *Infrastructure Management Plan* every five (5) years to guide servicing and infrastructure upgrades. ♦

Achieves Objectives: A, B, C, D

- 7.1.2 The Town **will** maintain a reserve fund dedicated to infrastructure maintenance and repairs, establishing financial readiness for unplanned contingencies.

Achieves Objective: A

- 7.1.3 The Town **will** develop an *Infrastructure Master Plan*, review it at least every five (5) years, and comprehensively update it every ten (10) years. ♦

- 7.1.4 Following completion of any new or updated *Infrastructure Master Plan* the Town will update the Municipal Development Plan.

Achieves Objective: A, B, C, D

- 7.1.5 The Town **will** prioritize water and sewer servicing capacity for non-residential development.

- 7.1.6 Notwithstanding the above policy, the Town may refuse development that is deemed a heavy user of water or sewer in accordance with water and sewer conservation policies in this Plan.

Achieves Objectives: A, C

- 7.1.7 Community growth and contiguous development patterns that optimize existing infrastructure **will** be encouraged and supported.

Achieves Objectives: C, D

- 7.1.8 The Town **will** complete an annual review of the Offsite Levy Bylaw to reflect the costs of growth-related infrastructure, including emergency services, parks and recreation, and allow for incremental increases. ♦

Achieves Objectives: C, D

- 7.1.9 The Town **should** establish and maintain a regular condition assessment program of critical infrastructure and create risk mitigation strategies to address vulnerable sections of the infrastructure networks, (e.g., assessments for deeps every 20th percent of design life, and a thorough assessment at half life, inspections every two (2) years after the completion of preventative maintenance). ♦

Achieves Objectives: A, B, D

Infrastructure (Asset) Management Planning allows the Town to create a comprehensive inventory of municipal assets and systematically track deferred maintenance. This helps the Town prioritize funding for repairs and replacements to prevent costly emergency fixes and extend the lifespan of infrastructure.

- 7.1.10 The Town **should** maintain and update its emergency repair program at least every five (5) years to address unexpected breaks or failures in drinking water and wastewater systems, minimizing service disruptions and environmental impacts. ♦

Achieves Objective: B, D

- 7.1.11 Innovative stormwater, wastewater, potable water and fire protection strategies **should** be used to the satisfaction of the Town.

Achieves Objective: C

- 7.1.12 The Town **may** require new development to develop water, wastewater, and stormwater management plans to demonstrate the ability for long-term servicing capacity to accommodate future growth.

Achieves Objective: C

Innovative water servicing strategies can help enhance efficiencies and support the Town's long term infrastructure needs. These can be solutions like rain gardens or permeable pavement for stormwater manage, greywater recycling systems for waste reduction, smart water metres to monitor potable water use, or integrated water storage systems that serve both irrigation and fire protection purposes.

7.2 Water

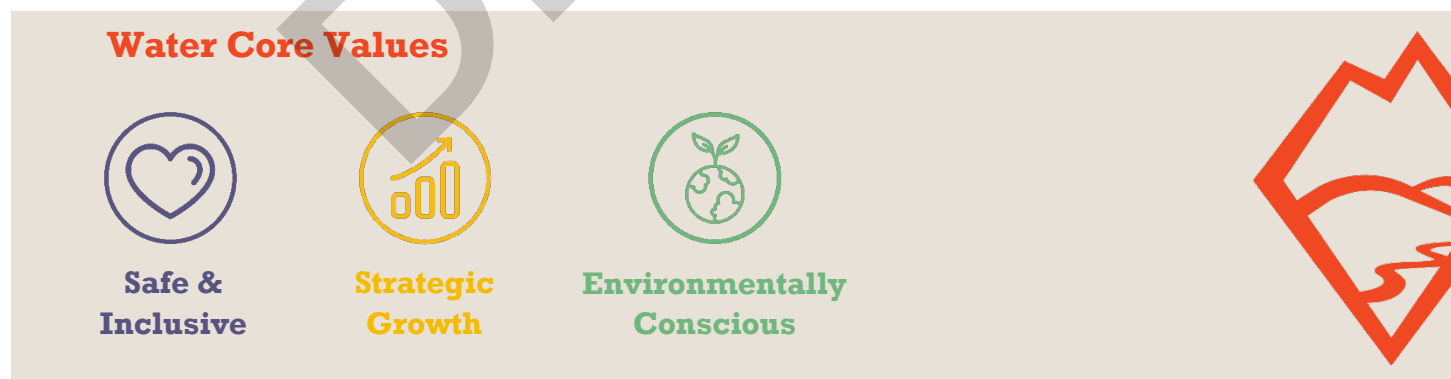
The Town gets its water from the Sheep River Regional Utility Corporation (SRRUC). SRRUC operates a water treatment plant in the former Town of Turner Valley, which provides treated water to Diamond Valley and surrounding areas. Diamond Valley holds seven water licenses for a combined gross diversion volume of 1,469,543 m³ (cubic metres) per year and a maximum daily diversion rate of 9,757 m³. The treatment plant is designed to produce a maximum daily flow of 7,300 m³/d, which can serve an estimated population of 10,000 people based on 315L/capita/day. The current treatment plant experiences a 20% loss of volume during the treatment process⁸. The amount of population and industry the Town can support depends largely on the system-wide demands for water.

For comparison, the City of Calgary's average water demand in 2023 was roughly 350L/capita/day⁹. To service all developable vacant lands within the town, it is anticipated that the Town will eventually require an additional water license capacity and treatment capacity; again, this volume will largely depend on the types of development, system-wide demands, and treatment technology available.

Water availability is a key consideration for the town, particularly when planning for the future. Careful considerations for land uses that have high water use, seasonal drought potential, and climate change affecting long-term river levels should be considered and are discussed further in [Section 9.4 Drought](#). The Town currently has bylaws to regulate both indoor and outdoor water use and conservation.

All new water infrastructure must adhere to the current edition of Alberta Environment and Protected Areas guidelines and the Town engineering standards.

The water servicing network is generally illustrated in [Figure 7. Water Servicing](#).



WATER OBJECTIVES

- A Require water facilities to be designed and constructed in accordance with provincial and municipal standards.
- B Protect water quality and quantity through water conservation strategies.

- C Responsibly manage water resources to maintain current and future infrastructure.
- D Contribute to the high standard of surface and groundwater quality within the Sheep River watershed through sound environmental planning and protection.

WATER POLICIES

- 7.2.1 Potable water **must** be supplied by an approved municipal system, through
- a. Connection to the municipal system, or
 - b. On-site cistern; and
 - c. Where a connection to the municipal system is available on-site, a cistern **must not** be utilized.

Achieves Objective: A

- 7.2.2 New potable water wells **must not** be utilized, except where already granted/authorized.

Achieves Objective: A

- 7.2.3 The Town **will** assess and plan for future water supply needs by conducting regular infrastructure capacity studies and integrating projected population growth into long-term water management strategies. ♦

- 7.2.4 The creation of any new or updated *Infrastructure Master Plan* will analyze water capacity, including water loss or leakage from aging pipes.

Achieves Objective: C

- 7.2.5 The Town **will** monitor its water license allocation and confirm that new developments align with available water resources to prevent overuse and depletion of local water supplies.

Achieves Objective: B, C



- 7.2.6 The Town **will** regulate land use near aquifers and wellheads to prevent contamination and enable groundwater recharge areas to be maintained through natural or permeable landscapes.

Achieves Objective: A, C, D

- 7.2.7 Development applications **must** be supported by a technical report from a *qualified professional* summarizing projected water use before project approval, when requested by the Town.

Achieves Objective: C, D

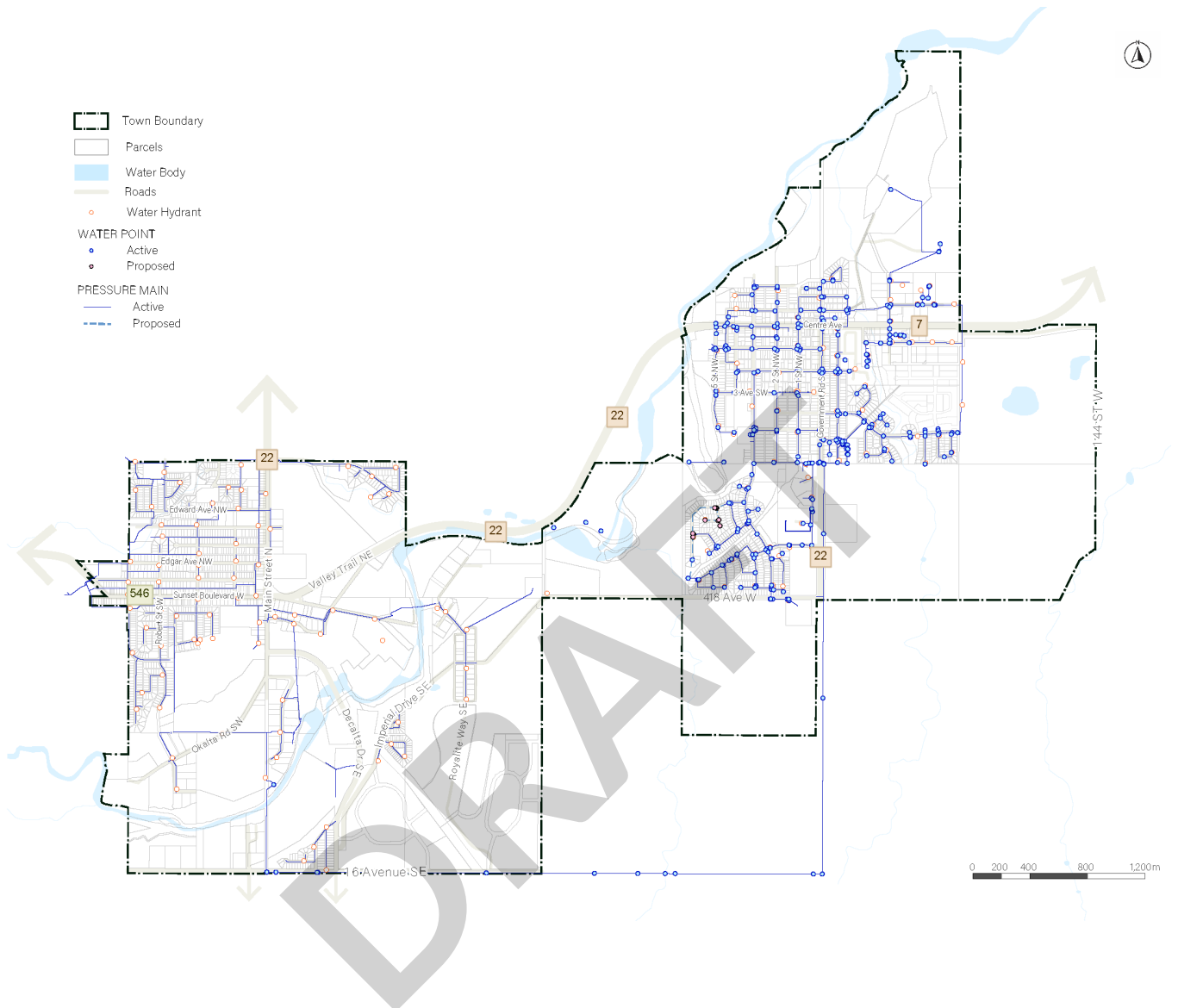
- 7.2.8 The Town **should** review and update its water bylaws, including Water and Wastewater Utility Bylaw and Water Use and Conservation Bylaw to implement upgrades to municipal infrastructure to reduce water loss and improve efficiency. Some strategies that can be included are:

- a. Efficient Water Use;
- b. Rainwater Harvesting;
- c. Water-Saving Devices;
- d. Greywater Recycling;
- e. Public Education; and
- f. Improving Water Management Practices. ♦

Achieves Objective: B, C



Figure 6. Water Servicing

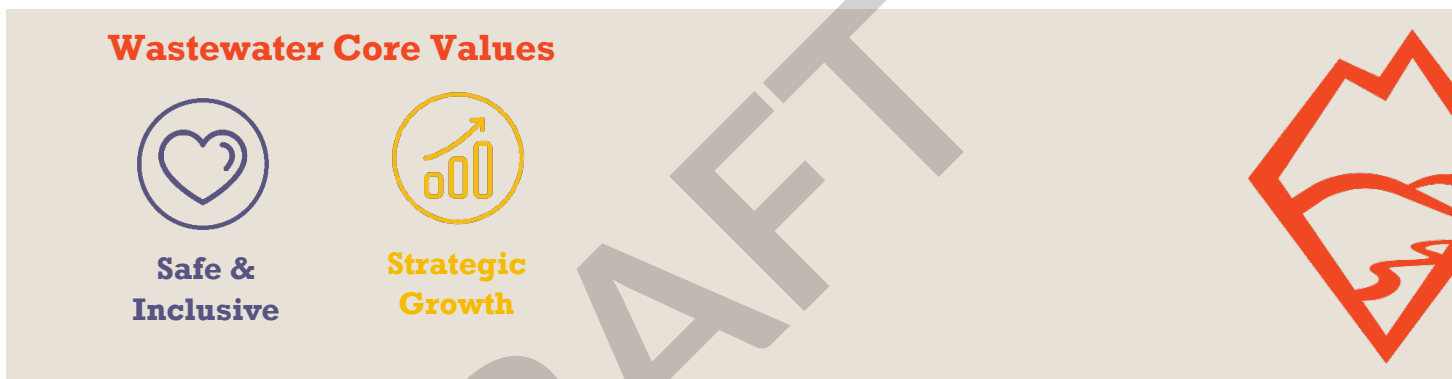


7.3 Wastewater

Currently, the wastewater for the Town is conveyed by gravity sewer mains, force mains, and lift stations towards the lagoon. Upgrades to the lagoon were recently undertaken through the Westend Regional Sewage Services Commission to improve the lagoon system's efficiency and meet new federal standards. At the time of developing the MDP, the Westend Regional Sewage Services Commission was undergoing disestablishment, with the intent of incorporating the lagoon into the operations of the Town.

All new sanitary extensions must adhere to the current edition of Alberta Environment and Parks guidelines and the Town engineering standards.

The wastewater servicing network is generally illustrated in [Figure 8. Wastewater Servicing](#).



WASTEWATER OBJECTIVES

- A Maintain wastewater facilities and infrastructure and expand as required to address growth and future development while adhering to all regulatory standards.

WASTEWATER POLICIES

- 7.3.1 Wastewater **must** be supplied by an approved municipal system, either
 - a. Connection to municipal system, or
 - b. Pump out tank; and
 - c. Where a connection to the municipal system is available on-site, a pump-out tank **must not** be utilized.

Achieves Objective: A

- 7.3.2 Development of new on-site septic fields **must not** be authorized, except where already granted/authorized.

Achieves Objective: A

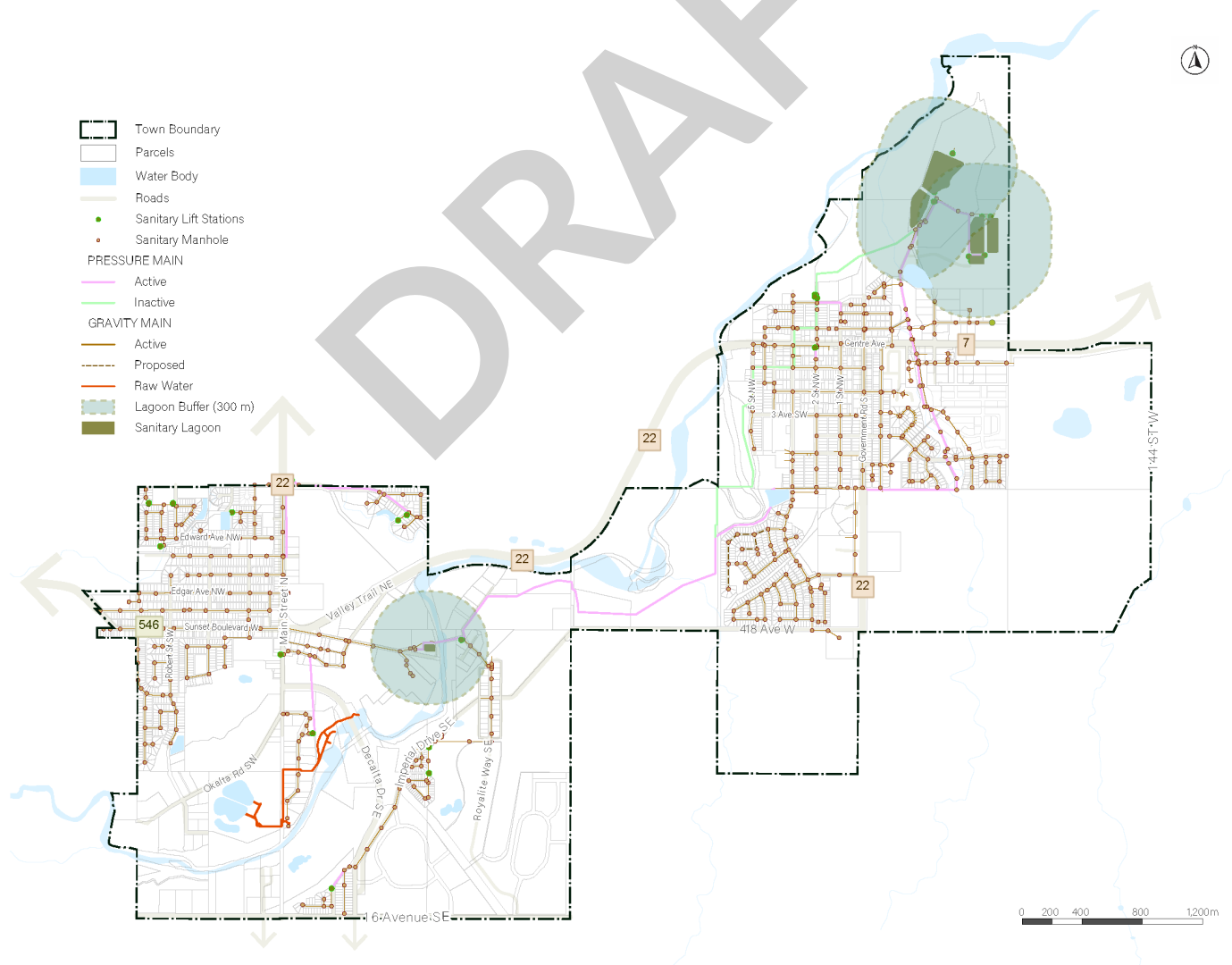
- 7.3.3 Allocation of existing wastewater capacity **should** be primarily used for *infill* and redevelopment of existing built areas where existing capacity exists or only minor upgrades are required.

Achieves Objective: A

- 7.3.4 The Town **should** limit the number of new Fix Sanitary Assets (Sanitary Lift Stations) to minimize upfront costs, long-term operating costs, and land cost of new *assets*.

Achieves Objective: A

Figure 7. Wastewater Servicing



7.4 Stormwater

Stormwater in Diamond Valley is managed through ponds, underground mains, gutters and ditches, however there are areas identified where overland flooding poses a risk (see [Figure 2. Development Constraints](#).) and identified in the Town of Black Diamond Master Drainage Plan. Overland flooding occurs when intense rainfall overwhelms drainage systems, causing water to flow over land surfaces. This type of flooding can lead to significant damage to property and infrastructure, and pose risks to human safety.

Prioritizing the management and effectiveness of stormwater management systems, such as well-maintained storm sewers and drainage infrastructure, is crucial for the Town. Stormwater management facilities are dedicated as Public Utility Lots. Requirements for *Area Structure Plans*, *Area Redevelopment Plans*, or *Outline Plans* relating to stormwater management can be found in [Section 11.2 Subordinate Plan Alignment](#).

The stormwater is generally illustrated in [Figure 9. Storm Infrastructure](#).



STORMWATER OBJECTIVES

- A Maintain stormwater facilities and infrastructure and expand as required to address growth and future development while adhering to all regulatory standards.
- B Identify stormwater solutions to mitigate the risk of overland flooding in affected areas.
- C Promote innovative approaches to stormwater management in new developments.

STORMWATER POLICIES

7.4.1 Stormwater **must** be managed on-site and any discharge through an approved method.

Achieves Objective: A

- 7.4.2 Stormwater systems **must** be able to handle 1:100-year storm events and have the ability to accommodate future upgrades or expansions.

Achieves Objective: A

- 7.4.3 The Town **will** review and address the recommendations in Appendix B of the Town of Black Diamond Master Drainage Plan related to overland flooding. ♦

Achieves Objective: A, B

- 7.4.4 The use of best practices and Low-Impact Development (LID) principles **will** be encouraged in new developments and redevelopment opportunities, including, but not limited to, green roofs or walls, pervious pavement, rain gardens, xeriscaping, and bioswales.

Achieves Objective: A, B, C

- 7.4.5 Stormwater facilities **must** be designed as dual-use amenities (e.g. with walking trails, seating areas, or naturalized landscapes to support biodiversity) where feasible, while still meeting engineering requirements.

Achieves Objectives: A, C

- 7.4.6 The Town **should** support regional initiatives for infrastructure upgrades, including lagoon system improvements and water treatment plant expansions, to meet the demands of future population growth.

Achieves Objective: A

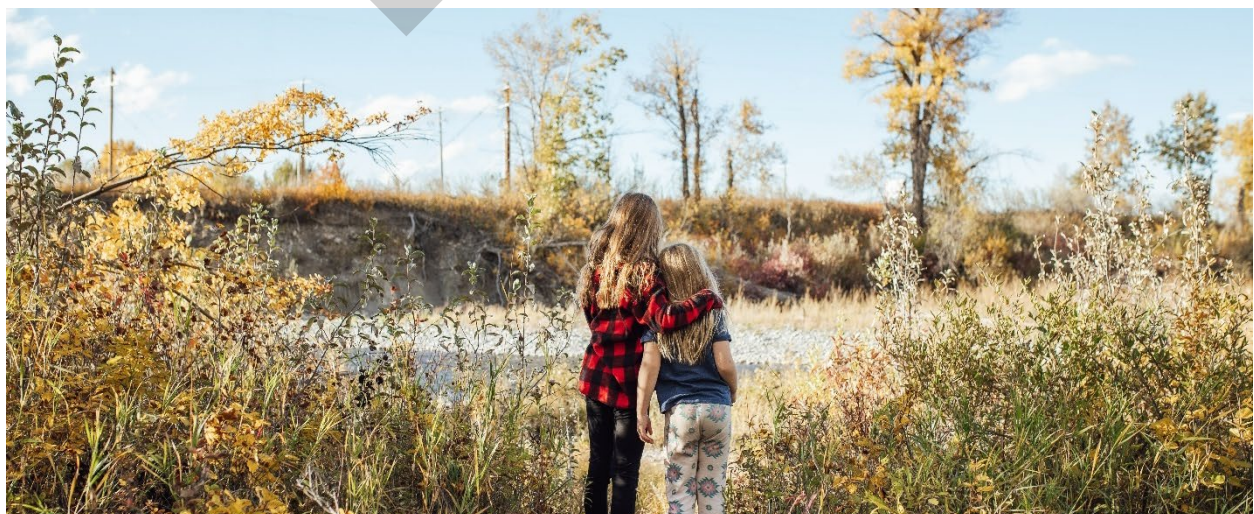
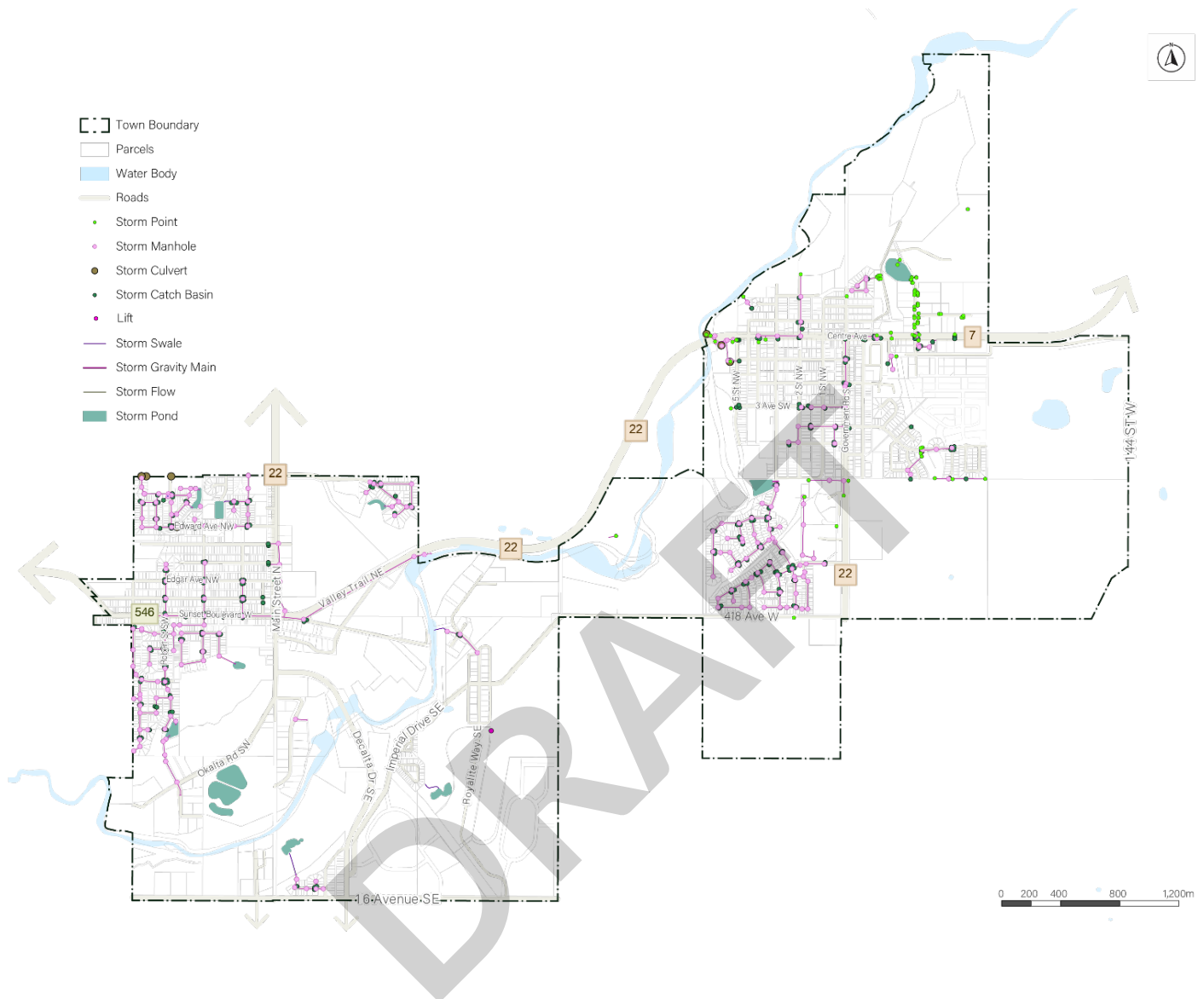


Figure 8. Storm Infrastructure



7.5 Transportation Networks & Infrastructure

Streets, sidewalks, and trails are vital corridors for connecting the people of Diamond Valley. Highway 22 is the only direct transportation connection between the east and west sides of the town, with 16 Avenue connecting through Foothills County. With provincially regulated highway linkages outside municipal control, Diamond Valley is limited in its ability to create a cohesive, pedestrian-friendly environment against the province's mandate to manage high traffic volumes and smooth vehicular movement.

Due to the administrative boundary and topography of the town, the opportunity for additional connections between the two former towns, particularly within the town boundary, is limited. Therefore, Downtown Black Diamond and Downtown Turner Valley face unique challenges due to their location along Highways 7 and 22, respectively, where high traffic volumes, speeds, and noise may impact the Town's ability to create a pedestrian-friendly environment. However, there is potential to explore connections by extending 176 Street W to Township Road 201, which could serve as a critical physical and symbolic link between the two former towns. Strengthening connections can support more cohesive development patterns, enhance access to services and amenities on both sides of town, and promote a stronger shared identity as the community grows together.

As the town evolves, transportation infrastructure must balance the needs of all users—pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, personal and commercial automobile users within the public realm—while enhancing connectivity between neighbourhoods, commercial hubs, and surrounding regions. Collaborative planning with Alberta Transportation and Foothills County is critical to creating smooth vehicular movement and safe, attractive, functional walkable streetscapes.

Requirements for *Area Structure Plans*, *Area Redevelopment Plans*, or *Outline Plans* relating to transportation networks and infrastructure can be found in [Section 11.2 Subordinate Plan Alignment](#).

The transportation network is generally illustrated in [Figure 10. Transportation & Pathways](#).



Transportation Networks & Infrastructure Core Values



**Safe &
Inclusive**



**Strategic
Growth**



TRANSPORTATION OBJECTIVES

- A Foster a safe and efficient movement of people, goods and vehicles.
- B Support an accessible, inclusive, and well-developed transportation network in all seasons.
- C Identify future roadway connections to establish internal access across town.
- D Work with the provincial government to identify and address transportation and pedestrian improvements in the Downtown Areas.

TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

- 7.5.1 All new residential neighbourhoods and streets **must** have sidewalks on both sides.

Achieves Objective: A, B

- 7.5.2 The developer **must** fund new transportation linkages or upgrades and associated infrastructure that is required as a direct result of new development.

Achieves Objective: A

- 7.5.3 The Town **will** collaborate with Alberta Transportation to identify opportunities to apply Complete Streets design in the Downtown Areas to enhance the pedestrian experience along Highway 22 and Highway 7.

Achieves Objectives: C, D

- 7.5.4 The Town **will** work with Alberta Transportation to maintain or improve efficient vehicular movement along Highway 22 and Highway 7, including on-street parking and enhancing the pedestrian experience in the Downtown Areas.

Achieves Objectives: C, D

- 7.5.5 The Town **will** collaborate with landowners to establish a roadway connection from George Street NW to Edward Avenue NW.

Achieves Objective: C

- 7.5.6 The Town **will** collaborate with Foothills County and local landowners to establish a north-south roadway connection between 418 Avenue W and 16 Avenue SE to enhance connectivity between the east and west sides of town.

Achieves Objective: A

- 7.5.7 The Town **will** regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of downtown parking as redevelopment occurs to identify and implement improvements to regulation.

Achieves Objective: A

- 7.5.8 Roadways serving Employment Lands **should** be located and developed to minimize visual and noise impact to adjacent residential areas.

Achieves Objective: A, B

- 7.5.9 The Town **should** encourage convenient multi-modal access, allowing residents and visitors to navigate downtown using various transportation modes, including walking, cycling, and some form of public transit.

Achieves Objectives: B, C

- 7.5.10 Wherever possible, planning applications for new neighbourhoods **should** adopt grid road patterns characterized by intersecting streets forming a network of rectangular blocks..

Achieves Objectives: B, C

- 7.5.11 The Town **may** investigate community public transit options, including carpooling, car sharing, bike sharing, short-term vehicle rentals, and other privately operated transportation services.

Achieves Objectives: A, B

As downtown evolves, it is important to monitor the provision and performance of parking to respond to needs, and may require amendments to Land Use Bylaw regulations.

7.6 Active Transportation

Diamond Valley's scenic natural surroundings, small-town charm, and close-knit community make it ideal for promoting active transportation. The Town's location along the Sheep River, with its existing trails and pathways, offers a unique opportunity to create a connected network that supports walking, cycling, and other non-motorized travel. Enhancing these routes will encourage healthy, active lifestyles and potentially increase tourism opportunities. By prioritizing active transportation, Diamond Valley can promote a sustainable, small-town lifestyle that celebrates its scenic environment and sense of community.



Active Transportation Core Values



**Safe &
Inclusive**



**Diversified
Employment**



**Strategic
Growth**



**Environmentally
Conscious**



**Fiscally
Responsible**



ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION OBJECTIVES

- A Create a safe, continuous, and accessible active transportation network to urban and natural areas.
- B Promote active transportation as a viable and attractive alternative to vehicle travel and an opportunity to enhance the town's tourism experience.
- C Engage with partners to identify and fund regional pathway connections.

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

- 7.6.1 The Town **will** encourage the inclusion of active transportation infrastructure in all new development and redevelopment projects. This infrastructure **should** be located along or visible from streets and linked to local destinations. It could include bike racks, interpretative signage, art, and/or rest areas.

Achieves Objective: A, B

- 7.6.2 The Town **should** work with Alberta Transportation to explore extending the Friendship Trail as a separated multi-purpose pathway along Centre Avenue West to improve regional trail connectivity.

Achieves Objectives: B, C

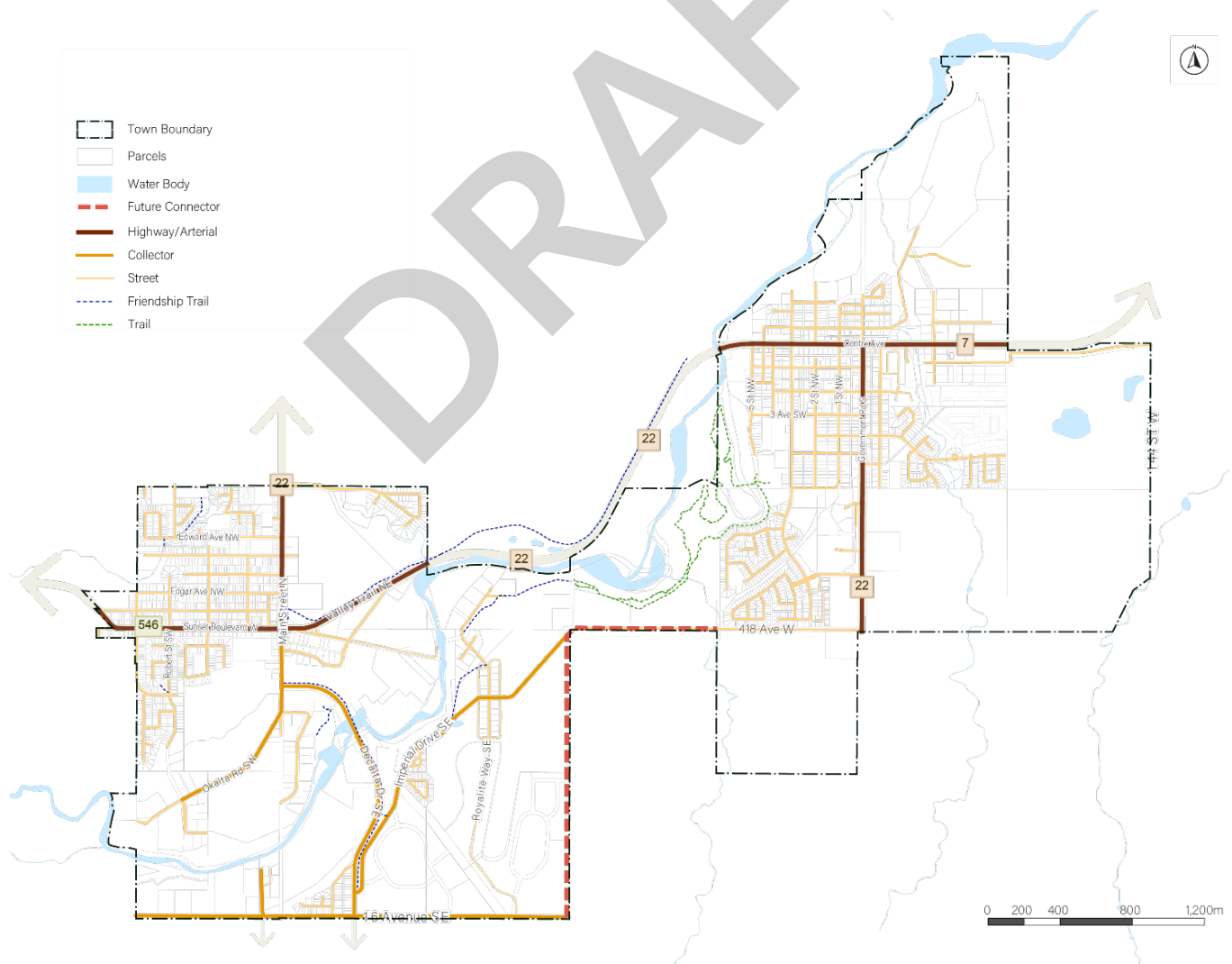
- 7.6.3 Green infrastructure elements, such as tree-lined pathways and landscaped buffer zones, **should** be integrated into trail and sidewalk design, wherever possible.

Achieves Objective: A

- 7.6.4 The Town **may** collaborate with other municipalities, government agencies to expand connections of inter-municipal regional pathways.

Achieves Objective: C

Figure 9. Transportation & Pathways



7.7 Protective & Health Services

Community safety and feeling safe are key components of the quality of life in Diamond Valley, and residents' express appreciation for and wish to maintain them in the future. Diamond Valleys' Fire and Rescue operates two fire stations (Station 2 and Station 3) and consists of dedicated, professionally trained, paid-on-call firefighters and career chief staff. Community Peace Officers, appointed by the Alberta Ministry of Public Safety and Emergency Services, serve and protect Diamond Valley with the RCMP under the Peace Officer Act.

Additionally, the Town employs a Bylaw Enforcement Officer appointed under the Municipal Government Act. Municipal enforcement plays a key role in managing community safety by educating the public, raising awareness of key issues, and regulating compliance with Town bylaws, provincial acts, and regulations.

Diamond Valley is also home to the Oilfields General Hospital, which provides residents with modern medical facilities that cater to their various medical needs. Development adjacent to the heliport must adhere to Canadian Aviation Regulations (CARs) and Standard 325, which provides detailed guidelines on heliport design and obstacle limitation surfaces.

Protective & Health Services Core Values



**Safe &
Inclusive**



**Fiscally
Responsible**



**Strategic
Growth**

PROTECTIVE & HEALTH SERVICES OBJECTIVES

- A Maintain development and construction practices that support health and protective services operation.
- B Collaborate with appropriate partners to maintain and expand public emergency and health services to respond to growth demands over time.
- C Maintain adequate funds for fire, police, and ambulance services to maintain and upgrade equipment, facilities, and training programs.

PROTECTIVE & HEALTH SERVICES POLICIES

- 7.7.1 Developments **must** provide safe and efficient access for emergency service vehicles.

Achieves Objective: A

- 7.7.2 The Town **will** cooperate with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to ensure the level of police protection and facilities is appropriate to meet community needs.

Achieves Objective: B

- 7.7.3 The Town **will** support Alberta Health Services to maintain appropriate levels of hospital services, including extended care services for seniors.

Achieves Objective: B

- 7.7.4 The Town **will** continually assess the requirements for fire services to address the fire risk within the town.

Achieves Objective: A, C

- 7.7.5 The Town **should** collaborate and partner with adjacent municipalities in the efficient provision of emergency and protective services.

Achieves Objective: B

- 7.7.6 The Town **should** maintain that development near and adjacent to the Oilfields General Hospital does not conflict or limit the current and future operations or expansion of the facility, including the heliport.

Achieves Objective: A

7.8 Designing Safe Places

The built environment plays a key role in creating safe spaces. Poor lighting, hidden blind spots, and neglected or poorly maintained areas can inadvertently create unsafe spaces and create a feeling of vulnerability. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles are simple to practice and effective in maintaining safe environments. In accordance with CPTED, private and public development should consider:

- Designing spaces for natural surveillance, including the strategic placement of windows, lighting, and landscaping to enable public areas to be easily observable by residents and passersby.
- Clearly defining public and private spaces using physical elements like fences, signage, and landscaping. This creates a sense of ownership and responsibility among residents, which can deter unauthorized access and criminal activities.
- Keeping public spaces clean and well-maintained signals that the area is cared for and monitored, which can deter vandalism and other criminal activities.
- Encouraging legitimate activities in public spaces to increase the presence of people and reduce opportunities for crime. This can include community events, markets, and recreational activities.

Designing Safe Places Core Values



**Small-Town
Feel**



**Safe &
Inclusive**



**Government
Transparency**

DESIGNING SAFE PLACES OBJECTIVES

- A Enforce bylaws that support the maintenance of property and spaces.
- B Integrate CPTED design principles in the development approval process.
- C Integrate CPTED design principles in architectural and urban design standards.
- D Provide avenues for residents to identify problem areas and report issues.

DESIGNING SAFE PLACES POLICIES

- 7.8.1 CPTED Design Principles **must** be integrated into any design standards prepared for the Town.

Achieves Objective: C

- 7.8.2 The Town **will** continue to enforce its Property Responsibility Bylaw to address property maintenance standards.

Achieves Objective: A

- 7.8.3 The Town **may** develop a CPTED checklist to accompany development permits proposing new development or redevelopment. ♦

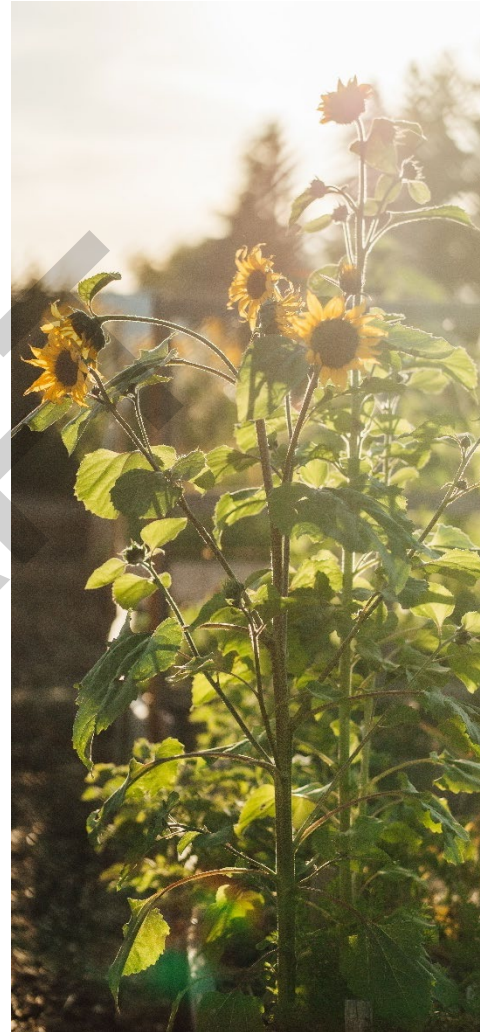
Achieves Objective: B

- 7.8.4 The Town **will** continue to provide an avenue for residents to communicate concerns related to safety on public and private lands through its Municipal Enforcement complaint process to identify opportunities to improve environmental design in target areas.

Achieves Objective: D

- 7.8.5 The Town **may** perform regular safety audits to identify areas with inadequate lighting, poor maintenance, and other CPTED deficiencies in response to resident complaints, to inform corrective action. ♦

Achieves Objective: D



7.9 Waste Management

Diamond Valley maintains a contract with the Town of Okotoks to transport solid waste to the Foothills Landfill and Resource Recovery Centre. The Town's waste management system includes regular curbside garbage collection, recycling, and organic waste, helping divert significant amounts of material from landfills. The Diamond Valley Transfer Station is located north of Diamond Valley, outside of town, and collects compost, electronics recycling, and household garbage. While local recycling services are provided through municipal programs and regional partnerships, recycling in Alberta has shifted as of April 2025 to shift the cost and management of recycling certain materials to the provincial government through the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)¹⁰. To extend the Regional Waste Management Facility's life span, the Town collaborates with its neighbouring municipalities to continue to promote recycling, composting, and other waste reduction practices through education and facility operation policies.

Waste Management Core Values



**Strategic
Growth**



**Environmentally
Conscious**



**Fiscally
Responsible**



WASTE MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

- A Promote responsible waste management practices among residents, businesses, and institutions to reduce the volume of waste sent to landfills.
- B Maintain waste management infrastructure and services now and in the future.

WASTE MANAGEMENT POLICIES

- 7.9.1 The Town **will** promote the principles of reducing, reusing, and recycling materials.

Achieves Objective: A

- 7.9.2 The Town **will** maintain curbside collection services for recycling, organics, and household waste for eligible residential developments in accordance with the Town's Waste Management Bylaw to enable convenient and effective waste diversion.

Achieves Objective: B

- 7.9.3 The Town **will** review the efficiency of its waste management program by monitoring waste diversion rates and modifying services as necessary to meet or exceed provincial waste reduction targets. ♦

Achieves Objective: A, B

- 7.9.4 The Town **should** collaborate with regional waste management authorities and private service providers to explore innovative solutions, such as waste-to-energy technologies and expanded recycling options.

Achieves Objective: B

- 7.9.5 The Town **should** conduct solid waste audits annually to track progress on recommendations of the audits. ♦

Achieves Objective: A

- 7.9.6 The Town **may** consider including recycling and waste separation infrastructure in all new developments, parks, and public spaces.

Achieves Objective: B

7.10 Community Amenities & Recreation

For its size, Diamond Valley offers a considerable variety of community amenities and operates several town-owned indoor and outdoor recreational facilities. These facilities include the Oilfields Regional Arena, Oilfields Curling Club, Scott Seaman Sports Rink, Flare 'n Derrick Community Hall, Dr. Lander Memorial Pool and Spray Park, Sheep River Library, the skateparks, baseball diamonds, sports fields, and outdoor skating rinks.

Community amenities, recreational facilities and cultural programs provided by for-profit or non-profit organizations are integral to the town's social fabric. They create opportunities for social connection and physical activity, attract young families, and encourage recreation tourism. As *assets* age, thoughtful life cycle planning and proactive maintenance are critical to continuing to serve residents in the future.

Community events and initiatives play a crucial role in fostering social cohesion, enhancing local culture, and providing residents with opportunities to connect and engage with one another. As a result of budget constraints, the Town must re-evaluate its investment in promoting and organizing community events and initiatives. Volunteerism and community activism have never been more essential, and the community-oriented values of the town must be acted on through collaboration between residents and the Town to fill the gap until the Town's finances can sustain its previous level of town-led activities and initiatives.

Community Amenities & Recreation Core Values



**Small-Town
Feel**



**Fiscally
Responsible**



**Strategic
Growth**



**Government
Transparency**



COMMUNITY AMENITIES & RECREATION OBJECTIVES

- A Maintain community amenities and recreational facilities through proactive life cycle planning and maintenance.
- B Provide accessible, multi-seasonal recreational opportunities that support physical activity, social interaction, and cultural engagement.
- C Strategically balance funding for the renewal of aging infrastructure with funding for new amenities to meet the evolving needs of Diamond Valley's residents.
- D Seek collaborative partnerships and foster a culture of volunteerism and community leadership to enhance and sustain local cultural, recreational, and social offerings including public facilities, amenities, events, and programming.

COMMUNITY AMENITIES & RECREATION POLICIES

- 7.10.1 The Town **will** develop and implement a Facility Management Plan to guide the inspection, maintenance, and replacement of aging recreational and community infrastructure. ♦

Achieves Objective: A, C

- 7.10.2 Multi-use design principles in the development of new community amenities or facilities (such as through the colocation of commercial, residential, and institutional uses) **will** be encouraged.

Achieves Objective: B, C, D

- 7.10.3 The Town **will** foster an inclusive community by encouraging programs and organizations that enable equitable access and participation for all residents, regardless of their background, abilities, or circumstances.

Achieves Objective: A, B

- 7.10.4 The Town **will** support community partnerships and volunteer-driven initiatives that contribute to the maintenance, programming, or fundraising for amenities and facilities.

Achieves Objective: A, C, D

- 7.10.5 Multi-functional and joint use parks and recreation facilities **should** be encouraged wherever possible (such as the joint locating of school sites and recreation sites) to maximize space efficiency while supporting a diverse range of activities. This may enable public-private partnerships to help fund the development of new recreation or amenity spaces.

Achieves Objective: A, B, D

- 7.10.6 The Town **should** seek provincial and federal grant opportunities to offset the costs of maintaining and improving recreational and community infrastructure.

Achieves Objective: B

- 7.10.7 The Town **should** explore partnership opportunities with Foothills School Division or the Christ the Redeemer Catholic School Division to offer existing space for recreational and cultural facilities.

Achieves Objective: A, D

- 7.10.8 The Town **may** explore the viability of a *microgrants* program for community-led initiatives instead of direct funding.

Achieves Objective: D

- 7.10.9 The Town **may** explore the use of Offsite Levies to fund recreation facilities.

Achieves Objective: D

Volunteer-driven initiatives are important for the town due to fiscal constraints on funding its typical programs and activities. However, the Town still plays an important role in supporting its local volunteer organizations. For example, the Town could support community fundraising with matching grants, facilitate connections that lead to partnerships, or establish a volunteer recognition award.

7.11 Heritage Preservation & Awareness

Planning for the future does not mean forgetting about the past. Diamond Valley's character is defined by its heritage buildings and architecture, largely concentrated in Downtown Turner Valley and Downtown Black Diamond. New development downtown can enhance vibrancy and lead to derelict buildings possibly transitioning to serve a modern purpose. However, the preservation of buildings showcasing the past should be encouraged, and new development should complement the style and character of existing buildings. Although Diamond Valley currently does not have any buildings with the municipal heritage designation, there are nine (9) historic places that have been identified as eligible for municipal designation.

The Town also has large swaths of land with Historical Resource Value (HRV) identified by the province, ranging from HRV 5, which indicates a high potential to contain a historic resource, to HRV 4, which contains a historical resource, and HRV 1, which contains a world heritage site. Future development or redevelopment of these lands will require the appropriate level of historical resource study and avoidance in accordance with provincial legislation and regulation. Requirements for *Area Structure Plans*, *Area Redevelopment Plans*, or *Outline Plans* relating to heritage preservation and awareness can be found in [Section 11.2 Subordinate Plan Alignment](#).

Heritage Preservation & Awareness Core Values



**Small-Town
Feel**



**Strategic
Growth**

HERITAGE PRESERVATION & AWARENESS OBJECTIVES

- A Support and encourage the preservation of land and buildings with historical significance or demonstrating historical architecture.
- B Encourage the adaptive re-use of existing historically significant residential, commercial and industrial buildings downtown.
- C Plan for development or redevelopment on lands with provincial Historical Resource Value in accordance with provincial legislation and requirements.

HERITAGE PRESERVATION & AWARENESS POLICIES

- 7.11.1 The Town **should** support the adaptive reuse of buildings with heritage significance or demonstrated qualities, to encourage the protection of heritage sites and buildings.

Achieves Objective: B

- 7.11.2 Development or redevelopment applications **must** demonstrate efforts to preserve land and buildings with historical significance or architecture.

Achieves Objective: A, B

- 7.11.3 The Town **will** cooperate with other levels of government, private agencies and individuals in the management of lands with Historical Resource Value.

Achieves Objective: A, C

- 7.11.4 The Town **may** review and update the Downtown Turner Valley Inventory of Historic Places, and include Downtown Black Diamond. ♦

Achieves Objective: A

- 7.11.5 The Town **should** explore the creation of a municipal process or program aimed to identify, catalogue and manage historic places and resources.

Achieves Objective: A

- 7.11.6 The Town **should** incorporate heritage elements and the historic character of heritage areas into any applicable design guidelines and standards so that new development complements and reflects the community's historic identity.

Achieves Objective: A, B



8 ENVIRONMENT

The natural environment is a defining feature of Diamond Valley and its importance is reflected in conversations with residents about community values and aspirations. Throughout the town, many natural features and opportunities to connect with nature should be celebrated and protected.

Open Space and Parks are generally illustrated on [Figure 5. Land Use Concept](#). These areas may include lands dedicated as Municipal Reserve (MR), which are secured through the subdivision process to provide for parks, trails, schools, and other public amenities and Environmental Reserve (ER), which are secured to protect environmentally sensitive features. The strategic use and management of MR and ER lands will help establish that natural areas are preserved, recreational needs are met, and public access to green spaces is maintained over time. Policies relating to MR and ER can be found in [Section 13 Reserve Dedication](#).

All developments must meet or exceed federal, provincial or regional environmental acts and regulations, including, but not limited to, those relating to air quality, water quality, wetlands, wildlife, *floodway*, and floodplain/riparian areas.



8.1 Protecting the Natural Environment

Riparian and environmentally sensitive lands in Diamond Valley are crucial for maintaining biodiversity, improving water quality, and controlling floods. These areas support diverse wildlife, provide scenic recreational spots, and offer educational opportunities about local ecosystems. Conservation efforts, such as those by the Western Sky Land Trust with Gray Park, focus on protecting these habitats while promoting sustainable development and community engagement. Overall, these lands enhance ecological health and community well-being.

Protecting the Natural Environment Core Values



**Strategic
Growth**



**Environmentally
Conscious**



**Government
Transparency**



PROTECTING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT OBJECTIVES

- A Protect and enhance natural habitats within riparian and *environmentally sensitive areas*.
- B Encourage community involvement and partnerships in conservation efforts to provide educational opportunities about the importance of riparian and environmentally sensitive lands.
- C Engage in responsible and environmentally sensitive development practices near natural areas in accordance with provincial legislation and regulation.

PROTECTING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT POLICIES

- 8.1.1 The Town **will** identify opportunities to protect natural features along the Sheep River from adjacent development, such as through the regulation of land uses, building heights, massing, parking or other uses to reduce negative impacts on the natural character of the river valley.

Achieves Objective: A, C

- 8.1.2 Major planning applications **must** submit a *Biophysical Impact Assessment* (BIA) prepared by a *qualified professional* to identify *environmentally sensitive areas* and buffer requirements.

Achieves Objective: A, C

- 8.1.3 Subdivision and development applications adjacent to *watercourses* and or *escarpment areas* **must** provide, as part of the development agreement and engineering drawings, a site-specific construction management plan that outlines environmental protection measures, including but not limited to:

- a. Erosion control, vegetation protection, and pesticide and herbicide control;
- b. Environmental mitigation and monitoring measures to be undertaken by the developer; and
- c. Reclamation and re-vegetation plans.

Achieves Objective: A, C

- 8.1.4 The Town **will** protect identified *environmentally sensitive areas* by implementing the following measures:

- a. Creating and maintaining a local inventory of *environmentally sensitive areas*;
- b. Dedicating these areas as a Conservation Reserve, an Environmental Reserve or easements, in accordance with the MGA;
- c. Restricting land use for passive recreation;
- d. Requiring appropriate setbacks from identified *environmentally sensitive areas*;
- e. Protecting, restoring, and increasing riparian areas to create additional room for the river; and

A Biophysical Impact Assessment assesses the specific location, type, function, and ecological value of environmental areas and wetlands on a site and provides the town with the necessary information to develop policy and regulations that support environmentally sensitive areas.



- f. Entering into conservation easements with not-for-profit agencies to protect the land for generations.

Achieves Objective: A, C

- 8.1.5 The Town **will** support partnerships and community-led initiatives aimed at restoring and enhancing the natural beauty and ecological function of the Sheep River and other key natural features.

Achieves Objective: A, B

- 8.1.6 The Town **will** engage the community in conservation through educational programs, volunteer opportunities, and public consultation to promote environmental stewardship.

Achieves Objective: A, B

- 8.1.7 Park and trail development **should** be directed away from *environmentally sensitive areas*.

Achieves Objective: C

- 8.1.8 The Town **should** develop a *wayfinding* strategy to encourage responsible behaviour for open space recreators and include information about the community's natural areas and ecology, throughout Diamond Valley's Parks and Trail System. ♦

Achieves Objective: B, C

- 8.1.9 The Town **should** explore opportunities to partner with local community groups to assist with the management of local park and recreation facilities, such as enter into maintenance and operation agreements with community groups when this occurs.

Achieves Objective: B

A wayfinding program would serve two purposes: It would allow the town to communicate expected behaviours in natural areas and parks while also providing an opportunity to educate visitors about the importance of the environment they are frequenting.

8.2 Embracing Nature on Our Doorstep

Diamond Valley is unique in that it has nature at its doorstep. The boundary between town life and nature is blurred, which is often taken advantage of by the resident mule deer. Evidence suggests a strong association between exposure to nature and open spaces and improved mental and physical well-being. Residents are a short drive to the stunning landscapes of Kananaskis, with amenities along the way that offer many outdoor recreation activities, including horseback riding, motorized recreational vehicle trails, hiking, camping, and fishing.

The Sheep River is a cherished natural feature of Diamond Valley's landscape. It provides a longstanding physical connection between the two amalgamated towns of Turner Valley and Black Diamond. Local and visiting anglers' fish for trout, hikers and cyclists populate trails along the river valley, and there are numerous spots along the riverbank for picnics and relaxation. It is important to maintain the integrity of these natural assets while enhancing public access.

The former Town of Turner Valley and the former Town of Black Diamond have master plans that address recreation, parks, and pathways. However, since amalgamation, a joint review of these features and amenities has not been completed.

Embracing Nature on Our Doorstep Core Values



**Small-Town
Feel**



**Environmentally
Conscious**

EMBRACING NATURE ON OUR DOORSTEP OBJECTIVES

- A Maintain or enhance public access to natural areas for public recreation in natural areas, a comprehensive recreation and open space network including trails, recreation facilities and open space.
- B Promote well-being by encouraging outdoor activities and providing amenities that support a healthy lifestyle.

EMBRACING NATURE ON OUR DOORSTEP POLICIES

8.2.1 The Town **will** develop a *Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan* that designates specific areas for public access and recreation that do not compromise the ecological integrity of sensitive lands. The *Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan* **should** consider including:

- a. Recreation, cultural and open space priorities for the community;
- b. An integrated hierarchy of active and passive parks and recreational facilities to guide recreational development;
- c. Responsible opportunities to connect recreation access to the Sheep River; and
- d. Opportunities to increase public access to scenic vistas and view points throughout the open space network. ♦

Achieves Objective: A, B

Master Planning looks at the entire open and natural space network and can guide future decisions relating to recreation opportunities and access to nature, while supporting conservation efforts.

8.2.2 The Town **should** investigate ways to market its connection to nature to promote tourism and economic development.

Achieves Objective: B

8.2.3 When parks and open spaces are designed and developed, they **must** be:

- a. Functional, publicly accessible, and located to serve the needs of current and future residents;
- b. Designed to accommodate a range of passive and active recreational uses;
- c. Integrated into a neighbourhood layout from the earliest planning stages, not as residual land; and
- d. Connected to the surrounding neighbourhoods, trails, and amenities using safe and accessible pathways.

Achieves Objective: A, B

8.2.4 The Town **should** encourage the integration of *pocket parks* in developed or redeveloped urban areas where land is limited to provide small, accessible green spaces, as important contributions to the open space and parks network.

Achieves Objective: A

8.3 Dark Sky

The night sky in Diamond Valley is a priceless resource, and the town is endeavouring to preserve the night sky visibility by minimizing urban light pollution to offer residents and visitors an opportunity to experience clear, star-filled nights. As a gateway to the Rocky Mountains and adjacent to Foothills County—which has implemented a Dark Sky Bylaw—Diamond Valley recognizes the importance of engaging in responsible outdoor lighting practices to maintain its natural nighttime environment.

Dark Sky Core Values



**Small-Town
Feel**



**Environmentally
Conscious**

DARK SKY OBJECTIVES

- A Preserve the beauty of the region's dark skies, through initiatives and education that support the minimization of light pollution.
- B Identify partnerships to initiate and implement dark sky initiatives
- C Create a Dark Sky Bylaw to maintain dark sky visibility now and in the future.

DARK SKY POLICIES

- 8.3.1 The Town **will** develop Dark Sky regulations to address contributors of light pollution to preserve the visibility of dark skies. ♦

Achieves Objective: C

- 8.3.2 The Town **will** explore partnerships with adjacent municipalities, educational or non-governmental organizations for opportunities to jointly deliver Dark Sky initiatives and create consistency in policy to maximize the effectiveness of light pollution reduction efforts.

Achieves Objective: B

- 8.3.3 New developments, including residential, commercial, and industrial projects, **should** demonstrate dark sky-friendly lighting standards that limit excessive brightness, glare, and uplighting.

Achieves Objective: A

- 8.3.4 Awareness about light pollution **should** be promoted through public outreach initiatives, workshops, and educational programs that highlight the benefits of preserving dark skies for human health, wildlife, and astronomy.

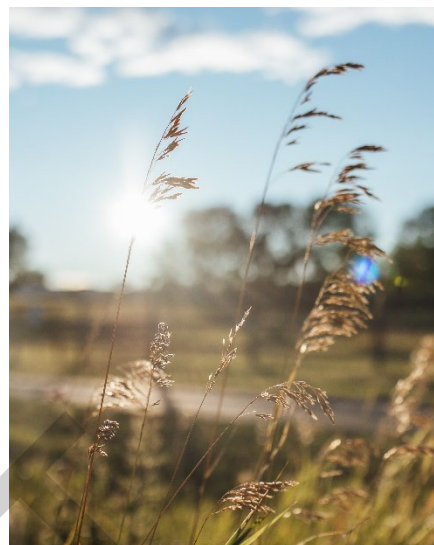
Achieves Objective: A

DRAFT

8.4 Agriculture

Agriculture is a defining feature of Diamond Valley's landscape. While the town itself is primarily urban, where agriculture activity is present on undeveloped lands and along the Town interface with Foothills County. The Town respects the right of these areas to continue agricultural production and is committed to minimizing conflicts between urban and rural land uses, such as through buffers between farms and residential or commercial developments.

Urban agriculture is also important to enhance food security and provide equitable access to fresh food. Diamond Valley residents also maintain two community gardens, which provide residents with opportunities to grow their own food. The Town will continue to encouraging the maintenance and expansion of urban agriculture initiatives.



Agriculture Core Values



**Small-Town
Feel**



**Strategic
Growth**

AGRICULTURE OBJECTIVES

- A Support the existing agricultural activities in the town boundary and minimize land use conflicts between urban and agricultural activities within and beyond urban limits.
- B Support urban agriculture and community-based initiatives for local food production.

AGRICULTURE POLICIES

- 8.4.1 Development **must** provide appropriate buffers and transition zones between agricultural operations and urban development areas to minimize conflicts. This could look like landscaped setbacks, tree or shrub plantings, berms, fencing, or open space corridors that can separate agricultural operations from urban development.

Achieves Objective: A

- 8.4.2 The Town **will** encourage urban agriculture initiatives, such as edible landscaping, community gardens, rooftop gardens, and small-scale food production.

Achieves Objective: B

- 8.4.3 The Town **should** regularly communicate with Foothills County on issues of appropriate buffers and transitions between agricultural operations and urban development to minimize conflicts and proactively address issues.

Achieves Objective: A



9 EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

9.1 General Emergency Preparedness

Emergency preparedness from a municipal perspective involves comprehensive planning and local and regional coordination for community safety and resilience. An Emergency Response Plan was developed for Black Diamond in 2019; however, Diamond Valley does not have a comprehensive Municipal Emergency Plan that outlines the procedures and responsibilities for responding to emergencies. The Town does emit emergency management notices and alerts, and has a flood monitoring system in place, and monitors snowpack levels, river flow data, and weather forecasts for flooding risk. Residents are provided with resources and information to stay informed and prepared for potential flooding.

Like other communities in the region, the town is expected to experience increased impacts of climate change, which can manifest through heightened risks of floods, droughts, and wildfires. These climate impacts must be considered in discussions of emergency preparedness. The Town of Black Diamond & Turner Valley *Climate Resilience Action Plan* prepared in 2016 provides the foundation for future climate resilience planning.

General Emergency Preparedness Core Values



**Safe &
Inclusive**



**Fiscally
Responsible**



**Strategic
Growth**



**Environmentally
Conscious**



**Government
Transparency**

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS GENERAL OBJECTIVES

- A Establish strong partnerships with provincial agencies, neighbouring municipalities, and private service providers to enhance coordination during emergencies.
- B Promote resilience through ongoing public education, awareness, training initiatives, and development requirements focused on emergency preparedness and safety.
- C Maintain and enhance critical infrastructure to maintain reliable, efficient, and responsive emergency management systems.
- D Develop and maintain an Emergency Response Plan.
- E Develop and maintain a *Climate Resilience Action Plan*.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS GENERAL POLICES

- 9.1.1 The Town **will** develop an Emergency Response Plan, and annually update the plan every five (5) years. ♦

Achieves Objective: D

- 9.1.2 The Town **will** continue to share resources related to climate impacts and mitigation measures related to wildfire, flooding and drought to spread awareness and encourage sustainable behaviour.

Achieves Objective: B. E

- 9.1.3 All existing development in Diamond Valley **must** maintain adequate emergency access to enable the safety of residents and effective emergency response. Where emergency access routes are currently required, they **will** be preserved, clearly marked, and maintained to meet safety standards.

Achieves Objective: C

- 9.1.4 All new subdivisions and developments **must** incorporate emergency vehicle access requirements at the early stages of planning and design.

Achieves Objective: C

- 9.1.5 Emergency access routes **must** be protected from unauthorized use through appropriate measures and preserved with clearly marked signage and access to be maintained to meet safety standards.

Achieves Objective: C



- 9.1.6 Emergency access routes, including lanes, roads, and designated fire lanes, **must** be maintained in a condition that allows year-round accessibility. Any changes to these routes, including modifications or removals, **must** be reviewed and approved by the appropriate authority so that there is continued emergency access for fire, police, and ambulance services.

Achieves Objective: C

- 9.1.7 The Town **should** update the Town's *Climate Resilience Action Plan*. ♦

Achieves Objective: A

- 9.1.8 Development **should** demonstrate emergency preparedness considerations in new developments, such as through its requirement for Fire Safety Plans and site design.

Achieves Objective: B

- 9.1.9 The Town **should** provide regular training for staff, council members, and emergency management teams and encourage the community to become familiar with the Municipal Emergency Plan.

Achieves Objective: B

- 9.1.10 The Town **should** seek provincial and federal funding opportunities to invest in critical infrastructure upgrades, such as flood mitigation systems, backup power solutions, and emergency operations enhancements.

Achieves Objective: C

- 9.1.11 The Town **should** develop and maintain joint action plans and mutual aid agreements with all neighbouring municipalities and regional authorities.

Achieves Objective: C



9.2 Wildfire

Hot and dry weather conditions create heightened risk for wildfires, and wildfire seasons are beginning to extend in Southern Alberta from early spring and last longer into the fall. Wildfires pose a significant threat as they can spread rapidly through surrounding forests and grasslands, endangering homes, infrastructure, and natural habitats. Wildfires also contribute to poor air quality, releasing harmful pollutants that can affect respiratory health. Wildfire prevention and preparedness requires a collaborative effort between local authorities, residents, and regional partners.

Wildfire Core Values



**Safe &
Inclusive**



**Environmentally
Conscious**



**Government
Transparency**



WILDFIRE OBJECTIVES

- A Encourage fire-resistant development and landscaping practices.
- B Educate residents and businesses about wildfire risks and incentivize prevention measures.

WILDFIRE POLICIES

- 9.2.1 The Town will develop a FireSmart Bylaw following FireSmart principles.
- 9.2.2 The use of native, fire-resistant plant species **will** be encouraged in public and private landscaping projects.

Achieves Objective: A

- 9.2.3 The Town **should** explore grant programs or incentives for property owners who adopt FireSmart practices, creating defensible spaces around properties, such as replacing flammable vegetation, or installing ember-resistant vents.

Achieves Objective: B

9.3 Flooding Hazard

Many of the Town's open spaces and natural areas face flood hazards due to their location along the Sheep River (see [Figure 11. Flood Hazards](#)). Flooding can lead to property damage, erosion, and infrastructure challenges, particularly during high-flow events. The multi-year Sheep River Flood Study, which covers 60 km of the river upstream of the Highwood River confluence, identifies various river-related hazards that could impact properties in Diamond Valley. The study highlights the importance of accurate flood mapping and hydraulic modeling to inform emergency response and land-use planning. When this MDP was written, updated flood mapping had not been released. In the absence of updated flood hazard figures, the town must continue to proactively monitor risks and consider flood mitigation measures in affected areas. To understand where flood hazards affect development areas, refer to [Section 5.2 Development in Flood Hazard Areas](#).

Flooding Hazard Core Values



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FLOOD HAZARD OBJECTIVES

- A Preserve natural landscapes that support natural flood mitigation, such as retention of the riparian and wetland areas.
- B Plan proactively for future flood events and take appropriate mitigation measures to protect human health and property.

FLOOD HAZARD POLICIES

- 9.3.1 *Major planning applications* **must** demonstrate an avoidance-first approach to the preservation of natural flood mitigation features, such as wetlands, riparian areas, and vegetated buffers, to help absorb, slow, and direct floodwaters.

Achieves Objective: A, B

- 9.3.2 The Town **will** maintain and update its plans, documents and databases with receipt of updated floodplain mapping from the province to inform risk assessment and mitigation planning efforts.

Achieves Objective: A,B

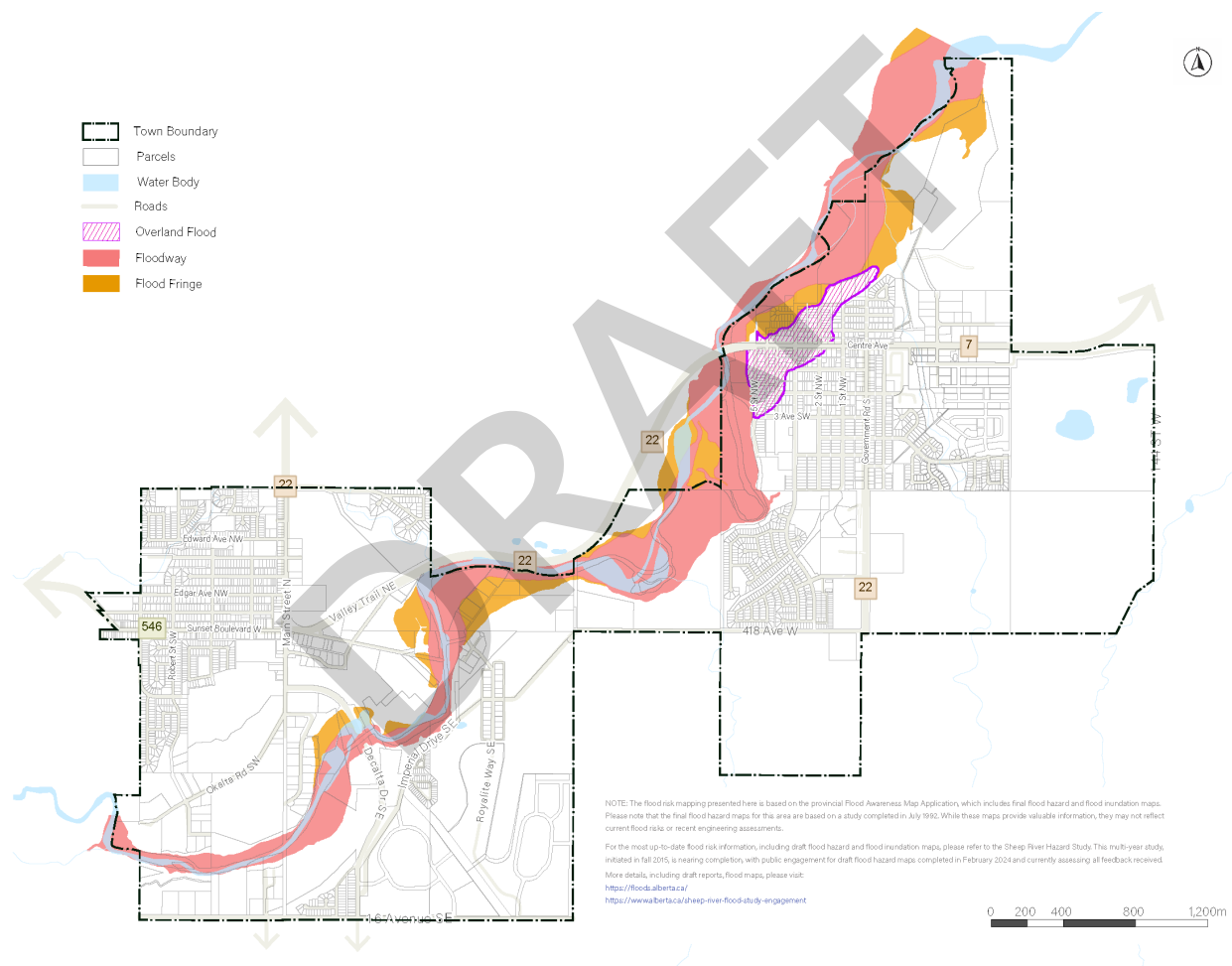
- 9.3.3 The Town **will** investigate a flood mitigation including potential engineering controls (e.g. berms).

Achieves Objective: A,B

- 9.3.4 The Town **will** work with affected landowners and relevant provincial agencies to manage private development in Flood Hazard Areas and mitigate risks to life and property.

Achieves Objective: B

Figure 10. Flood Hazards



9.4 Drought

Diamond Valley is susceptible to drought due to its semi-arid climate, reliance on the Sheep River watershed, and periodic fluctuations in precipitation. Extended dry periods can reduce water availability for residents, businesses, and agriculture during times where the risk of wildfires is heightened.

The Town's water conservation bylaws and initiatives that regulate watering schedules and restrictions on non-essential water use, are crucial in managing limited resources.



As climate patterns shift and droughts become more frequent and severe, the Town will continue to adapt its water management strategies with required action by the community to preserve this precious water source. See additional related policies in [Section 7.2 Water](#), [Section 7.3 Wastewater](#), and [Section 7.4 Stormwater](#).

Drought Core Values



Safe &
Inclusive



Environmentally
Conscious

DROUGHT OBJECTIVES

- A Enforce water conservation bylaws and initiatives that manage limited water resources effectively.

DROUGHT POLICIES

- 9.4.1 The Town **will** monitor and enforce compliance with its water conservation bylaws and regulations through inspections and penalties for violations.

Achieves Objective: A

10 RESERVE DEDICATION

As Diamond Valley continues to grow, intentional management of land designated as Municipal Reserve (MR), School Reserve (SR), and Environmental Reserve (ER) is needed to contribute to a well-planned community. These reserves include parks, open spaces, trails, and natural areas, which are detailed more in [Section 8 Parks & Environment](#).

10.1 Municipal Reserve

Municipal Reserve lands are essential for providing public amenities that enhance the quality of life in Diamond Valley. These lands are set aside for parks, recreation, and community facilities.

Municipalities take Municipal Reserves when land is developed in accordance with the Municipal Governance Act (MGA). Municipalities typically take 10% (the maximum allowed in the MGA) of the land being developed to set aside for these uses, which may include a combination of Municipal Reserve and School Reserve. Where land is not taken, the town can take cash-in-lieu up to 10% or a combination of land and cash. Lands for Municipal Reserve are identified at the *Area Structure Plan* stage and transferred to the municipality during the subdivision process.

Municipal Reserve serves a different purpose from Public Utility Lots (PUL) or Environmental Reserve (ER). Whereas MR lands are set aside for recreation and community use, PUL parcels are designated for public utilities and infrastructure, such as stormwater ponds or facilities, electrical substations, and other essential services. ER lands are lands considered of significant environmental value; they must be protected, and the lands automatically fall within the

Municipal Reserve Core Values



**Small-Town
Feel**



**Strategic
Growth**



MUNICIPAL RESERVE OBJECTIVES

- A Maximize resident benefit of Municipal Reserve lands by locating MR lands strategically to enable access to parks, recreational facilities, and community spaces for all residents.

MUNICIPAL RESERVE POLICIES

- 10.1.1 At the time of subdivision, reserve dedication or cash-in-lieu or a combination of both **shall** occur in accordance with the Municipal Government Act (MGA).

Achieves Objective: A

- 10.1.2 Land allocation of Municipal Reserve **will** be preferred, except in the case of industrial development, where municipal reserve **may** be either land allocation or cash, at the discretion of the subdivision authority.

Achieves Objective: A

- 10.1.3 Triggered by an application of subdivision, the Town **will** require the dedication of municipal reserve in accordance with the MGA.

Achieves Objective: A

- 10.1.4 The location and distribution of municipal reserve (MR) land **must** be determined at the *Area Structure Plan/Area Redevelopment Plan* stage or as designated within a Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails Master Plan.

Achieves Objective: A

- 10.1.5 Municipal Reserves **must not** consist of lands that:

- contain excessive slopes;
- are susceptible to flooding; or
- are legally encumbered.

Achieves Objective: A



10.1.6 *Non-contributing Space* **must not** be included in the calculation of Municipal Reserve (MR).

Achieves Objective: A

10.1.7 All Municipal Reserve **must** be located outside of the 1:100-year flood elevation, unless to be taken for open space, parks or sports fields.

Achieves Objective: A

10.1.8 Developers **must** provide a detailed drawing showing all MR dedicated areas with *Outline Plans* or re-designation applications, provided in a digital format as required by the Town.

Achieves Objective: A

10.1.9 When provided as MR, pathways around storm ponds **should** be located above the 1:100-year high water level. Where boardwalks or special water features are incorporated into storm pond pathways, exceptions **may** be considered.

Achieves Objective: A

10.1.10 Municipal Reserve **may** be used to enhance municipal trails, where acceptable to the Town, with a minimum width of 3 metres.

Achieves Objective: A

10.1.11 Deferred reserve **may** be considered in areas with fragmented land ownership, provided it is addressed through an approved *Area Structure Plan* (ASP).

Achieves Objective: A



10.2 School Reserve

School Reserve lands are designated to support future educational facilities in Diamond Valley, and any lands dedicated are accounted for in the 10% MR land contribution requirement under the MGA. As growth occurs, the municipality may need to identify land for future schools to meet the educational needs of families. The Town, school boards, and provincial authorities play a role in how School Reserve lands are planned and developed. MR lands are identified at the *Area Structure Plan* stage and transferred to the municipality or school authority during the subdivision process.

School Reserve Core Values



**Small-Town
Feel**



**Strategic
Growth**

SCHOOL RESERVE OBJECTIVES

- A Maintain adequate land for future educational facilities, so that School Reserve lands are appropriately located to serve current and future populations.
- B Collaborate with local school boards and provincial authorities to dedicate and plan for School Reserve lands.
- C Integrate School Reserve lands with community amenities and public spaces to create vibrant, multi-functional areas.

SCHOOL RESERVE POLICIES

- 10.2.1 School sites **must** be identified at the *Area Structure Plan* stage with additional details at the *Outline Plan* stage showing the site and lot configuration, as well as demonstrate adequate pedestrian connections (particularly between adjacent park or civic facilities).

Achieves Objective: A

- 10.2.2 Where a School Reserve has been transferred to a school authority, and subsequently, these lands are deemed unnecessary for school needs, the subject parcel **must** be transferred in title back to the Town of Diamond Valley.

Achieves Objective: B

- 10.2.3 The Town **will** collaborate with school authorities to identify opportunities to locate joint school and municipal facilities. The joint use of proposed community facility sites for parks, schools and potentially other municipal services (e.g. libraries/recreational facilities) that capitalize on cost savings **will** be mutually agreed upon by all School Board and the Town of Diamond Valley through a “Joint Use Agreement”.

Achieves Objective: C

- 10.2.4 Until a school is constructed on a designated School Reserve site, the Town **should** explore opportunities to utilize vacant School Reserve lands for interim recreation purposes, such as by creating outdoor sports fields on the playfield portion of the school site.

Achieves Objective: A



10.3 Environmental Reserve

Environmental Reserve lands are designated to protect and preserve Diamond Valley's natural features, including swamps, gullies, ravines, coulees, natural drainage courses, lands that are unstable or subject to flooding, and land adjacent to the bed and shore of any water body. These lands play a vital role in preventing erosion, managing stormwater, and maintaining water quality in the Sheep River watershed while also providing opportunities for passive recreation, such as nature trails and wildlife viewing.

Land can be designated as an environmental reserve if it includes:

- Swamps, gullies, ravines, coulees, or natural drainage courses.
- Land that is prone to flooding or considered unstable.
- A strip of land, at least 6 metres wide, next to the bed and shore of any lake, river, stream, or other body of water (such as a wetland).

During the subdivision process, the Town Subdivision Authority assesses the land and technical studies submitted with the development to identify areas that meet the criteria.

Environmental Reserve Core Values



**Strategic
Growth**



**Environmentally
Conscious**

ENVIRONMENTAL RESERVE OBJECTIVES

- A Protect and preserve *Environmentally Sensitive Areas* through the designation of Environmental Reserve lands, focusing on maintaining water quality, biodiversity, and ecological integrity.
- B Demonstrate responsible development practices around the registration of Environmental Reserve lands to avoid negative impacts on sensitive ecosystems while enhancing community connections to nature.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESERVE POLICIES

- 10.3.1 Development setbacks around wetlands with high ecological value **must** be registered as Environmental Reserves and/or established as Environmental Reserve easements.

Achieves Objective: B

- 10.3.2 Environmental Reserve adjacent to the Sheep River **should** be planned and located in a way that enhances public access to the river, while at the same time protecting the area's natural features, ecological functions, and overall character.

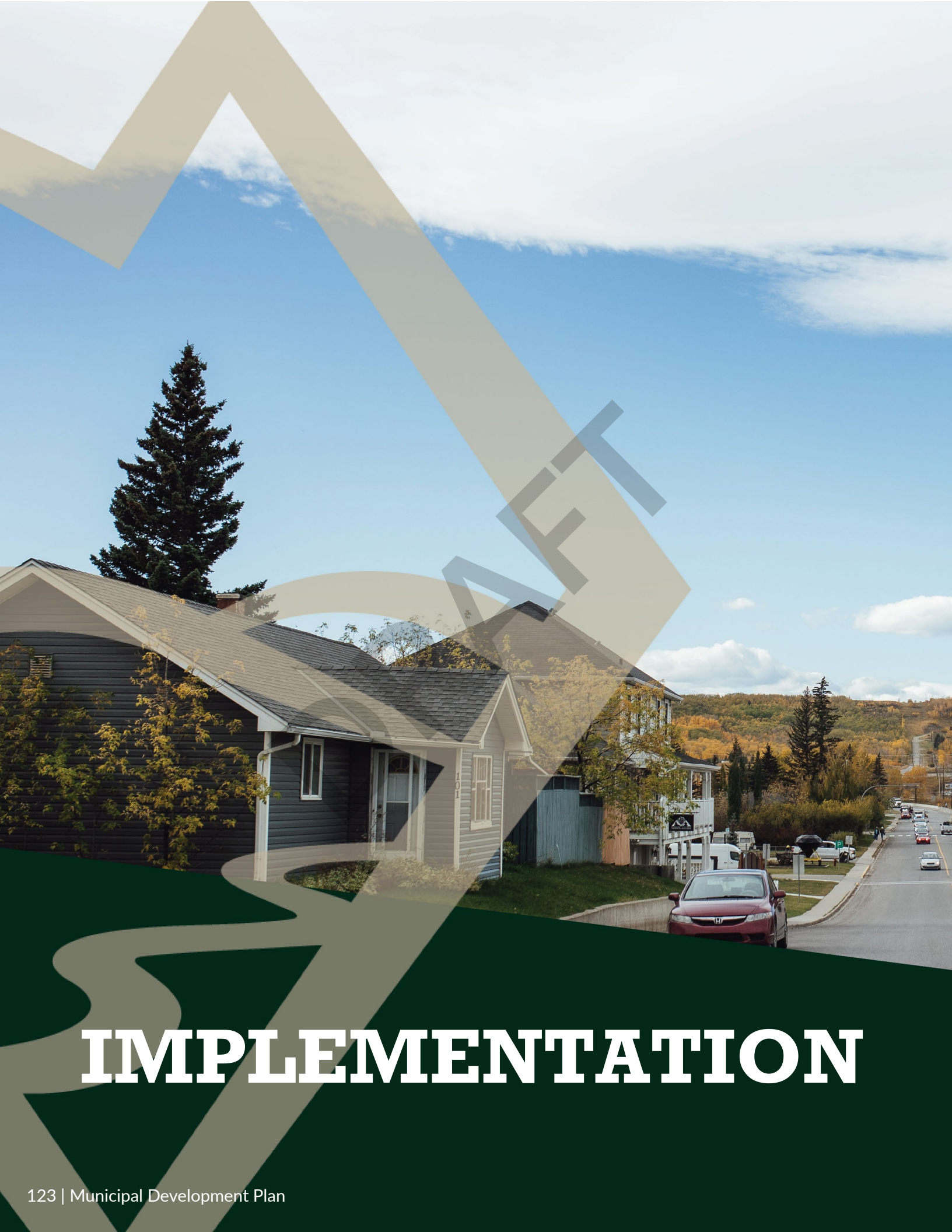
Achieves Objective: A

- 10.3.3 Town **may** require the completion of a geotechnical report, *biophysical impact assessment*, and/or environmental assessment to support the proposed dedication of Environmental Reserve.

Achieves Objective: A

- 10.3.4 In accordance with the Municipal Government Act at the time of subdivision, lands that are within the areas defined, such as subject to a flood hazard area, or subject to potential erosion due to steep or unstable slopes, **may** be identified as Environmental Reserve (ER).

Achieves Objective: A



SAFETY

IMPLEMENTATION



11 IMPLEMENTATION

The responsibility for implementing the Diamond Valley Municipal Development Plan lies with Town Council, committees of Council, administration and the residents and businesses of Diamond Valley. Council may assign specific tasks to various boards, agencies and ad-hoc citizen committees related to implementing, monitoring and reviewing specific MDP policies.

11.1 Regional Collaboration

Ongoing regional collaboration is important for taking a “big picture” approach to economic development, infrastructure planning, and environmental protection. Intermunicipal cooperation promotes consistency in land use policies, reduces instances of service duplication, and is intended to result in a maximization of cost-effectiveness to benefit both municipalities. The Town and County’s Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP) is the primary tool that guides collaboration between the Town and Foothills County. However, the Town also has partnerships with other neighbouring municipalities, including Okotoks.

Regional Collaboration Core Values



**Strategic
Growth**



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Transparency**

REGIONAL COLLABORATION OBJECTIVES

- A Promote cooperation, on-going consultation and dialogue and sharing of information amongst adjacent and neighbouring municipalities.

REGIONAL COLLABORATION POLICIES

- 11.1.1 The Town **will** continue to collaborate with neighbouring municipalities and other authorities and service providers to avoid duplication of municipal services, emergency and social services, and leverage partnerships for joint economic development and tourism opportunities, such as through an Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework.

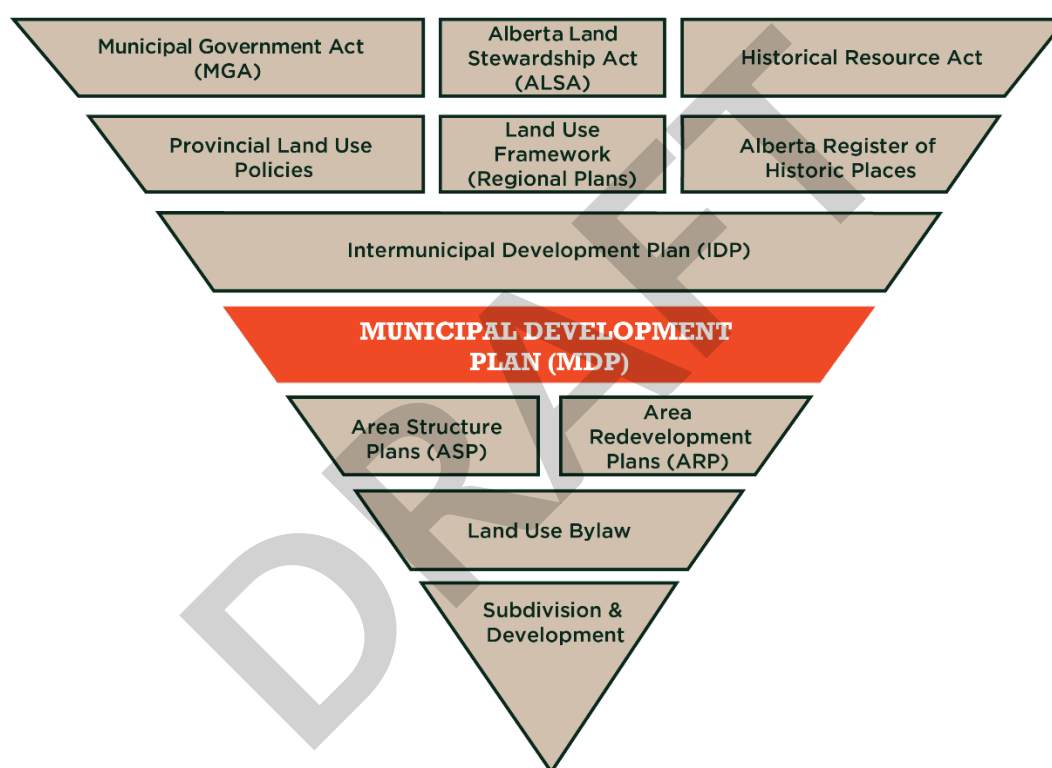
Achieves Objective: A, B

11.2 Subordinate Plan Alignment

The MDP serves as the overarching framework guiding the growth and development of Town and guides future land use decisions. All subordinate statutory and non-statutory planning must conform to this plan.

To maintain a strategic and intentional approach to future planning, it is essential that all *Area Structure Plans* (ASPs), *Area Redevelopment Plans* (ARPs), and *Outline Plans*, align with the goals, objectives and policies outlined in this MDP. Once subordinate plans are in place, applicants can apply to redesignate and subdivide the land, and submit a Development Permit.

Figure 11. Planning Hierarchy



Area Structure Plans (ASPs) provide detailed land use and infrastructure planning for new development areas, managing growth to support the municipality's long-term vision. There are currently four *Area Structure Plans* in effect in Diamond Valley.

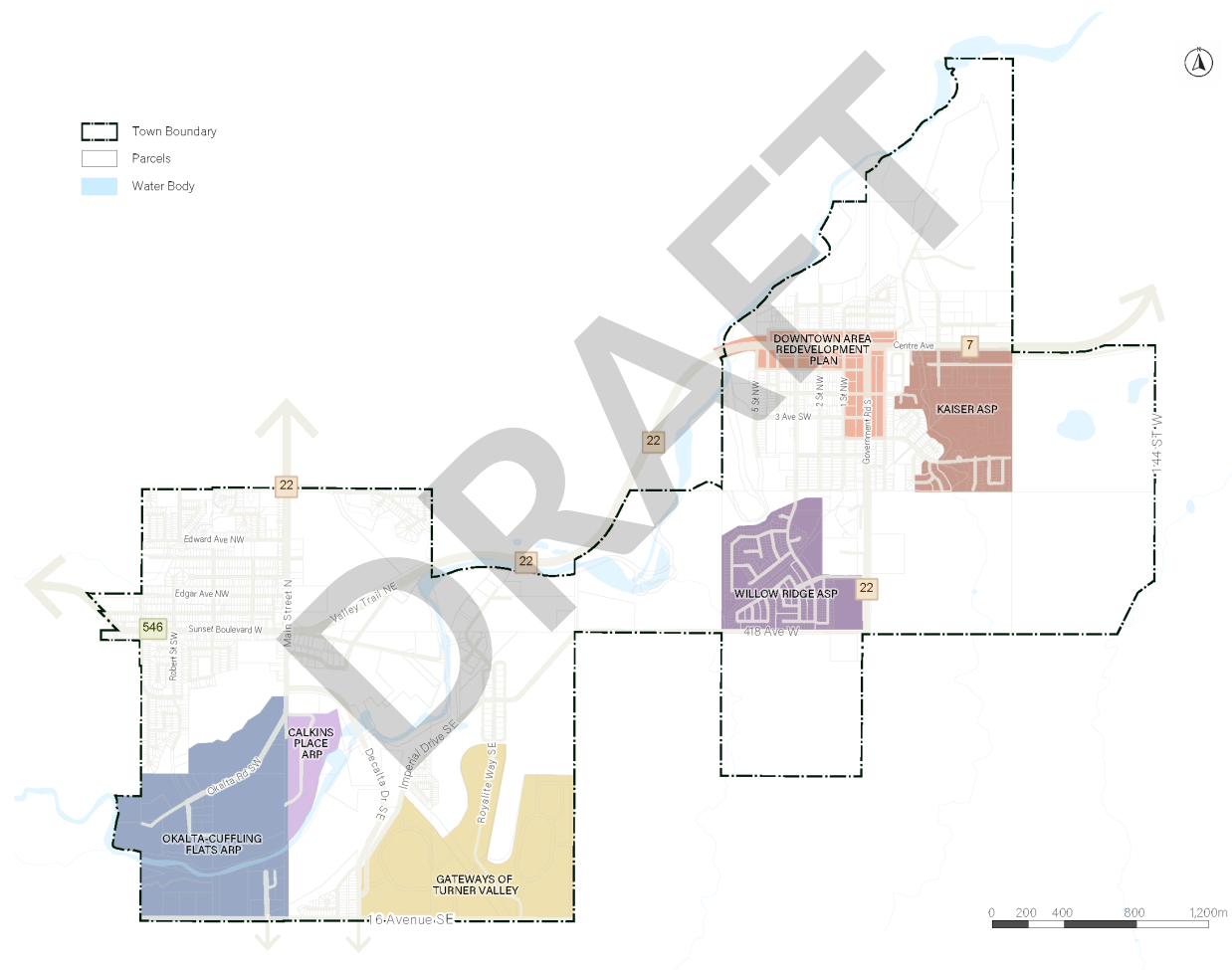
Area Redevelopment Plans (ARPs) enable the revitalization of existing neighbourhoods and commercial areas. These plans must be consistent with the MDP to promote orderly and efficient land use, infrastructure provision, and community development. There are currently two *Area Redevelopment Plans* in effect in Diamond Valley.

Outline Plans are completed within the framework of an approved *Area Structure Plan*, and offer a more detailed level of planning. These plans must adhere to the standards and policies outlined in their respective ASPs and the MDP.

Once the appropriate level of planning is complete, the applicant can apply to redesignate the land and subdivide, followed by submitting a Development Permit.

Existing *Area Structure Plans* and *Area Redevelopment Plans* in effect in Diamond Valley are shown on [Figure 13. Existing Area Structure Plans/Area Redevelopment Plans](#). There are no *Outline Plans* currently approved in the Town.

Figure 12. Existing Area Structure Plans/Area Redevelopment Plans



LANDS REQUIRING AN ASP

11.2.1 Subdivision, servicing, or discretionary development of the areas shown in [Figure 13. Existing Area Structure Plans/Area Redevelopment Plans](#) is prohibited without an approved *Area Structure Plan*.

GENERAL PLAN REQUIREMENTS

- 11.2.2 Applications for *Area Structure Plan*, *Area Redevelopment Plan*, and *Outline Plans* **must** demonstrate:
- a. How the plan meets the requirements of the Municipal Government Act, the Intermunicipal Development Plan, and the policies of this Municipal Development Plan;
 - b. Development staging in greenfield areas that prioritizes the preservation of high-quality agricultural land until such time development is warranted;
 - c. Land management practices that mitigate potential issues from the development on agricultural operations on adjacent lands; and
 - d. If servicing capacity exists to support growth projected in the plan.
- 11.2.3 Applications for an *Area Structure Plan*, *Area Redevelopment Plan*, and *Outline Plans* **must** identify:
- a. Impacts of growth on transportation networks;
 - b. Projected densities in accordance with the Town's density calculation table in [Appendix B](#);
 - c. New recreational facilities or infrastructure based on population, density and identified resident needs; and
 - d. Impacts of growth on public amenities, including public amenities and emergency response services and access through financial and statistical reporting and analysis.
- 11.2.4 *Area Redevelopment Plans* **must** identify opportunities for constructing and maintaining pedestrian pathways, multi-use trails, and bike lanes with attention to connections to other neighbourhoods, schools, commercial areas, and recreational amenities.
- 11.2.5 Comprehensive drainage and stormwater management plans **must** support all new *Area Structure Plans* and major developments.
- 11.2.6 *Area Structure Plans*, *Area Redevelopment Plans* or *Outline Plans* containing lands with a Historical Resource Value **must** submit a *Historic Resource Assessment* and undertake subsequent recommendations.
- 11.2.7 *Area Structure Plans* **must** establish roadway connections that are developed in a logical sequence determined through *Area Structure Plans* and *Outline Plans* to enhance the access and connectivity to the existing network.

11.2.8 *Area Structure Plans* **must** demonstrate features of complete streets, with design emphasis on a compact, human scale environment. Features **should** include but are not limited to:

- a. Bicycle lanes;
- b. Bump outs;
- c. Sidewalks in urban areas;
- d. Safe crossings for those with mobility challenges;
- e. Curb cuts; and
- f. Pattern paving.

11.2.9 Applications for *Area Structure Plan*, *Area Redevelopment Plan*, and Outline Plans **must** include:

- a. A Fiscal Impact Assessment completed by assessing the long-term (minimum 50-year projection) financial impact of the development to the Town, considering all costs and benefits (e.g. social services/ infrastructure maintenance/ capital cost replacement against the tax revenue generated by the development), including replacement costs of infrastructure (only for ASPs);
- b. A Land Use Concept that aligns with the intent of this Plan, including:
 - i. General location of public open space (that all residential buildings are within 300 metres of a park to provide equitable access);
 - ii. General location of schools and community services, where applicable;
 - iii. Servicing and transportation connections to adjacent development areas;
 - iv. Location of buffer zones and sensitive design around wetlands and natural features;
 - v. Architectural and Urban Design Standards and architectural controls;
 - vi. Servicing and transportation connections to adjacent development areas;
 - vii. A Market Report justifying the proposed land use mix;
 - viii. Pathway connections developed in a logical sequence to enhance the access and connectivity to the existing network;

- ix. The proximity and accessibility of emergency and protective service facilities to developments proposed through the plan processes to identify if future services are required. This **shall** be determined based on the emergency services response times; and
- x. Any additional items required at the discretion of the Town.

11.2.10 *Area Redevelopment Plans* and *Outline Plans* **must** demonstrate:

- a. Efforts to preserve and enhance green spaces and natural landscapes;
- b. Servicing plans, including solutions for any interim servicing solutions that **may** be required before full municipal servicing;
- c. Mitigations and design considerations for the siting of sensitive uses (residential or institutional) when adjacent to Commercial Areas or Employment Areas (e.g. buffering, landscaping, setbacks, building siting and orientation); and
- d. Additional items required at the discretion of the Development Authority.

11.2.11 *Area Redevelopment Plans* **must** identify opportunities for constructing and maintaining pedestrian pathways, multi-use trails, and bike lanes if the road right-of-way is large enough to accommodate, that fill gaps in connections to neighbourhoods, schools, commercial areas, and recreational amenities.

11.2.12 Applications to amend existing statutory planning documents **must** conform to the objectives and policies of this Plan.

11.2.13 The Town **should** refuse an *Area Structure Plan* or *Outline Plan* for primarily residential development on undeveloped lands, to achieve its goal for a 20% non-residential tax ratio.

FLEX PLANNING AREA REQUIREMENTS

11.2.14 *Area Structure Plans* in the Flex Planning Area **must** be accompanied by Architectural and Urban Design Standards prepared by a *qualified professional* architect. Standards **will** include the following:

- a. Architectural massing and variation in building form;
- b. Minimum open space;
- c. Roof shape and pitch;
- d. Parking and access;
- e. Privacy and transition;

- f. Finish materials and details;
- g. Landscaping, including minimum shrub and tree planting requirements; and
- h. Built form interface with the public realm (streets/ parks/open spaces).

11.2.15 Prior to subdivision of land in the Flex Planning Areas, redesignation, or a *major development permit application* the Town **may** require the applicant to complete an *Outline Plan* for the site and shadow plan for adjoining areas. The master plan **may** be in the format of a comprehensive application or an *Outline Plan* and **must** include:

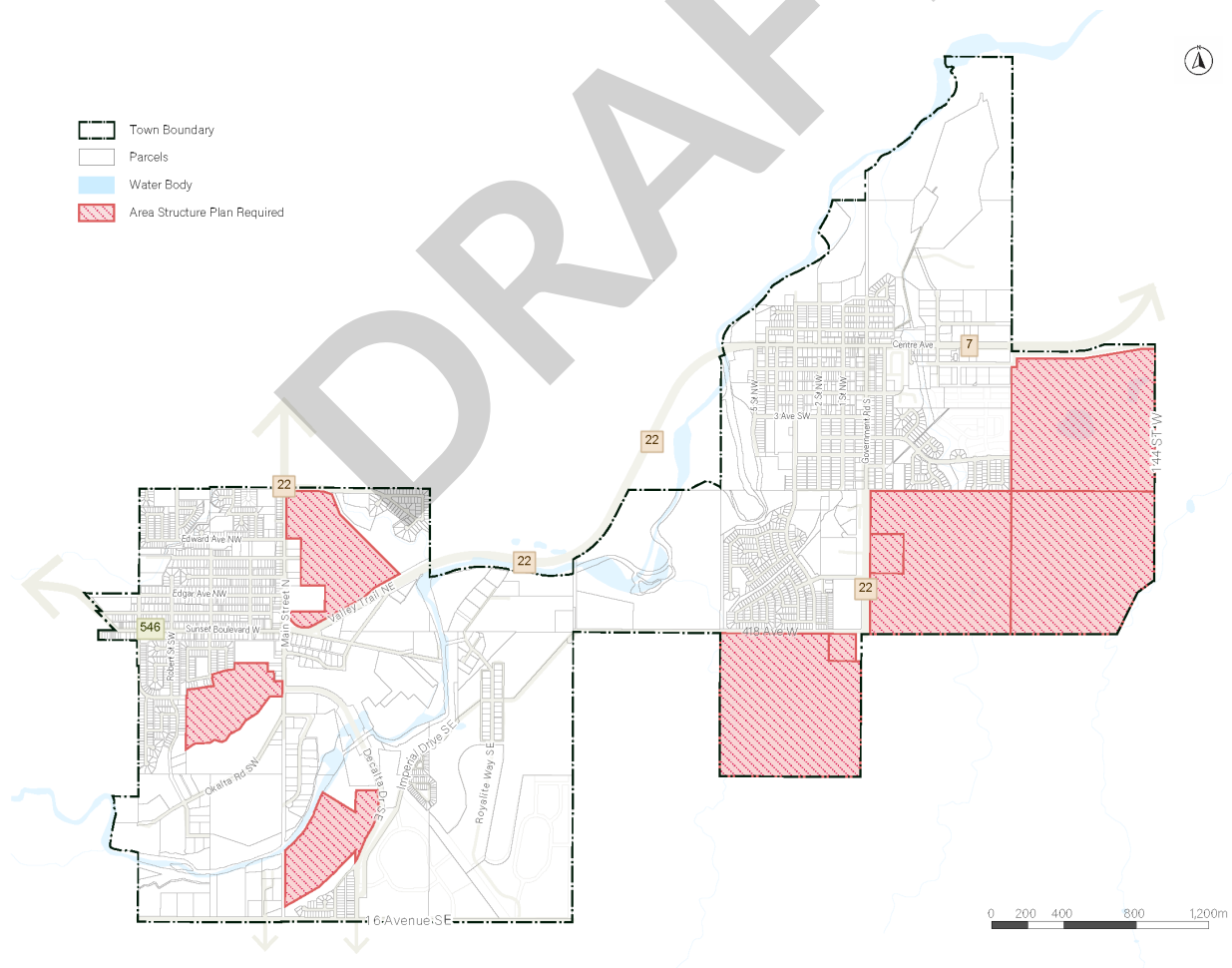
- a. A land use concept and associated maps and drawings that includes:
 - i. Location and density of existing and proposed land uses, including lot and building layout;
 - ii. Location of existing and proposed utilities;
 - iii. Location of existing and proposed roads, rights-of-way, parks and trails, including connections to any adjacent roads, parks and trails;
 - iv. Location of infrastructure features (e.g. storm ponds, utilities);
 - v. Location and design of any proposed screening or buffering features between uses; and
 - vi. Shadow planning for adjacent lands to enable logical development patterns and connectivity to reduce infrastructure redundancy.
- b. A fire protection report outlining the level of fire protection for the site is adequate for the proposed development and densities.
- c. A rationale comprehensive document explaining the proposed development, its overall vision and intent, and details and statistics on the various land uses, phasing, anticipated build out, proposed land use districts, densities (if residential) and explanation of compliance with this Plan, and other city policy.
- d. Relevant technical studies to determine the suitability of the land for the proposed land uses as required by the City, which **may** include, but not be limited to:
 - i. Transportation impact assessment or transportation study;
 - ii. Biophysical inventory and *Biophysical Impact Assessment* including wetlands;
 - iii. Historical resources assessment;
 - iv. Fiscal impact analysis (50 year projection that includes infrastructure replacement);

- v. *Environmental site assessment;*
- vi. Stormwater Management Plan or Drainage Study; and
- vii. Servicing Study, including water and sanitary.

11.2.16 Before the redesignation, subdivision or development of any portion of the Flex Planning Area, an *Area Structure Plan* **must** be adopted. In addition to the requirements in the MGA, an ASP for the Flex Planning area **must** include:

- a. A land use concept that includes a mix of non-residential (commercial and/or employment);
- b. Mix of residential housing types meeting the minimum density of 30 dwelling units per gross developable hectare; and
- c. Parks, trails, and open space.

Figure 13. Areas Requiring Area Structure Plans



11.3 MDP Monitoring & Reviews

The MDP is not intended to collect dust on a shelf while the modern world moves on around it. The MDP is a living document that is implemented through collaboration to achieve the Town's vision and Council aspirations over time.

Plan monitoring and review will occur on a scheduled basis to maintain that development is being effectively guided by the Plan policies. It is anticipated that major reviews of the policies and objectives of this document will be initiated within five (5) to ten (10) years after the date of Plan adoption. Amendments to this Plan may also be necessary in response to changing development trends, unanticipated external forces or changes in community priorities. As the primary planning document guiding future developments within the Town of Diamond Valley, this Plan must continue to reflect the goals and aspirations of the community as changes occur.

MDP Monitoring & Reviews Core Values



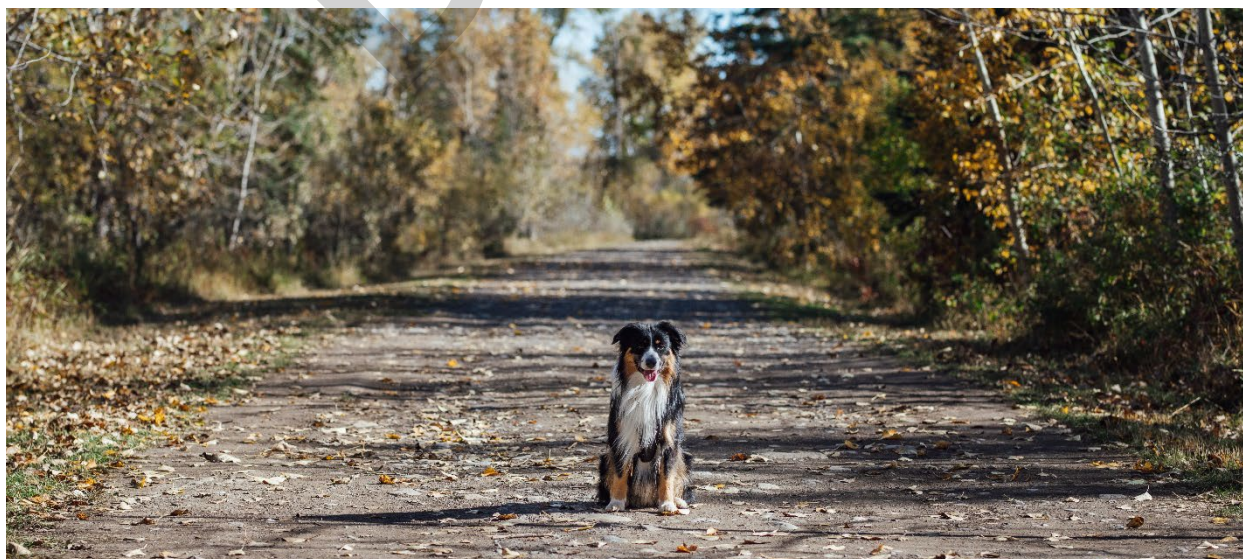
**Government
Transparency**



**Strategic
Growth**

MDP MONITORING AND REVIEWS OBJECTIVES

- A Establish and maintain a monitoring program that measures Plan progress and guides Plan reviews.
- B Review and update Plans so that they are reflective of the changing needs of the Town.



MDP MONITORING AND REVIEWS POLICIES

- 11.3.1 The Town **will** establish an MDP monitoring program that tracks the implementation and success of the MDP. The monitoring program **will** track:
- a. Completion of any policies that direct the completion or update of a plan or report;
 - b. Population increases related to increased residential density;
 - c. Impacts to water license capacity with new development approvals;
 - d. Progress towards measurable goals or key MDP performance indicators (KPIs).
 - e. Financial impacts of MDP implementation. ♦

Achieves Objectives: A, B

- 11.3.2 Town administration **will** review this MDP and Action Plan annually and track its progress, including providing an annual report to Council tracking the implementation process that:
- a. Identifies successes and challenges;
 - b. Identifies potential amendments;
 - c. Identifies funding priorities for upcoming prioritized actions.

Achieves Objectives: A, B

- 11.3.3 Town administration **will** conduct a review of this MDP and Action Plan and provide a comprehensive report to Council immediately following each Council election that, in addition to the annual reports, determines whether the MDP policy is being followed and is working as expected or whether a comprehensive update is required.

Achieves Objective: A

- 11.3.4 Town administration **will** conduct a ten (10) year comprehensive review of this MDP that includes an update, with:
- a. Updated Town population and employment forecasts
 - b. Extensive community, administration and Council engagement.
 - c. Consultation with any necessary provincial or federal personnel relevant to implementing this Plan.

- d. Updated implementation Action Plan with prioritized tasks assigned to various boards, agencies and ad-hoc citizen committees related to specific Plan policies. ♦

Achieves Objectives: A, B

- 11.3.5 Town administration **will** review, update, and/or rescind any *Area Structure Plans* or *Area Redevelopment Plans* to achieve conformity with the MDP.

Achieves Objective: B

- 11.3.6 Town administration **will** review and update *Land Use Bylaw* regulations regularly to develop regulations that works towards achieving the vision of the MDP by:
- a. Providing an annual report to Council on the effectiveness of *Land Use Bylaw* regulations in achieving the purpose and intent of the districts; and any required amendments;
 - b. Requiring an immediate update to *Land Use Bylaw* regulations following any comprehensive update of the MDP, including after the adoption of this Plan; and
 - c. Any amendments made to the MDP **will** be in accordance with the Municipal Government Act, as amended.

Achieves Objective: B



11.4 Achieving the Future State

The effectiveness of the Municipal Development Plan relies on the ability to track Plan progress of goals and policies as they are implemented by administration and Council. MDP is a 20-year plan, which means that administration and Council will evolve, and so will the priorities of the public they represent. Regular monitoring, tracking, and reporting are critical to enabling change that achieves the Town of Diamond Valley's vision for the future.

The following action plan includes items taken from policies within the Plan. The relevant Town departments are responsible for these action items and **should** work together to set forth a budget and timeframe for completion.

The proposed schedule for the implementation of action items are listed in order of priority based on the following:

♦ = **IMMEDIATE** – acted upon from within 1 year of adoption of MDP

♦ = **SHORT-TERM** – acted upon between 2- 3 years of adoption of MDP

♦ = **LONG-TERM** – acted upon from 3 – 6 years of adoption of MDP

SECTION	ACTION	TIMELINE	DEPARTMENT
4.1 Transparency	Review the Public Participation Policy at least every four (4) years.	SHORT-TERM	Planning & Development; Family & Community Support Services
	Review the External Communication Policy at least every three (3) years.	SHORT-TERM	Economic Development
4.2 Fiscal Resilience	Prepare the <i>Infrastructure Management Plan</i> annually (in progress).	IMMEDIATE	Public Works; Utilities
	Review the Town's current tax structure annually.	IMMEDIATE	Finance; Assessments & Taxation
	Conduct a Cost of Servicing Analysis to reassess the cost of each municipal service in relation to revenue streams.	SHORT-TERM	Finance; Assessments & Taxation; Public Works; Utilities
	Update and advertise the Town's WebMap annually.	IMMEDIATE	Planning & Development

SECTION	ACTION	TIMELINE	DEPARTMENT
4.3 Informed Decision Making	Adopt key performance indicators from this MDP that are measured, tracked, and presented.	IMMEDIATE	Planning & Development; Legislative Services; Finance; Assessments & Taxation
5.2 Development in Flood Hazard Areas	Update municipal figures, maps, and regulations based on Provincial Flood Plain mapping.	SHORT-TERM	Planning & Development
6.1 Established Community Areas	Review and adjust <i>Land Use Bylaw</i> regulations to support the required residential density and use mix in Established Community Areas.	SHORT-TERM	Planning & Development
	Conduct a <i>Housing Needs Assessment</i> .	IMMEDIATE	Planning & Development; Family & Community Support Services
	Review <i>Land Use Bylaw</i> regulations for flexibility to permit two units in the Established Community Areas.	SHORT-TERM	Planning & Development
6.3 Downtown Areas	Develop Downtown Design Standards for Downtown Turner Valley and Downtown Black Diamond.	LONG-TERM	Planning & Development
	Review and update the Black Diamond <i>Area Redevelopment Plan</i> .	SHORT-TERM	Planning & Development
	Examine the potential benefits of a Community Revitalization Levy Bylaw	LONG-TERM	Planning & Development; Finance
	Review the Town's bylaws to manage temporary uses.	SHORT-TERM	Planning & Development; Municipal Enforcement
	Develop a <i>wayfinding</i> strategy for Downtown areas.	LONG-TERM	Planning & Development

SECTION	ACTION	TIMELINE	DEPARTMENT
6.4 Highway / Service Commercial Areas	Review and adjust <i>Land Use Bylaw</i> regulations to support development of <i>missing middle commercial</i> forms in Commercial Areas.	SHORT-TERM	Planning & Development
	Review and adjust <i>Land Use Bylaw</i> regulations to consider design standards for commercial development along Highway 22 and Highway 7.	SHORT-TERM	Planning & Development; Public Works
6.6 Flex Planning Areas	Review and adjust <i>Land Use Bylaw</i> regulations to support the required residential density and use mix in Flex Planning Areas.	SHORT-TERM	Planning & Development
6.7 Infill Development	Review and adjust <i>Land Use Bylaw</i> regulations for flexibility to enable <i>infill</i> in residential areas.	SHORT-TERM	Planning & Development
	Develop Infill Design Standards.	LONG-TERM	Planning & Development
6.8 Mixed Use Development	Review and adjust <i>Land Use Bylaw</i> regulations for opportunities to enable and support <i>mixed-use</i> development in Established Community, Highway / Service Commercial Areas, and Downtown Areas.	SHORT-TERM	Planning & Development
	Develop Mixed-Use Design Standards.	LONG-TERM	Planning & Development
6.9 Business Attraction and Retention	Complete a <i>Targeted Investment Strategy</i> .	SHORT-TERM	Economic Development
	Review and update the <i>Economic Development Strategy</i> .	SHORT-TERM	Economic Development
	Review and update the investment guide annually.	SHORT-TERM	Economic Development

SECTION	ACTION	TIMELINE	DEPARTMENT
	Review and adjust <i>Land Use Bylaw</i> regulations to add land uses that enable key target sectors and conduct a regional <i>Land Use Bylaw</i> comparison to be competitive in development regulations and flexibility.	SHORT-TERM	Planning & Development
	Achieve a non-residential assessment ratio target of 20%.	LONG-TERM	Economic Development; Finance; Assessments & Taxation
	Create a micro-investment fund to support small business start-ups.	LONG-TERM	Economic Development
7.1 Strengthening Infrastructure Systems	Review and update the <i>Infrastructure Management Plan</i> at least every five (5) years.	LONG-TERM	Public Works
	Develop an <i>Infrastructure Master Plan</i> .	SHORT-TERM	Public Works
	Review the Offsite Levy Bylaw annually.	SHORT-TERM	Public Works; Finance
	Establish and maintain a regular condition assessment program of critical infrastructure and create risk mitigation strategies.	SHORT-TERM	Public Works; Emergency Management
	Maintain and update the emergency repair program at least every (5) years.	SHORT-TERM	Public Works
7.2 Water	Conduct regular infrastructure capacity studies.	IMMEDIATE	Public Works
	Review and update the Water Use and Conservation Bylaw.	IMMEDIATE	Public Works; Utilities
7.3 Stormwater	Review and address recommendations in the Town of Black Diamond Master Drainage Plan related to overland flooding.	SHORT-TERM	Public Works; Utilities

SECTION	ACTION	TIMELINE	DEPARTMENT
7.8 Designing Safe Places	Develop a CPTED checklist to accompany development permits.	LONG-TERM	Planning & Development
	Perform regular safety audits to identify areas with inadequate lighting, poor maintenance, and other CPTED deficiencies.	IMMEDIATE	Planning & Development
7.9 Waste Management	Review the efficacy of the Town's waste management program.	IMMEDIATE	Public Works; Utilities
	Conduct solid waste audits annually.	IMMEDIATE	Public Works; Utilities
7.10 Community Amenities and Recreation	Develop and implement a Facility Management Plan.	SHORT-TERM	Public Works; Utilities
7.11 Heritage Preservation and Awareness	Review and update the Downtown Turner Valley Inventory of Historic Places and include Downtown Black Diamond.	LONG-TERM	Planning & Development; Building Permits & Inspections
8.1 Protecting the Natural Environment	Develop a <i>wayfinding</i> strategy for the Town's parks and trail system.	LONG-TERM	Parks & Recreation; Planning & Development
8.2 Embracing Nature on Our Doorstep	Develop a <i>Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan</i> .	LONG-TERM	Parks & Recreation; Planning & Development
8.3 Dark Sky	Develop a Dark Sky Bylaw.	SHORT-TERM	Parks & Recreation; Municipal Enforcement
8.4 General Emergency Preparedness	Develop an Emergency Response Plan and update every five (5) years.	SHORT-TERM	Emergency Services; Fire Department
	Update the Town's Climate and Resilience Action Plan.	LONG-TERM	Parks & Recreation; Planning & Development

SECTION	ACTION	TIMELINE	DEPARTMENT
11.3 MDP Monitoring and Reviews	Establish a Municipal Development Plan (MDP) monitoring program and review the MDP and Action Plan annually.	IMMEDIATE	Planning & Development; Legislative Services
	Conduct a ten (10) year comprehensive review of the MDP.	LONG-TERM	Planning & Development

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DEFINITIONS



12 DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
<i>Area Structure Plan</i>	A statutory planning document that provides detailed land use and infrastructure planning for new development areas, managing growth to support the municipality's long-term vision.
<i>Area Redevelopment Plan</i>	A statutory planning document that enables the revitalization of existing neighbourhoods and commercial areas. These plans must be consistent with the MDP to promote orderly and efficient land use, infrastructure provision, and community development. There are currently two Area Redevelopment Plans in effect in Diamond Valley.
<i>Asset</i>	Physical infrastructure essential for supporting the social, economic, and environmental services provided by an organization or governing body.
<i>Infrastructure Management Plan (IMP)</i>	A document that outlines how an organization manages its assets to deliver a specific standard of service. It includes details on asset performance, planned actions for maintenance or improvement, and financial evaluations. An IMP helps optimize resource use, minimize costs and risks, and assist in long-term operational goals are met.
<i>Biophysical Impact Assessment</i>	A Biophysical Impact Assessment (BIA) is a study completed by a qualified professional that identifies, evaluates, and provides recommendations to mitigate the potential impacts of proposed development on natural features and ecological systems, such as wetlands, watercourses, vegetation, wildlife, and wildlife habitat. A BIA helps inform land use decisions so that environmentally sensitive areas are protected, regulatory requirements are met (such as the Alberta Wetland Policy), and long-term ecological health is considered as part of the planning and development process.
<i>Brownfield</i>	A previously developed site that is currently not in use and may be contaminated by hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants. These sites often require environmental remediation before they can be redeveloped or reused.
<i>Climate Resilience Action Plan</i>	A Climate Resilience Action Plan is a strategic document that identifies actions and initiatives a municipality can take to prepare for, adopt to, and reduce the risk associated with climate change impacts, such as extreme weather, flooding, drought, and wildfire. This Action Plan typically focuses on protecting critical infrastructure, supporting local, ecosystems, safeguarding public health and safety so that the long-term sustainability of the economy and natural resources can be established in the face of climate change.
<i>Communications Plan</i>	A Communications Plan is a strategic document that guides how the municipality will share information, engage with the public, and establish clear, consistent, and transparent communication about programs, services, projects, and decisions. It outlines key messages, target audiences, communication tools (like social media, public meetings, and newsletters), and approaches to foster meaningful dialogue and build trust to support community involvement in municipal initiatives.
<i>Complete Community</i>	A Complete Community promotes sustainability, social diversity, and a healthy lifestyle by providing access to green spaces, various housing types, and amenities like community centers and libraries along with access to employment.

Term	Definition
<i>Economic Development Strategy</i>	An Economic Development Strategy is a guiding document that outlines a municipality's long-term approach to growing and strengthening its local economy by attracting investment, supporting businesses, creating jobs, and enhancing the overall quality of life. It identifies economic priorities, target industries, opportunities for diversification, and actions the municipality can take to build a resilient, competitive, and sustainable economy that meets the needs of current and future residents.
<i>Environmentally Sensitive Areas</i>	<p>Environmentally Sensitive Areas are key natural components of the regional landscape, providing essential ecosystem functions and services. These functions and services include flood mitigation, drinking water supply, maintenance of regional biodiversity, preservation and connectivity of unique habitats and landscapes, and provision of culturally and economically valued resources and opportunities. They include areas that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the provision of water quality and quantity and provide protection against drought and flood events. Includes water courses, water bodies, and riparian areas; • Provide habitat for identified local species of interest, designated species of conservation concern (SCC), or identified focal species groups; • Provide rare, unique, or biologically diverse ecosystems or unique landforms; • Contribute to other important Ecosystems Services or functions at the local scale; and • Include Provincial Environmentally Significant Areas.
<i>Environmental Site Assessment (ESA)</i>	<p>An Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) is a study conducted to determine if a property is, or may be, contaminated due to past or present activities, helping municipalities, developers, and property owners manage environmental risks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1 ESA is a non-intrusive, historical review of the site, including records searches, site inspections, and interviews, to identify any potential environmental concerns. • Phase 2 ESA is completed if Phase 1 identifies potential contamination, and involves physical sampling and laboratory testing of soil, groundwater, and/or building materials to confirm whether contamination exists and assess its extent.
<i>Escarpment Area</i>	Land characterized by a steep slope or long cliff that results from erosion or faulting, separating two relatively level or gently sloping areas. Escarpments often contain sensitive soils, vegetation, and geological features, and may be prone to instability.
<i>Floodway</i>	Floodway refers to the portion of a floodplain that is most prone to flooding and where the flow of water is concentrated during high-water events. Floodways are regulated to restrict or limit development to reduce flood risks so that people and property are safe.
<i>Heavy Industrial</i>	Heavy Industrial Use means activities where some or all work happens outside a building, and dust or vibrations may be noticeable beyond the site. These uses can include manufacturing, assembling, repairing, cleaning, testing, storing, shipping, or dismantling materials, goods, machinery, or vehicles (without live animals, chemicals, or heat).
<i>Historic Resource Assessment (HRA)</i>	A Historic Resource Assessment (HRA) is a study conducted to identify, evaluate, and document the potential presence of historic resources—such as archaeological sites, historic buildings, or cultural landscapes—within a specific area that may be affected by proposed development. HRAs are often required under the Historical Resources Act and help maintain that significant historical, cultural, and Indigenous heritage sites are properly considered, protected, or managed before land disturbance or construction takes place.

Term	Definition
<i>Housing Needs Assessment</i>	A Housing Needs Assessment is a comprehensive study that analyzes the current and future housing requirements of a community, including the type, quantity, affordability, and availability of housing needed to meet the diverse needs of its population. It takes into account factors such as demographic trends, income levels, housing conditions, and local market conditions to guide municipal planning and policy decisions so that there is an adequate, sustainable, and affordable housing supply for all residents.
<i>Infill</i>	The development or construction of new buildings on vacant or underutilized land within an already developed area. This can include filling in gaps between existing structures or redeveloping obsolete sites to make better use of the available space.
<i>Infrastructure Master Plan</i>	An Infrastructure Master Plan is a strategic document that outlines the long-term vision, priorities, and actions required to develop, maintain, and improve a municipality's essential infrastructure systems, such as transportation, water, wastewater, stormwater, energy, and communication networks. The plan assesses current infrastructure capacity, identifies future needs based on population growth and development trends, and provides a framework for prioritizing investments.
<i>Land Use Bylaw</i>	A regulatory document that controls and manages land use, building standards, and development processes within a municipality.
<i>Light Industrial</i>	Light Industrial Use means activities that take place entirely inside a building, with no visible dust or vibration outside. These uses can include manufacturing, assembling, repairing, cleaning, or testing materials and goods (but not involving live animals or hazardous chemical processes). It also includes contractor workshops, storage and shipping of goods, small-scale warehousing.
<i>Low-Impact Industrial</i>	Industrial development that does not rely on full municipal servicing such as piped water and sewer. This type of development is characterized by uses that have minimal infrastructure demands, making it suitable for areas where extending full services would be cost-prohibitive. It is not defined by the intensity of industrial activity (e.g., light or heavy), but rather by the ability to operate with limited or alternative servicing.
<i>Major Planning Applications</i>	For the purpose of this MDP interpretation, major planning applications include Area Structure Plans (ASP), Area Redevelopment Plans (ARP), Outline Plans, subdivision applications and redesignation applications.
<i>Microgrants</i>	A small, typically non-repayable sum of money awarded to individuals, small businesses, or non-profit organizations. These grants, usually ranging from a few hundred to a few thousand dollars, are intended to kick-start initiatives, support creative projects, or propel entrepreneurial activities.
<i>Missing Middle Commercial</i>	Small to mid-sized commercial or mixed-use properties that fill the gap between large-scale commercial developments and small, single-use buildings. These properties typically include mixed-use buildings, small retail spaces, and office buildings that are integrated into residential neighbourhoods.
<i>Mixed-use</i>	A type of urban development that combines multiple functions such as residential, commercial, cultural, institutional, or entertainment within a single building or area. These functions are integrated both physically and functionally, often with pedestrian-friendly connections.

Term	Definition
<i>Non-Contributing Space</i>	Areas that do not significantly enhance the community's open space network. These spaces are often isolated and lack connectivity to other open spaces, making them less valuable for public use or ecological functions. Examples include utility strips, grassed intersections, and leftover green areas that do not serve a meaningful recreational or environmental purpose.
<i>Outline Plan</i>	A detailed planning document that guides the future subdivision and development of a specific area within a municipality. An outline plan typically shows the proposed layout of land uses (such as residential, commercial, parks, and roads), infrastructure connections, and how the area will integrate with surrounding development. It ensures that growth happens in an organized and coordinated way before formal subdivision or zoning changes are approved.
<i>Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan</i>	A Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan is a long-term strategic plan that guides the vision, goals, and priorities, for the development, maintenance, and enhancement of parks, recreation facilities, open spaces, and trail networks within the municipality. It assesses current and future needs, identifies gaps in services, and provides recommendations for improving access to green spaces and recreational opportunities. It can balance environmental conservation with public access by identifying appropriate recreational uses, protecting sensitive ecosystems, and setting priorities for parks, trails, and open space development to support both ecological health and community wellbeing.
<i>Pocket Park</i>	A small public park, typically less than one acre in size, that provides green space, seating, and recreational opportunities within a neighbourhood or urban area. Pocket parks are often built on vacant lots, irregular spaces, or between buildings, and are designed for local, everyday use.
<i>Qualified Professional</i>	A Qualified Professional is an individual who has the education, experience, and credentials required to perform specific tasks or assessments in a particular field, in accordance with applicable standards, regulations, or professional guidelines. In the context of municipal planning, development, or environmental studies, a qualified professional typically holds recognized certifications or licenses in areas such as engineering, architecture, planning, environmental science, or geology and is recognized by relevant professional associations or regulatory bodies.
<i>Targeted Investment Strategy</i>	A Targeted Investment Strategy is a focused approach that outlines specific areas or sectors within a municipality or region where investment efforts will be concentrated to drive economic growth and development. This strategy identifies priority industries, infrastructure projects, or geographic locations that offer the greatest potential for return on investment, and outlines actions to attract and direct resources, partnerships, and funding to those key areas.
<i>Tax Base</i>	Tax base refers to the total amount of property taxes collected by a municipality from all sources (e.g. residential, non-residential, linear, etc.), in the case of this MDP, it refers to the total amount collected by the Town of Diamond Valley.
<i>Vehicle-oriented Buildings</i>	Vehicle-oriented buildings are buildings designed primarily to serve customers who arrive by motor vehicle, often featuring facilities like drive-thrus, large surface parking lots, gas pumps, or vehicle service areas as prominent elements of the site layout and design.
<i>Watercourse</i>	A natural or man-made channel through which water flows either continuously or intermittently, including rivers, streams, creeks, and drainage ditches. Watercourses can also include the bed and banks of these features.

Term	Definition
<i>Wayfinding</i>	Wayfinding refers to the system or process of guiding people through an environment or space using visual cues, signs, landmarks, and other navigational tools. It is designed to help individuals easily orient themselves, understand directions, and find their destination, especially in complex or large areas such as cities, parks, transportation hubs, or buildings.

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APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A: FISCAL RESILIENCE

TAXES

Currently, the Town’s primary revenue source is from residential taxes, which must be increased to manage the increased operational and capital costs of infrastructure and avoid deferring infrastructure maintenance. A mill rate equates to the amount of tax payable per \$1000 of a property’s assessed value. It is used by municipalities to calculate property taxes; the lower the mill rate, the lower the tax.

Table 2. 2024 Mill Rate Comparable.

Municipality	Mill Rate for Non-residential Property	Mill Rate for Residential Property
Town of Diamond Valley	8.64%	6.04%
Town of Okotoks	7.81%	4.69%
Town of High River	7.40%	5.69%
Village of Longview	8.06%	4.49%

Source: Tax Bylaw 2024, Town of Okotoks; Tax Bylaw 2024 Town of High River; Tax Bylaw 2024, Town of Longview.

However, taxes help the Town function, provide services and pay for infrastructure costs required to support residential properties. To prioritize fiscal resilience, the Town must focus on infilling already serviced vacant lots, and attracting and increasing non-residential development taxes to help maintain infrastructure, which serves as a more efficient way to use land. If the town grows, it will continue to inherit new infrastructure like roads, parks, stormwater ponds, and lift stations, which will need maintenance and planned replacement over time. These combined put continued pressure on the residential property taxpayers and elected officials in making decisions around increasing taxes and where to invest the money, which can lead to further decline in infrastructure and services.

USER FEES AND SERVICE CHARGES

User fees and service charges provide a direct method for funding specific municipal services, ensuring that those who use them contribute to their costs. The Town charges fees for utilities such as water, wastewater, and waste collection, as well as recreational facilities, permits, and a variety of other services. While user fees help offset operating costs and reduce reliance on property taxes, they must be carefully structured to remain affordable for residents and businesses. The Town should regularly review its fee structures to ensure they reflect the true cost of service delivery while maintaining accessibility and fairness.

DEVELOPMENT CHARGES AND OFF-SITE LEVIES

Development charges and off-site levies are tools for funding the upfront capital costs of infrastructure required to support growth. These fees, paid by developers, help cover the costs of

roads, water and wastewater systems, parks, and other municipal facilities needed to accommodate new development. However, while these charges ensure that "growth pays for growth" in the short term, they do not provide funding for the long-term maintenance and eventual replacement of the infrastructure they help build. Once new infrastructure is constructed, the ongoing costs of repair, maintenance, and replacement fall on the municipality and, ultimately, the taxpayer. This creates a financial challenge, as municipalities must balance the initial benefits of development with the future liabilities they inherit. To ensure long-term fiscal sustainability, the Town must carefully evaluate new growth, prioritizing compact and efficient development that makes better use of existing infrastructure, while ensuring that financial planning accounts for future maintenance and replacement costs.

FINES AND PENALTIES

Fines and penalties serve as both a revenue source and a regulatory tool to enforce municipal bylaws and ensure development aligns with the Town's vision. While not a primary funding mechanism, they help uphold community standards, protect infrastructure, and support the Municipal Development Plan (MDP) by discouraging non-compliance with land use, environmental, and safety regulations. Strategically applied, fines can reinforce MDP objectives, such as sustainable development and environmental stewardship, by penalizing infractions like unauthorized development, improper waste disposal, or failure to meet landscaping requirements. However, enforcement should prioritize compliance over punishment, using escalating penalties for repeat offenders and public education to encourage voluntary adherence.

To further support MDP goals, revenue from fines could be reinvested into initiatives like bylaw enforcement, community beautification, or environmental programs. Aligning enforcement with planning priorities ensures fines and penalties contribute to a well-planned, sustainable, and livable community.

BUSINESS LICENSES

Business licenses provide a modest but important revenue stream for the Town while also ensuring businesses operate in compliance with municipal regulations. Licensing fees help fund economic development initiatives, bylaw enforcement, and administrative costs related to business regulation. While some businesses may view licensing as an unnecessary expense, a well-managed licensing program can support local businesses by ensuring fair competition and providing data to inform economic planning. The Town should evaluate its business licensing policies to reduce unnecessary administrative burdens while maintaining effective oversight of the local business environment.

GRANTS

Grants from provincial and federal governments provide critical funding for infrastructure projects, community programs, and operational support. While grants help reduce the financial burden on local taxpayers, they are often competitive, project-specific, or time-limited. The Town must strategically pursue available grant opportunities while advocating for stable, long-term funding support from higher levels of government. A proactive approach to grant applications and partnerships can enhance fiscal sustainability and reduce reliance on property taxes.

COST-SHARING ARRANGEMENTS

Cost-sharing agreements help fund shared services like recreation and emergency response, but the Town has faced challenges with non-payment from partners and strained regional relationships. The failure to receive agreed-upon reimbursements has placed an unfair financial burden on local taxpayers, while neighbouring municipalities have scaled back collaboration to focus on their own fiscal priorities.

Going forward, the Town must be cautious in relying on external contributions, ensuring agreements include clear enforcement mechanisms and contingency plans. While regional cooperation remains valuable, the Town must prioritize financial sustainability by advocating for fair contributions and exploring alternative funding models to protect essential services.

INFRASTRUCTURE MAINTENANCE AND CAPITAL PROJECTS

Ensuring the long-term viability of municipal infrastructure is critical to the Town's fiscal resiliency. The Town is currently undertaking its first *Infrastructure Management Plan*, which will consolidate and update infrastructure planning from the two former towns. Based on historical studies and reports, it is evident that Diamond Valley faces significant deferred maintenance across key assets, including roads, sidewalks, deep utilities, and municipal buildings. Without strategic investment, aging infrastructure will continue to deteriorate, leading to higher repair costs, service disruptions, and potential safety concerns. Addressing this backlog requires a proactive, data-driven approach to asset management, prioritizing maintenance and replacement based on lifecycle costs and risk assessments. Future capital projects must be carefully planned to align with growth projections, maximize available grant funding, and ensure that new infrastructure does not become a long-term financial burden. By taking a measured and sustainable approach, the Town can improve infrastructure reliability while protecting taxpayers from unexpected financial pressures.

EMPLOYEE SALARIES AND BENEFITS

The amalgamation of the two former towns has led to some economies of scale, particularly in administrative areas, but it has also resulted in increased workload in several areas. For example, while the reduction in Council positions and the elimination of redundant roles, such as the former CAO, have provided some cost savings, the demands on remaining staff have grown. The Town now faces a higher volume of work in areas like resident inquiries, permit processing, and service delivery, which can lead to staff burnout and increased costs in overtime or temporary staffing. Employee salaries and benefits, therefore, represent a significant portion of the budget. As the Town navigates fiscal challenges, it must ensure that staffing levels are sufficient to maintain service quality while also being mindful of fiscal sustainability. Strategic workforce planning, training, and technology investments will be essential to manage increased workload demands without sacrificing service levels or overburdening staff.

PROTECTIVE SERVICES

Protective services, including fire, police, and emergency response, are foundational to ensuring the safety and well-being of the community, yet they represent a significant ongoing expense. As the Town grows, so too does the demand for these services, requiring continual investment in

personnel, equipment, and facilities. The Town relies on a combination of local emergency services and external partnerships, such as the RCMP, to provide effective coverage. As part of its fiscal resiliency, the Town must balance the need for robust protective services with the associated costs, which include staffing, training, vehicles, and specialized equipment. Efficient service delivery can be enhanced through strategic regional collaboration, but this must be carefully managed to ensure that the needs of Diamond Valley residents are met. Long-term planning for the expansion of these services, including infrastructure upgrades and service agreements, will be essential to maintaining both fiscal sustainability and public safety as the community grows and evolves.

RECREATION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Recreation and community services are vital to the social fabric of Diamond Valley, but the Town faces growing challenges in maintaining and delivering these services at current levels. Key facilities, including the pool and community hall, are in significant disrepair, while the arena and curling rink require extensive upgrades to remain functional. The escalating costs of maintaining these facilities, combined with the increasing demands of a growing population, put pressure on the Town's ability to provide high-quality services without additional funding sources or cost-saving measures. Additionally, the Town has already had to make difficult decisions regarding service reductions, such as the elimination of events like Light Up, which have historically fostered community connection and engagement. While outdoor spaces remain heavily used and loved by residents, they cannot fully replace the social and recreational value provided by indoor facilities and events.

Given these constraints, the Town must critically assess what service levels are achievable within current fiscal limits. Prioritizing essential services, maintaining existing infrastructure, and considering partnerships or cost-sharing arrangements for facility upgrades will be essential for long-term sustainability. The community's expectations for recreation services must be balanced with financial realities, and future planning must focus on delivering a range of affordable, accessible options that meet the needs of residents without further stretching the Town's limited resources.

DEBT SERVICING AND FINANCIAL RESERVES

The Town is currently in a relatively stable position regarding debt, with manageable levels that allow for flexibility in addressing future needs. However, the Town is already taking on additional debt as part of the wastewater treatment plant upgrade, which will occur in conjunction with the dissolution of the Westend Regional Sewage Services Commission and the integration of its operations into the Town's Civic Operations portfolio. While this transition will provide the Town with greater control over wastewater services, it also introduces significant financial responsibilities. The cost of upgrading the wastewater treatment plant will require careful debt management and ongoing servicing, which will need to be factored into future budgets.

In managing financial reserves, the Town must exercise caution in drawing from these funds for "nice-to-have" projects. While reserve funds offer flexibility for future investments, depleting them for non-essential projects could leave the Town vulnerable in the event of unexpected

financial challenges or emergencies. Therefore, the Town should prioritize using reserves only for critical needs or projects that align with long-term goals, ensuring there is always a cushion available when unforeseen circumstances arise. This approach will help maintain fiscal resilience and safeguard the Town's financial health over the long term.

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APPENDIX B: DENSITY METHODOLOGY

Calculating Density in the Town of Diamond Valley

STEP 1: CALCULATE THE GROSS DEVELOPABLE AREA

1 Gross Total Area (all lands) $-$ NON-DEVELOPABLE AREAS (environmental reserves, expressways, railways, other non-developable lands) $=$ GROSS DEVELOPABLE AREA

STEP 2: CALCULATE THE GROSS RESIDENTIAL AREA

2 Gross Developable Area $-$ REGIONAL LAND USES (regional open spaces, major commercial centres [$>4\text{ha}/10\text{ac}$], major institutional sites, senior high schools, industrial areas, public lakes and water bodies, other regional uses) $=$ GROSS RESIDENTIAL AREA

STEP 3: CALCULATE THE GROSS RESIDENTIAL DENSITY

3 Total number of residential units \div GROSS RESIDENTIAL AREA $=$ GROSS RESIDENTIAL DENSITY

What do you 'keep'/what's included in the gross residential area?

- Single unit residential
- Multi unit residential
- Local commercial
- Local parks & open space (municipal reserve)
- Elementary & junior high schools
- Local roads including majors & lanes
- Church sites
- Daycare centres
- Community centres
- Small indoor recreation centres
- Small site fire and police stations
- Private lakes, wet/dry ponds
- Public Utility Lots (PULs)
- Other local uses

APPENDIX C: ENDNOTES

¹ [2025 Full Cover Hail Insurance Premium Rates](#), AFSC.

² [Tornadoes and Climate Change in Canada](#), Pouriya Jafarpur and Ryan Smith, Canadian Centre for Climate Services.

³ Ibid.

⁴ [Black Diamond Housing Needs Assessment](#), Resilience Planning.

⁵ Census Profile, 2021 Census of Population, Turner Valley

⁶ Census Profile, 2021 Census of Population, Black Diamond

⁷ McMillan, M; Dahlby, B. (2014). Do Municipal Governments Need More Tax Powers? University of Calgary: The School of Public Policy. Volume 7, Issue 33.

⁸ [Sheep River Intake Feasibility Assessment](#), Boreal Water Resources Ltd.

⁹ [Calgary's water efficiency plan](#), City of Calgary.

¹⁰ [Extended Producer Responsibility](#), Government of Alberta.

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