

MUNICIPAL  
M D P  
DEVELOPMENT PLAN

BIG SPIRIT, BIG IDEAS, BIG PLAN



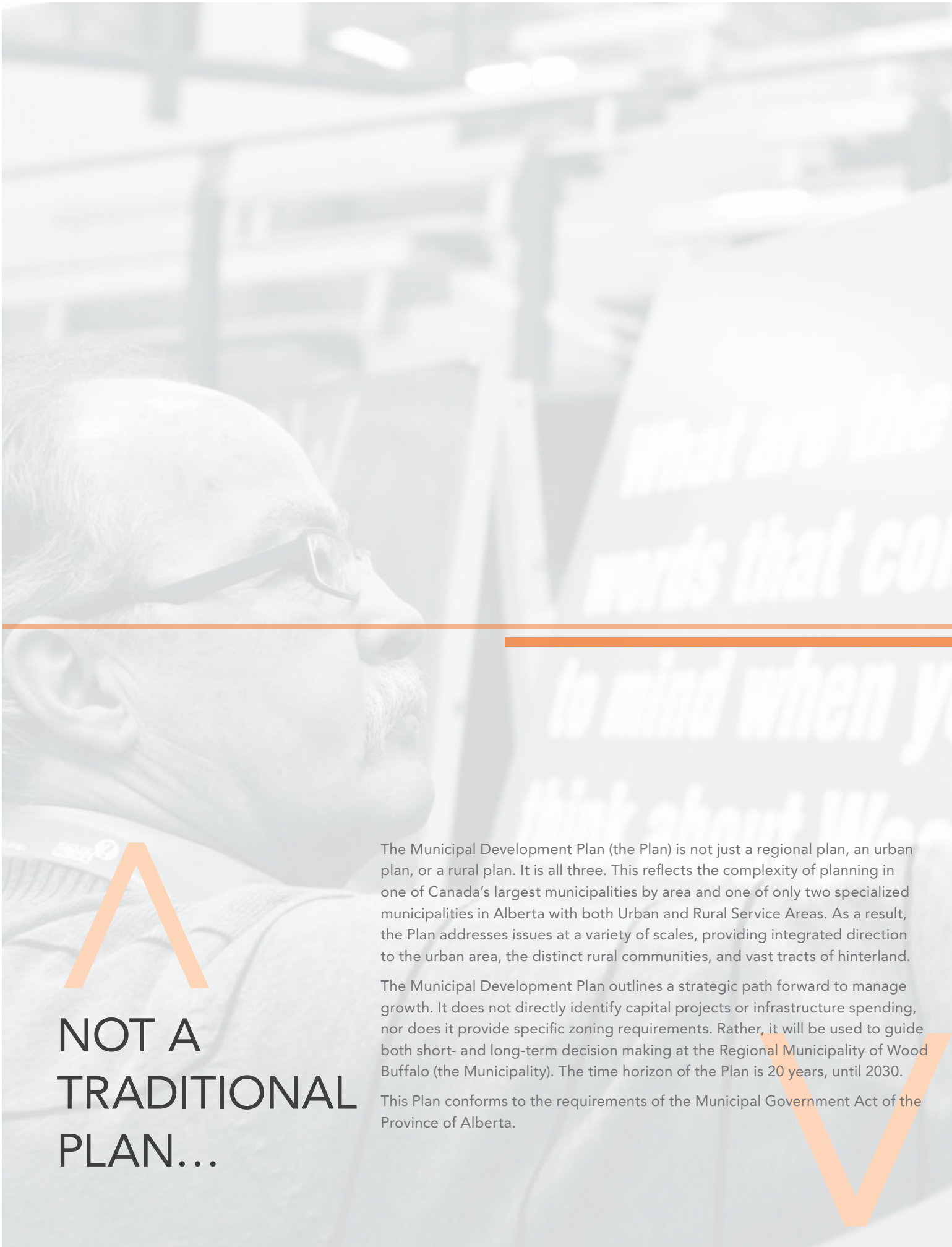
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY  
OF **WOOD BUFFALO**

# PLAN STRUCTURE



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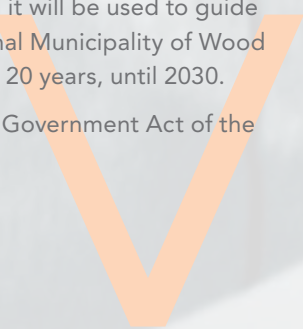


# NOT A TRADITIONAL PLAN...

The Municipal Development Plan (the Plan) is not just a regional plan, an urban plan, or a rural plan. It is all three. This reflects the complexity of planning in one of Canada’s largest municipalities by area and one of only two specialized municipalities in Alberta with both Urban and Rural Service Areas. As a result, the Plan addresses issues at a variety of scales, providing integrated direction to the urban area, the distinct rural communities, and vast tracts of hinterland.

The Municipal Development Plan outlines a strategic path forward to manage growth. It does not directly identify capital projects or infrastructure spending, nor does it provide specific zoning requirements. Rather, it will be used to guide both short- and long-term decision making at the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo (the Municipality). The time horizon of the Plan is 20 years, until 2030.

This Plan conforms to the requirements of the Municipal Government Act of the Province of Alberta.






# BIG SPIRIT, BIG IDEAS, BIG PLAN

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo is poised to enter a bold new era. This Municipal Development Plan will lead the way, charting a course to make Wood Buffalo a global model for sustainable living in the north.

The development of this region has long been propelled by the hard work and tenacity of generations of residents whose **big spirit** defines the region. In the last two centuries, the region has grown and transformed from one of Canada's most successful fur trading posts, to an international supplier of salt, to the home of the world's largest industrial operation, the oil sands. This development has been made possible by ambition, innovation and **big ideas**. And now, as the next chapter in the development of this region is about to unfold, we bring forward a **big plan** for our future.

This Plan outlines a path forward to harness Wood Buffalo's abundant opportunities, address its unique challenges and build a region, an urban centre, and a series of communities founded on the principles of sustainability.

An aerial photograph of a residential neighborhood in Wood Buffalo, Canada. The image shows a dense cluster of houses with dark roofs and light-colored walls, interspersed with paved roads and parking areas. A prominent blue semi-transparent rectangle is overlaid on the center of the image, containing white text. The background shows a mix of urban development and open land, with a winding road and some greenery visible on the right side.

Wood Buffalo is among Canada's largest and fastest growing municipalities, with a population that has doubled in the past ten years. The region's population is expected to more than double again in the next two decades, requiring new homes, retail opportunities, transportation solutions, and access to parks and open space.

As our population continues to grow rapidly, we need to **manage growth sustainably** throughout the region, in our urban area and rural communities, ensuring the integrated development of land and transportation.










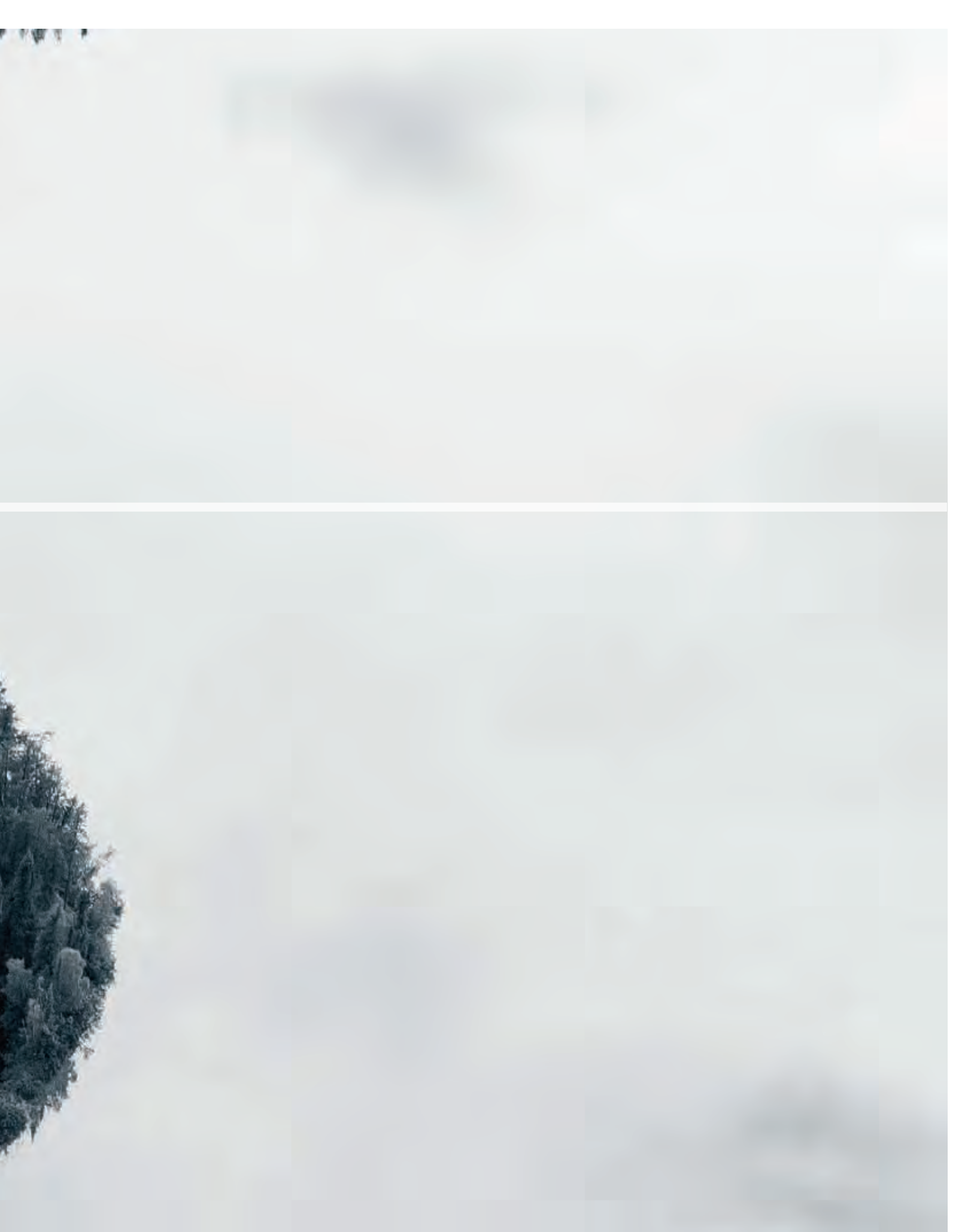
Land for residential, commercial and industrial expansion remains one of the most significant challenges in our region. Competing interests over land for development and resource extraction have driven up land values, an issue that must be addressed to attract development and long-term investment.

We must enable **responsible development**, ensuring the timely availability of developable land to stimulate investment, accommodate population growth, and fuel economic prosperity.



Our natural environment is a contrast of large tracts of pristine, untamed boreal forest and pockets of concentrated industrial activity. While industry continues to improve environmental practices, more can be done in our communities to protect the natural systems on which we depend and to address the realities of global climate change.

Through practicing **environmental stewardship**, we will respect and sustain our rich natural surroundings, reduce energy consumption and waste, and play our part in the global effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.




**BELIEVE**





Growth in the oil sands has made our region's economy among the strongest in Canada, with average household incomes nearly twice the national average. Still, prosperity in a single industry can put stress on the service sector and make us vulnerable to the many local and global factors that influence the oil economy.

We can establish a more **resilient economy** through diversification, supporting local businesses, and promoting a culture of innovation, education and training.

An aerial photograph of a city and its surrounding landscape. The foreground shows a dense urban area with various buildings, parking lots, and a large white-roofed structure. The middle ground features a mix of residential and commercial buildings, interspersed with green spaces and trees. The background shows a vast, flat landscape extending to the horizon under a sky with scattered clouds. A large, semi-transparent red rectangle is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing white text.

Employment opportunities have attracted residents to our region from across Canada and around the globe, many of whom consider their time in the region as part of a short-term plan rather than a long-term investment. High housing prices and a lack of retail services and other amenities further discourage residents from putting down roots in the region.

By building attractive, livable communities that offer a high quality of life, we can foster a sense of **home and belonging** that will attract residents to settle in the region for the long-term.










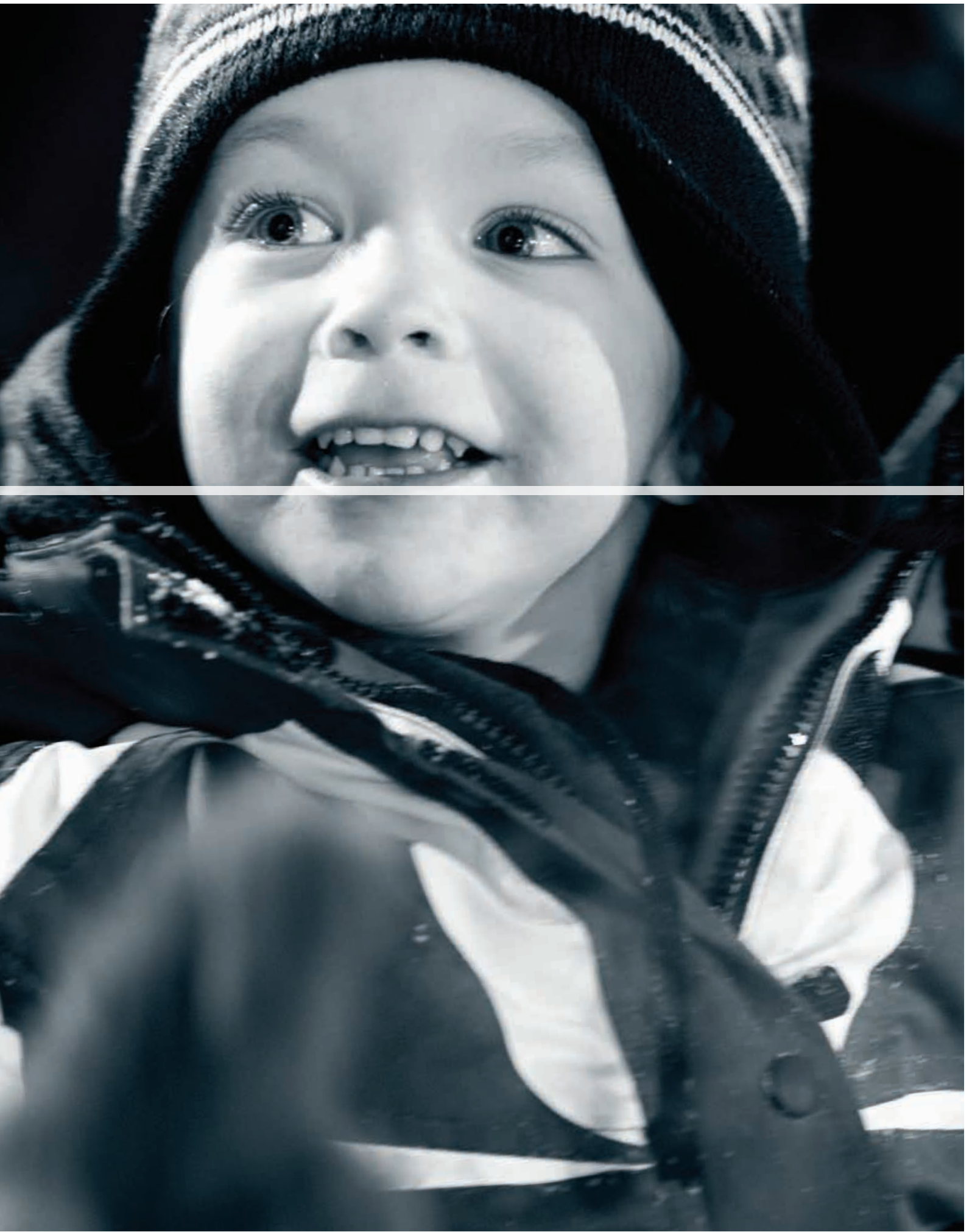
Our cultural infrastructure and the quality of public spaces do not accurately reflect the region's prosperity. More can be done to promote our region's diversity, First Nations and Métis heritage, and rich culture, as well as challenge unbalanced stories about our region.

We can support and promote a **vibrant culture** that will bring our story to life through celebrations, events, and the arts, as well as through high quality urban design that will help build pride in our region.



Our relatively young municipal government is responsible for providing a wide array of services to a large, diverse, and rapidly growing region. Its evolution into a larger, more complex entity requires increasingly sophisticated municipal governance, administrative practices, and structures.

By **working together**, municipal government and the region's stakeholders can achieve coordinated service delivery, mutually supportive relationships, and effective communication to help us achieve a more sustainable future for all.





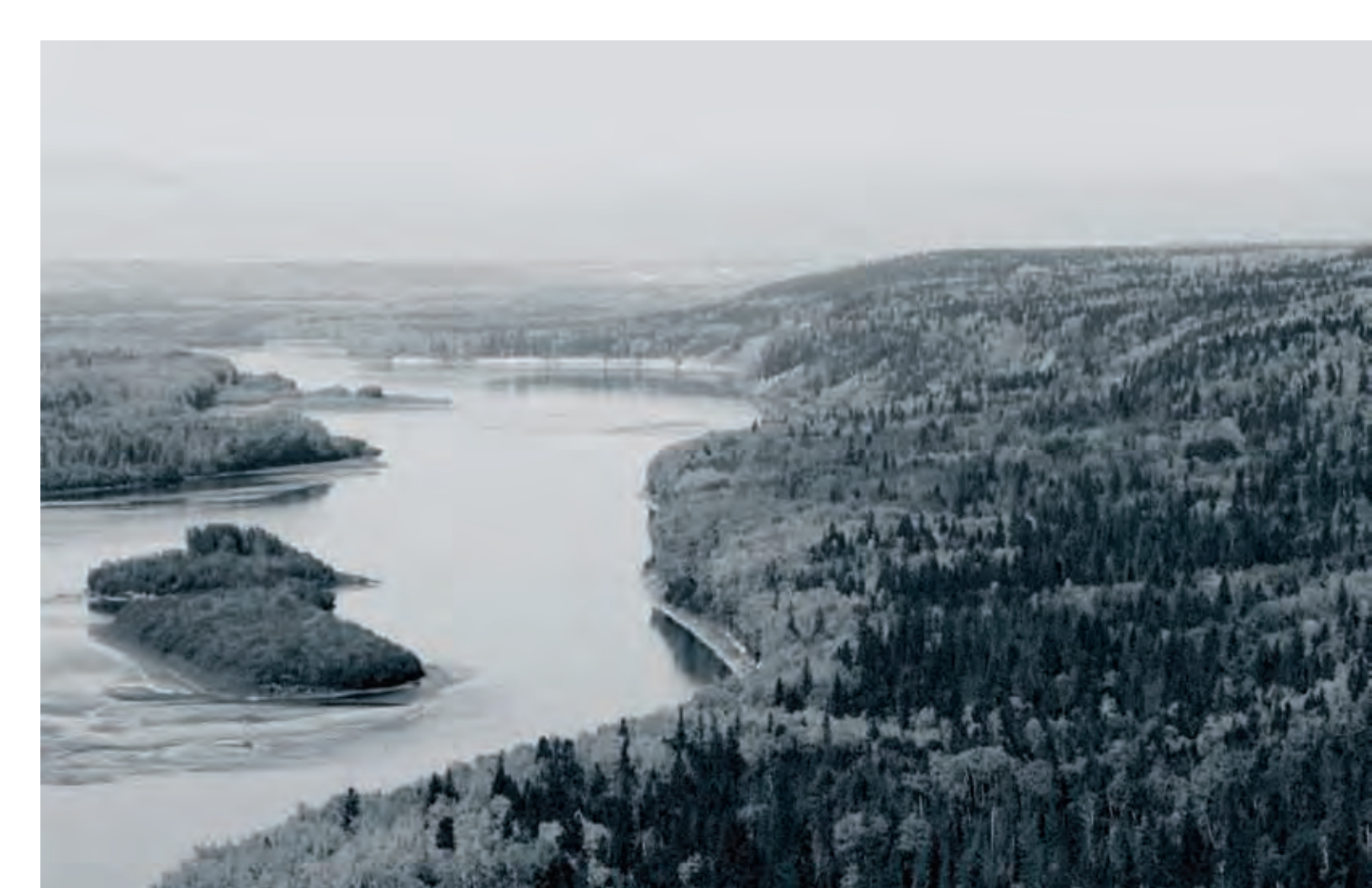
# ourSTORY

Few other municipalities in the world are presented with the opportunities that stand before the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo today. The region's size, prosperity, diversity, and growth provide an unparalleled context to imagine the future and pursue a bold vision of transformation.

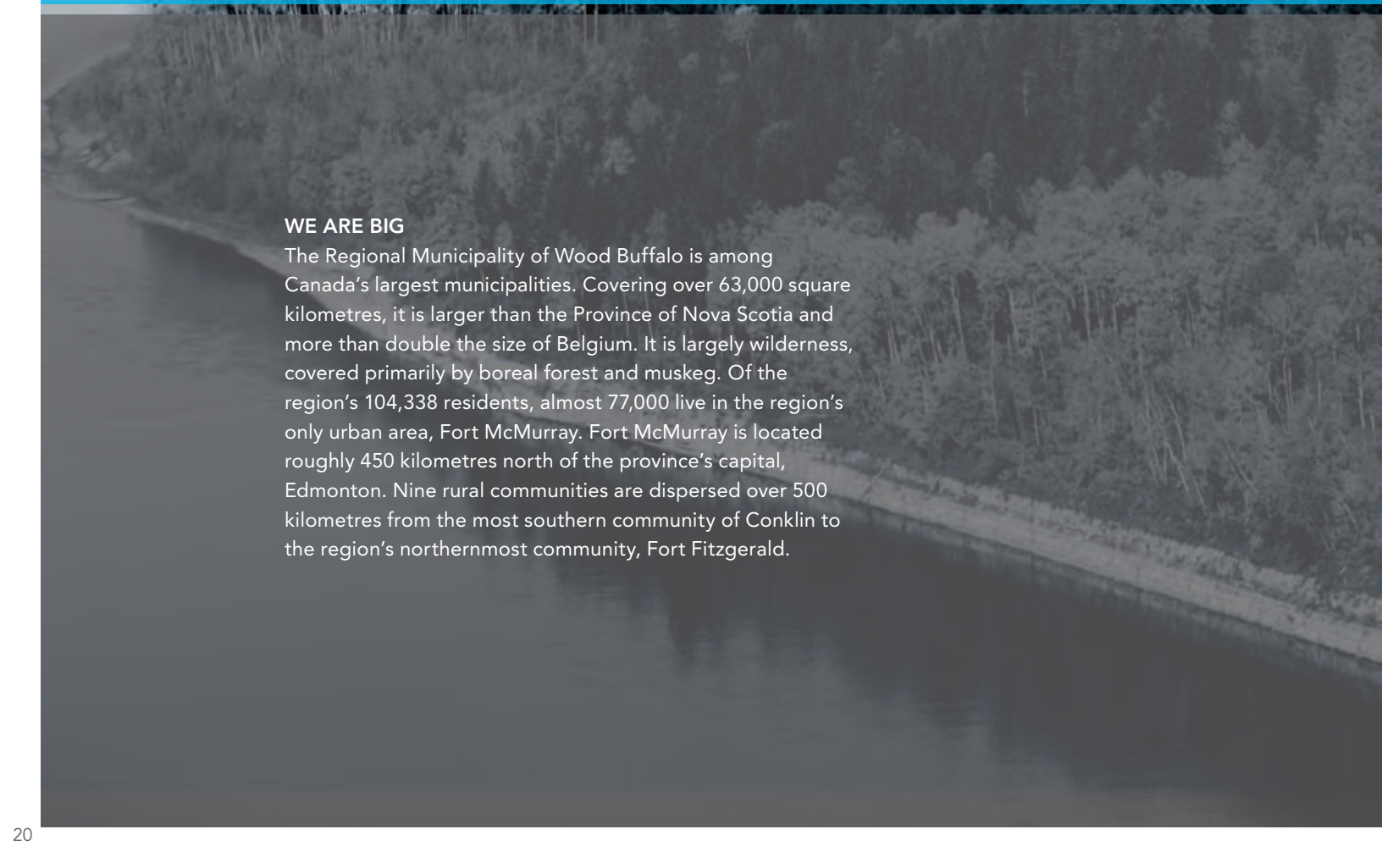
Over the next 20 years, projections indicate that the Urban Service Area of Fort McMurray will emerge as the third largest urban area in Alberta, overall growth will

accelerate faster than nearly any other municipality in Canada, and the region will inject over \$1 trillion into the Canadian economy. As we grow, we will experience a transformation unlike anything this region has felt before: new neighbourhoods and transportation networks will be established, Fort McMurray's City Centre will be revitalized, rural communities will experience improved levels of service, and more opportunities will be created to enjoy our rich natural surroundings.





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### **WE ARE BIG**

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo is among Canada's largest municipalities. Covering over 63,000 square kilometres, it is larger than the Province of Nova Scotia and more than double the size of Belgium. It is largely wilderness, covered primarily by boreal forest and muskeg. Of the region's 104,338 residents, almost 77,000 live in the region's only urban area, Fort McMurray. Fort McMurray is located roughly 450 kilometres north of the province's capital, Edmonton. Nine rural communities are dispersed over 500 kilometres from the most southern community of Conklin to the region's northernmost community, Fort Fitzgerald.

# Regional Context



### WE ARE ECONOMICALLY STRONG

The region is known worldwide for its oil sands. The richest deposits of the Athabasca Oil Sands Area lie within the region, including the only portion available for surface mining. In 2010, oil sands operations were directly attributable for over 31,000 jobs and the production of 1.6 million barrels of oil per day (bpd). The oil sands industry is responsible for 48 percent of the region's employment and 96 percent of investment. The strength of this industry has made the region one of the wealthiest in Canada with an average household income of \$177,634 in 2011.

#### Average Household Income and Projections

AREA	2011 Average Household Income	Above National Per Capita Average	2011 Per Capita Income	2013 Projected Per Capita Income	2016 Projected Per Capita Income
Calgary	\$127,821	52%	\$50,254	\$54,678	\$61,377
Edmonton	\$102,304	24%	\$41,070	\$44,594	\$49,876
Vancouver	\$89,077	6%	\$35,023	\$37,410	\$41,010
Toronto	\$99,168	8%	\$35,612	\$37,986	\$41,630
Wood Buffalo	\$177,634	95%	\$64,507	\$71,050	\$81,346
Alberta	\$110,056	30%	\$42,810	\$46,604	\$52,360
Canada	\$82,608	0%	\$33,036	\$35,370	\$38,964

Source: F.P. Markets 8.0 Income, Estimates and Projections (2011)





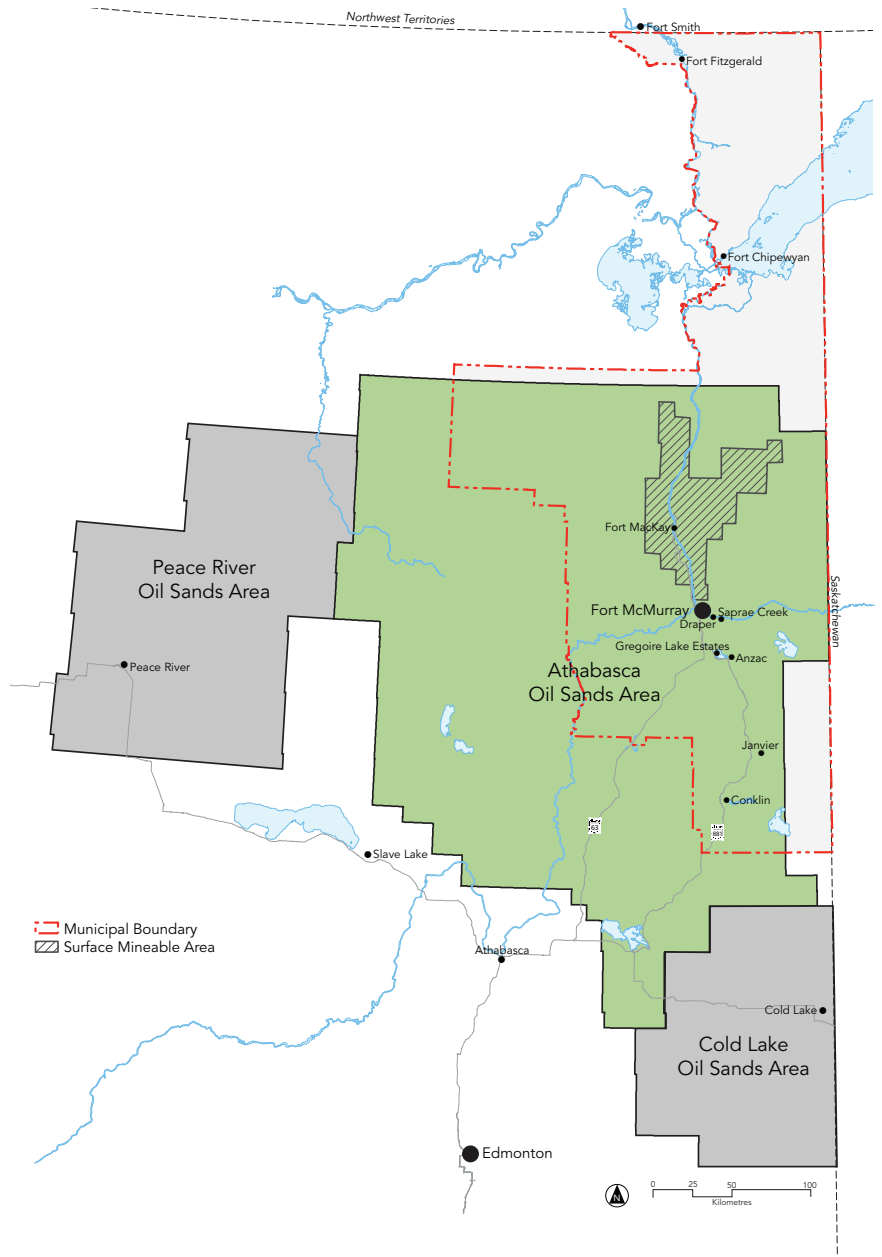
# About the Athabasca Oil Sands Area (AOSA)...

The Athabasca deposit is the largest reserve of crude bitumen in the world and the largest of three major oil sands deposits in Alberta, along with the nearby Peace River and Cold Lake deposits. Together, these oil sands deposits lie beneath 141,000 square kilometres of sparsely populated boreal forest and muskeg, and consist of an estimated 1.7 trillion barrels.

With modern oil production technology, at least 10 percent of these deposits, or about 170 billion barrels, are considered to be economically recoverable. This is enough oil to satisfy the total Canadian oil demand for over 200 years. This makes Canada's total oil reserves the second largest in the world after Saudi Arabia. The Athabasca deposit is the only large oil sands reservoir in the world that is suitable for large-scale surface mining; however, most of the reservoir can only be extracted using more recently developed *in situ* technology called Steam Assisted Gravity Drainage (SAGD), which allows extraction of deeper oil sands deposits. Future developments of *in situ* technology may expand access to the resource.



## ATHABASCA OIL SANDS AREA and the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo





## First Nations & Métis History...

First Nations and Métis have given Wood Buffalo its history and heritage. Before oil sands development, First Nations and Métis forged a lifestyle that included a strong sense of family, community and culture. Many of their traditional practices, established centuries ago, continue today. The rich culture they established in Wood Buffalo is illuminated through their cultural practices including spiritual prayers, dance, music, and traditional regalia. Hunting, trapping, berry picking and visiting ancestral territories are some of the many traditions still practiced throughout our region.

First Nations and Métis people celebrate their heritage at events held throughout the region, passing on traditions and culture to future generations. Treaty Days, Métis Fest and National Aboriginal Day are a few of the events where their heritage and rich cultural traditions are celebrated. Their long-standing presence in the region is treasured.

### WE ARE DIVERSE

Spurred by growth in the oil industry, the region doubled its population in the last decade from just under 52,000 residents in 2000 to more than 104,000 in 2010, making it one of the fastest growing municipalities in Canada. While Fort McMurray itself increased by more than 34,000 people over that time period, the population living in work camps has grown dramatically from less than 6,000 to more than 23,000. New population in the region has added a dimension of diversity with migrant workers coming from all parts of Canada and from around the globe. Furthermore, First Nations and Métis comprise an important segment of the region's population, most significantly in rural communities.



# FIRST NATION RESERVES

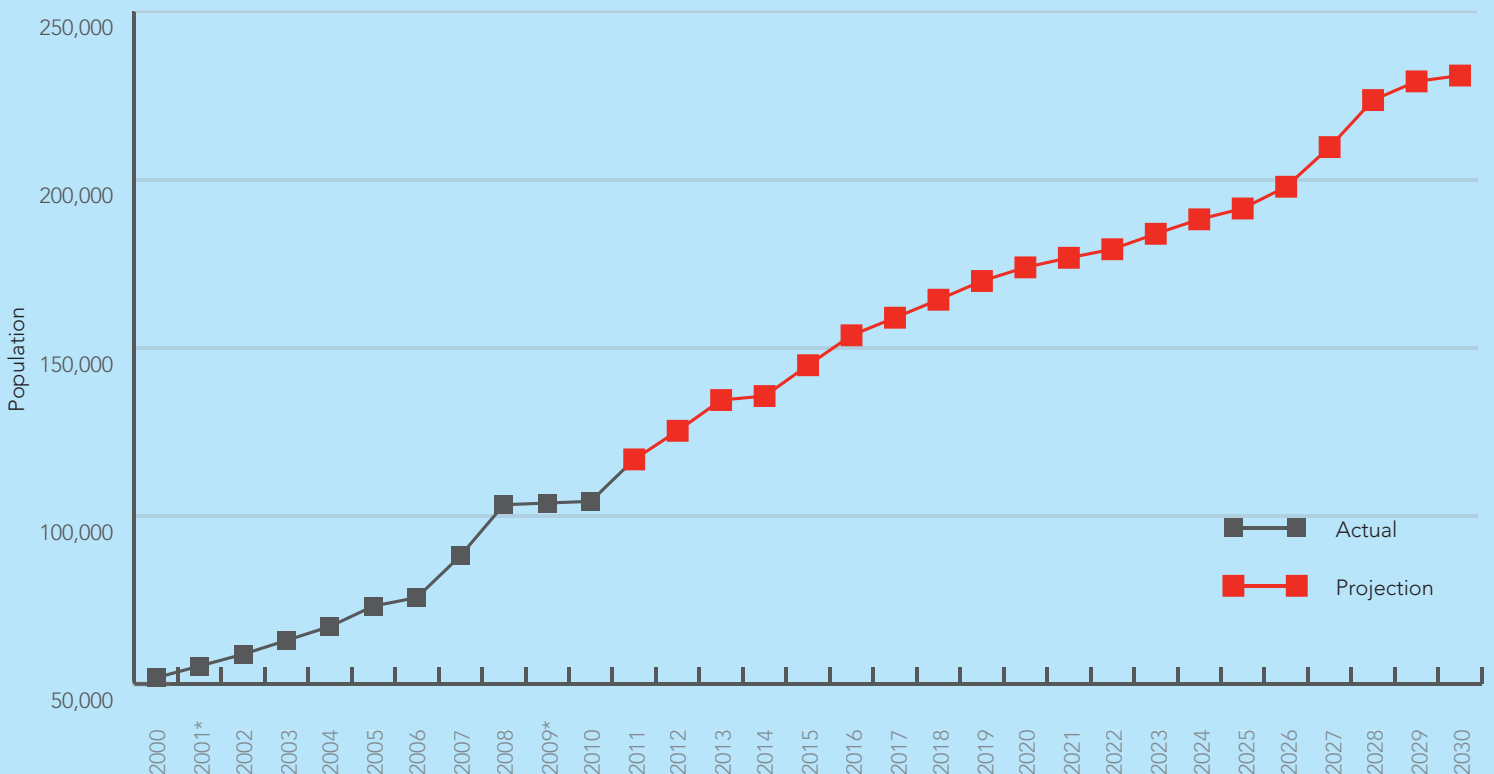
and the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo



### WE ARE GROWING

The region is expected to continue its pattern of rapid growth into the foreseeable future. Oil production is projected to rise from the current 1.6 million bpd to as much as 6.9 million bpd over the next two decades, which will stimulate a corresponding demand for employment and an increase in population. Current and projected oil sands employment could amount to as many as 50,000 permanent operational jobs in the region, generating an increase in population of more than 125,000 people over the next 20 years. Population growth, in turn, will trigger a rise in demand for support and institutional services, as well as increased levels of retail and employment opportunities.

## Historic and Projected Regional Population (2000 – 2030)



Source: Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, 2011

\*No Municipal Census was conducted during these years; the average from the two adjacent years was used to estimate the population.





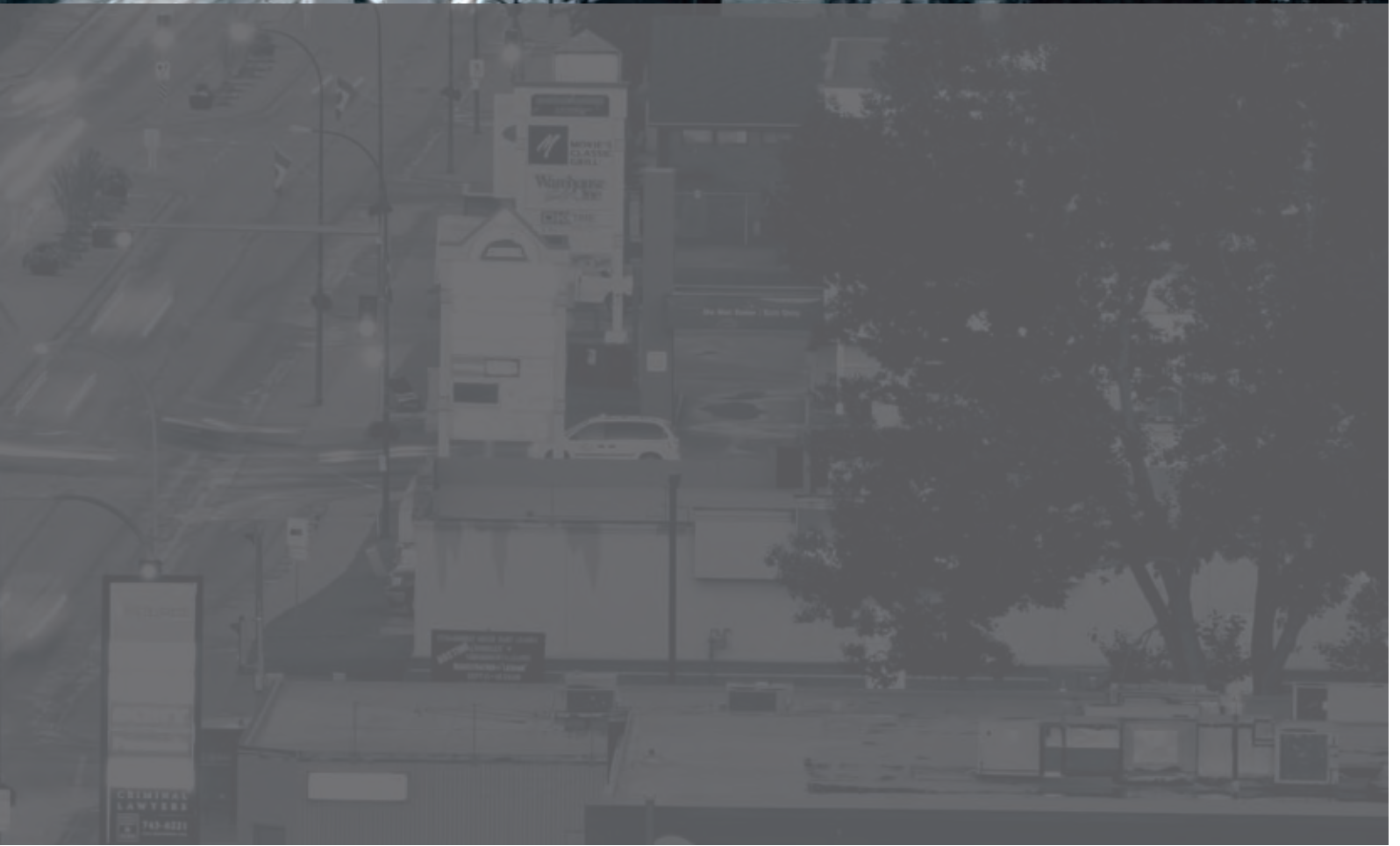
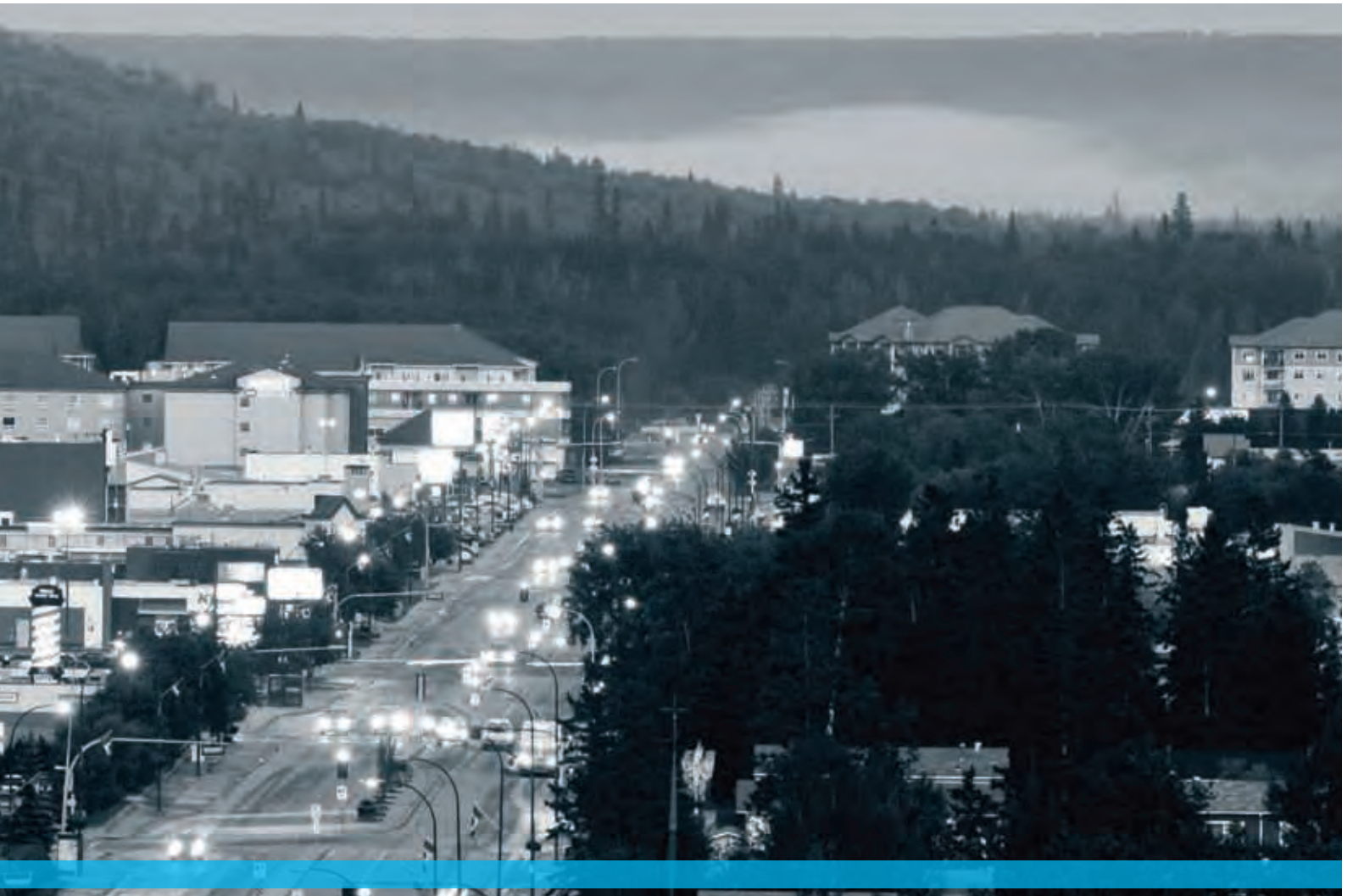
## OURvision

In 2006, the Municipality adopted a vision that remains as relevant today as when it was crafted: **"A balanced future with opportunity for all."**

In the pursuit of this vision, the Municipality must work toward a sustainable future, ensuring that the opportunities enjoyed today remain present for future generations, and that the path forward is inclusive of the region's diverse population. Therefore, it can be said that this Plan is a plan for sustainability with a desire to have Wood Buffalo emerge as **a global model for sustainable living in the north.**

Being a global model for sustainable living in the north is a commitment to the pursuit of excellence. From a practical

perspective, excellence can be interpreted as following best practices. However, to be a global model implies not merely adhering to best practices, but also establishing them. To establish best practices, the Municipality needs to seek continuous improvement through innovation, striving to find new and better ways to demonstrate sustainable living, as well as addressing the pressures of tremendous growth in a northern climate. The Municipality will be driven to make informed and responsible decisions regarding both quantity and quality; that is, it will need to manage its growth sustainably and it will need to build healthy, sustainable communities.









# Statement of Sustainability for Wood Buffalo...

The Municipality's understanding of sustainability is derived from the Statement of Sustainability from Envision Wood Buffalo (2010):

"We value living in a region that is safe, healthy, inclusive of all residents and provides local opportunities. We have a strong economy, a healthy environment, a rich culture, and an abundance of social capital that together form the pillars of sustainability and contribute to quality of life and well-being.

We strive to find balance in our economic, environmental, cultural, and social systems and to live within their natural limits. We make decisions that reflect an understanding of the interdependence of these systems and consider residents' long-term needs to ensure the resources of today are sustainable into the future."





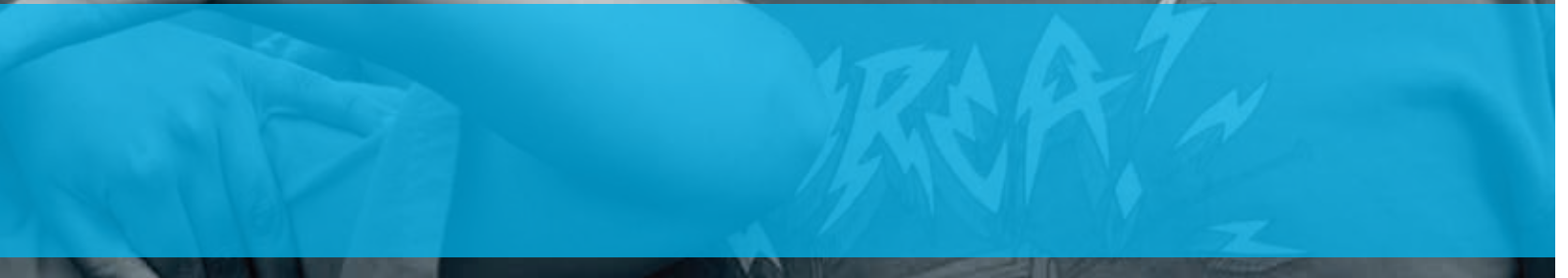
# managing growth SUSTAINABLY

A commitment to sustainability hinges upon a responsible growth management strategy that addresses regional, rural, and urban needs. Key considerations include making optimum use of existing infrastructure through intensification, concentrating development to promote efficient servicing, minimizing greenfield development, promoting contiguous development, and emphasizing

efficient transportation networks. It also means minimizing impact on the natural environment.

In Wood Buffalo, growth management must be addressed at various scales: broadly at the regional level, as well as more specifically in the region's urban area and rural communities.

WESTERN  
SUMMER  
GAMES  
2015  
WOOD BUFFALO





## GROWTHanalysis

Wood Buffalo is one of the fastest growing municipalities in Canada and projections indicate that this rapid rate of growth will not only continue, it will accelerate. This is especially true in the near- to mid-term, that is, within the next decade. The region's oil sands industry will continue to be the primary driver of growth, generating employment opportunities that are expected to attract workers from across the country and around the world.

Recent population and employment projections indicate that the region could grow from 104,338 in 2010 to over 231,000 people by the year 2030, an increase of 121 percent. Population growth will bring with it economic growth through the development of the service industry and private sector-driven small-scale businesses and retail.

Already, the average annual population growth rate is above 7 percent. With a number of new oil sands projects proposed to start between now and 2020, employment is projected to grow by as much as 53 percent and the population by 66 percent over the next decade.

Growing social services and new economic opportunities will continue to attract migrant workers to the region and new induced and indirect employment will develop as the region's economy diversifies beyond oil and gas. Employment in the financial, social services (including health and education), entertainment, and retail sectors could collectively increase by more than 200 percent over the next 20 years.

GROWTH  
analysis



## OIL INDUSTRY PRODUCTION

Oil sands activity is the engine for growth in the region. Currently, oil sands operations in Wood Buffalo produce 1.6 million barrels of oil equivalents per day (bpd). If projects that are under construction, approved, in application, or announced for the next 20 years are considered, production levels could approach 6.9 million bpd (reaching a total of 7.5 million bpd in production capacity), assuming all projects proceed. While the timing and scope of longer-term oil sands development is difficult to predict, it is assumed, for the purpose of the Plan, that the bulk of this capacity will be realized by 2030.

Oil sands production includes both surface mining and *in situ* extraction for deeper deposits. Surface mining operations account for approximately 80 percent of current production while

Steam Assisted Gravity Drainage (SAGD) operations, a form of *in situ* extraction, account for the remaining 20 percent. SAGD and other *in situ* operations are expected to comprise a larger share of operations in the future to the point where SAGD operations will overtake mining operations in terms of capacity.

New technologies could contribute to future extraction if and when increasing world demand and rising commodity prices justify such investment. Carbonates, a different form of bitumen, are an emerging resource within the region. If a commercially viable method of extraction is found, carbonates could significantly increase the recoverable oil resources within the region in coming years.

In the long-term, if the 6.9 million bpd level of production is realized, it would represent an increase of 5.4 million bpd from current production rates. It is projected that *in situ* operations would account for approximately 60 percent of this increase in production with approximately 40 percent derived from surface mining. A very small percentage of future production is expected to be generated through new technologies.

In the near-term, projects that are approved or currently under construction are expected to increase production by 2.1 million bpd, up to 3.7 million bpd from the current 1.6 million bpd. It is projected that *in situ* operations and surface mining operations would each account for approximately 50 percent of the increase in production.

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## EMPLOYMENT DEMAND

The oil production industry requires two forms of labour: construction and ongoing operations. Mining operations generally have three times the number of operational employees compared to SAGD extraction and also require a greater number of construction workers to get a new facility into operation. While SAGD operations have fewer operation and construction workers per barrel of production, they tend to have multiple phases and ongoing drilling that result in continuous construction.

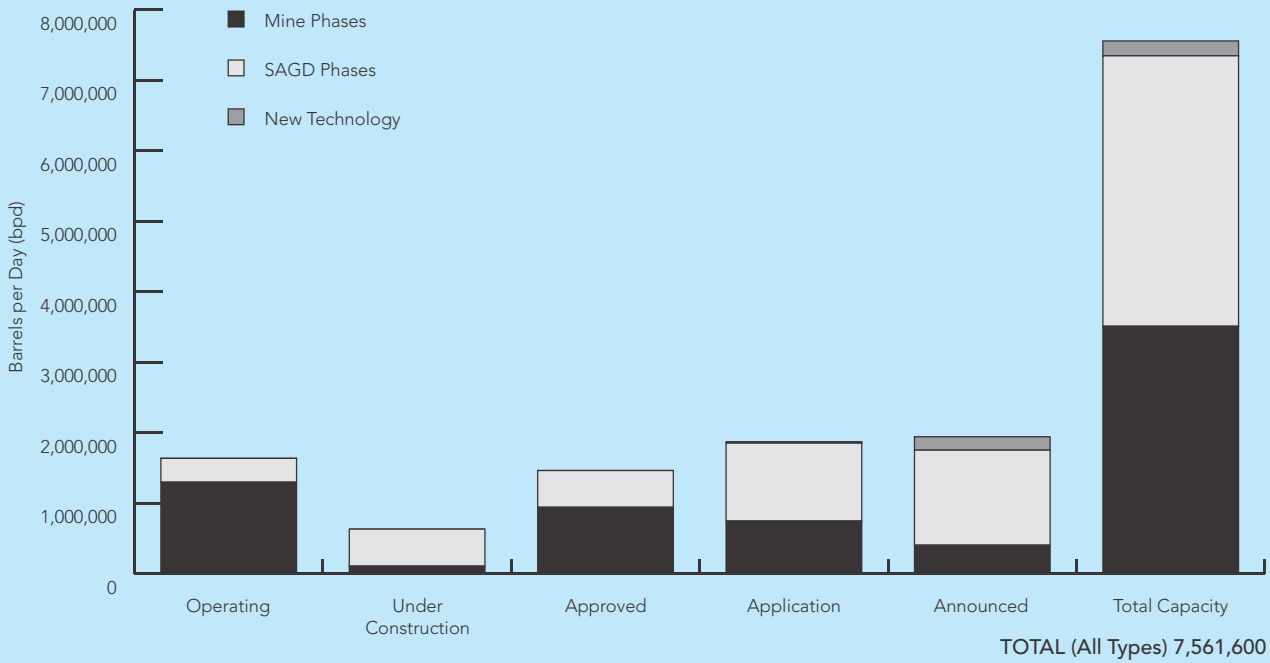
Over the long-term, production levels of 6.9 million bpd could translate into approximately 50,000 direct

operational jobs in the region by 2030. This assumes an increase of approximately 2.2 million bpd in mining production and 3.2 million bpd related to *in situ* production.

Construction jobs are generally considered to represent non-permanent employment; however, if the region sustains growth in the oil industry to 2030, there will be a steady pace of construction jobs bringing greater stability to construction employment. This steady employment will provide the opportunity for the construction-related workforce to settle long-term, supported by the implementation of a large number of industrial projects.

In addition, indirect and induced jobs from oil sands operations will contribute to the overall labour force demand for the region in sectors such as real estate services, temporary accommodations, manufacturing and business services, among others. These sectors are expected to grow as oil production increases, leading to an even more diversified economy over time as financial, educational, social service and other sectors expand. There is the potential for an increase of more than 200 percent in employment in sectors outside of the oil and gas industry over the next two decades.

# Oil Sands Capacity (bpd) by Status



## JOB LOCATIONS

Surface mining operations are mainly located north of Fort McMurray, whereas *in situ* operations are located throughout the region. Mining operations are not usually economically viable if production is less than 100,000 bpd, so they are not only more intensive in labour, they require a higher level of operational input and maintenance. Consequently, the vast majority of new operational jobs will be associated with the northern mining operations.

To the south of the region, development of *in situ* operations will be concentrated near the community of Conklin. Employment growth in this area could result in approximately 5,700 new operational jobs over the next 20 years.

Looking at all future operations, it is estimated that 32,500 jobs or 65 percent of all operational jobs will be within 75 kilometres of Fort McMurray and over 90 percent of all future oil sands employment in the region

will be within 100 kilometres of Fort McMurray, primarily to the north.

### Employment Proximity to Fort McMurray, Anzac, and Conklin

#### Projected Operational Workforce Employment near Fort McMurray

Proximity	Operational Jobs	% of Operational Jobs
Within 50km	13,891	27.9%
Within 75km	32,271	64.8%
Within 100km	45,787	92.0%

#### Projected Operational Workforce Employment near Anzac

Proximity	Operational Jobs	% of Operational Jobs
Within 25km	2,244	4.5%
Within 50km	4,001	8.0%

#### Projected Operational Workforce Employment near Conklin

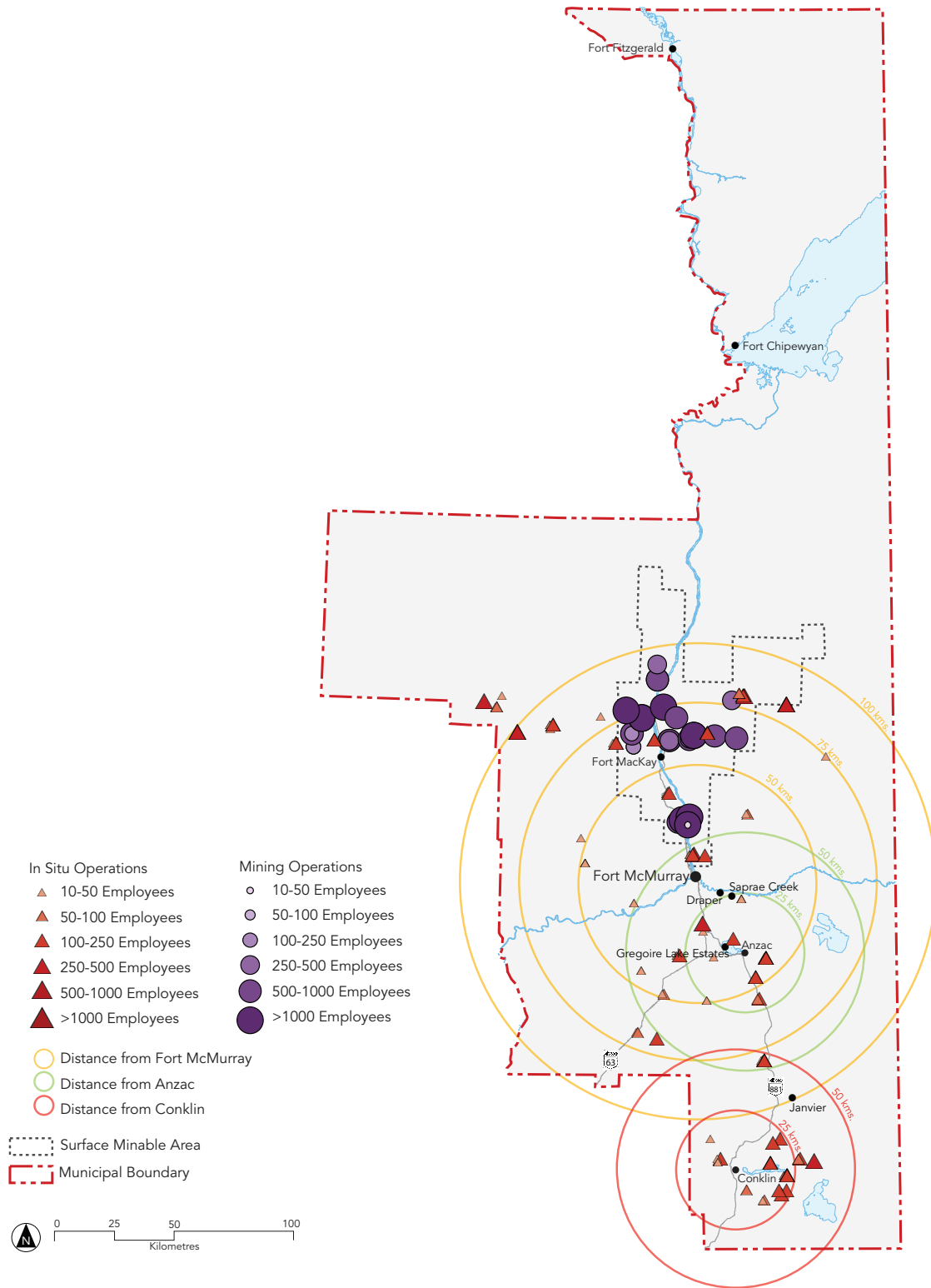
Proximity	Operational Jobs	% of Operational Jobs
Within 25km	4,840	9.7%
Within 50km	5,741	11.5%

Source: Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, 2011



# OIL SANDS OPERATIONAL EMPLOYMENT

Location of existing and potential employment



## TIMING

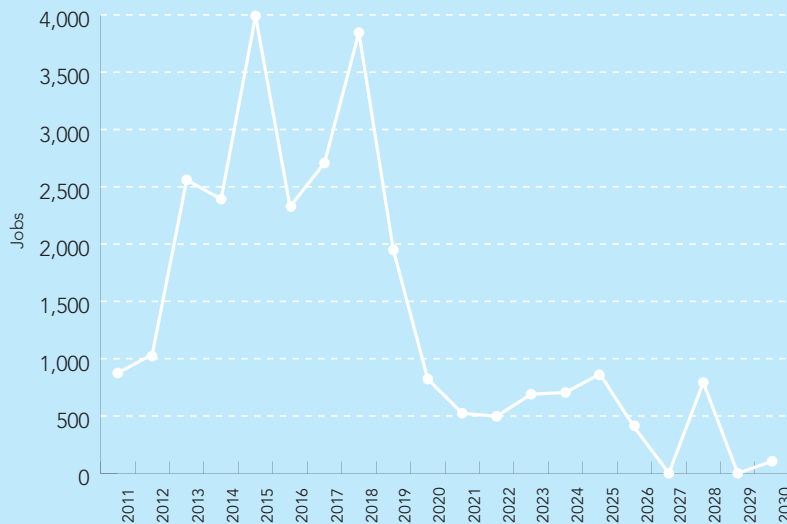
The timing of oil sands projects can be affected by the availability of labour and materials, regulatory processes, fluctuations in financial markets, and changing oil prices. Assuming relative stability in these areas, the majority of new oil sands operations are anticipated to begin over the next decade. Significant growth is expected between 2012 and 2019, with spikes in operational jobs forecasted for 2013, 2015 and 2018. In addition, employment growth in the oil and gas industry implies growth in

other economic sectors. It is expected that there will be fluctuation in terms of employment increases between 2012 and 2022 due to the number of projects expected to start in this same period.

A slow down in added employment is expected toward the second half of the projection period to 2030. This is explained by the fact that most projects are expected to be complete by that time, with fewer projects starting up. At this time, most of the non-permanent construction

employment positions are likely to give way to more stable operational jobs. Furthermore, several projects in operating today will begin to shutdown as the resources are exhausted. The region's population is then expected to stabilize.

## Projected Operational Employment Growth (2011 – 2030)



Source: Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, 2011.

Amount of projects per year summarizing 138 projects estimated to be built by 2030, leaving 27 projects to be accomplished in the 2030-2035 period, considering a 5 years lapse per construction process. This forecast does not include generic projects to be considered in the 2025-2030 period.

## POPULATION PROJECTIONS

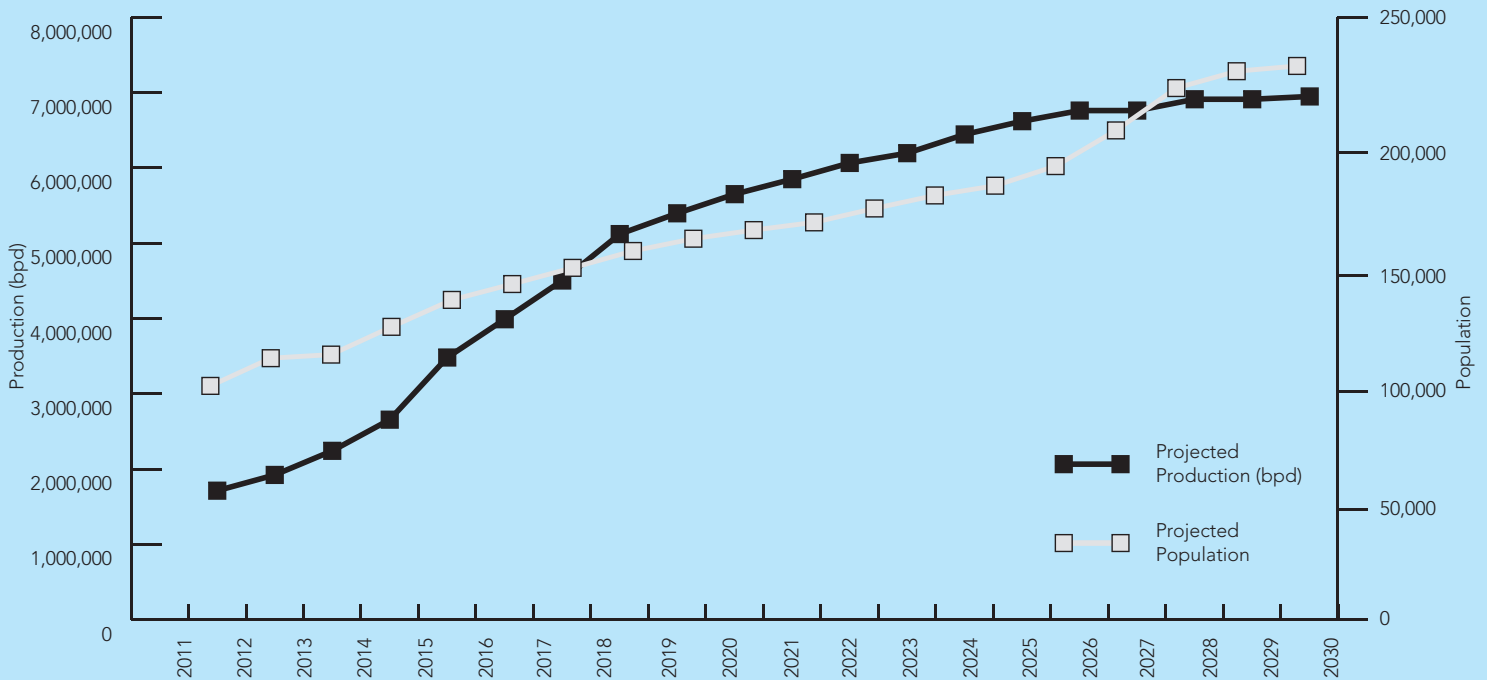
Growth estimates in the oil industry, anticipated timing of projects, and the resulting impact on direct and indirect employment growth, combine to provide insight into population growth. Oil sands production is forecasted to be 5.6 million bpd in 2020, continuing to rise to as much as 6.9 million bpd by 2030. As a result, the regional population is projected to reach 174,000 by 2020 and 231,000 by 2030. To put this into perspective, these projections represent a higher growth rate over the next 10 years

than that experienced in the decade from 2000 to 2010.

Given the number of projects that are expected to start in the years 2011-2020, employment is likely to grow by as much as 53 percent by 2020, while population is likely to grow by 66 percent in the same period. After 2020, both employment and population growth rates will stabilize and further growth will rely on new projects, as well as indirect and induced employment generated.

Given that the projected employment will continue to grow, the region is going to rely on a continued influx of labour migration into the region.

# Oil Sands Production & Population Projections



Source: Oil Sands Production – Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, 2011; Population - Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, 2011.

## LAND REQUIREMENTS

Most of the region’s growth will occur in Fort McMurray to the point where it is expected to comprise 85 percent of the region’s population by 2030. Estimates for land and housing requirements have been derived based on this distribution model and the overall projected regional population climbing to over 231,000 by that time.

As it currently stands, it is estimated that approximately 2,850 hectares of land will be required for residential housing in the region by 2030. This translates into a density of 45 persons per hectare of land using an average household size of 3.1 people. It is also estimated that the region will require half of its residential land requirement

for commercial uses and twice its residential land requirement for industrial uses. This requirement for commercial and industrial land in the region translates into about 1,400 and 5,700 hectares of land, respectively, by 2030.

In addition, about 64 percent of the total estimated land area is required for green space. This high percentage is due in large part to local geographic conditions in which large tracts of land are unsuitable for development because of unstable slopes, muskeg, or flood plains. Green space is required for parks and recreational uses, or may be left as natural lands. About 6,500 hectares will be required for green spaces,

which assumes the same proportion of green space per person as in 2010.

In total, about 16,500 hectares of land could be required within the planning period to accommodate future growth and development in the region. Total land demand will be highest in the near-term, up to 2015, after which the demand will decelerate from 2015 to 2025. However, the required amount of space may increase again toward the end of the planning period as construction activities wind down and a more stable population base settles in the region’s communities.

**Projected Land Requirement by Usage Type (hectares), 2011 - 2030**

Year	Residential	Commercial	Industrial	Green	Total
2011-2015	802	401	1,604	1,816	4,623
2016-2020	646	323	1,292	1,463	3,723
2021-2025	465	232	929	1,053	2,679
2026-2030	941	471	1,882	2,132	5,425
TOTAL					16,451

Source: Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, 2011

**Projected Land Required for Residential Use (hectares), 2011 – 2030**

	2011-2015	2016-2020	2021-2025	2026-2030	Total
Fort McMurray	758	609	436	885	2,689
Rural Communities	44	37	28	56	165
Total	802	646	468	941	2,854

Source: Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, 2011

**Projected Land Required for Commercial Space (hectares), 2011– 2030**

	2011-2015	2016-2020	2021-2025	2026-2030	Total
Fort McMurray	379	304	218	443	1,344
Rural Communities	22	19	14	28	82
Total Land Requirement	401	323	232	471	1,426

Source: Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, Planning & Development Department, 2011

**Projected Land Required for Industrial Use (hectares), 2011– 2030**

	2011-2015	2016-2020	2021-2025	2026-2030	Total
Fort McMurray	1,516	1,218	873	1,771	5,377
Rural Communities	88	74	57	111	330
Total Land Requirement	1,604	1,292	929	1,882	5,707

Source: Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, Planning & Development Department, 2011



### HOUSING REQUIREMENTS

Based on the population projections and assuming household size remains at approximately three residents per household or less, about 37,000 new housing units will be required in the region to accommodate the growing population over the next 20 years. This figure is also adjusted downwards to exclude some non-permanent population residing in hotels or motels and work camps.

In addition to the housing requirement, there is currently a housing deficiency of approximately 3,500 units that needs to be addressed. It is estimated that the deficit could be addressed within a period of eight years between 2012 and 2020, but this would represent a higher rate of construction and housing units during that time.

The net result of projected new housing and the existing housing deficit is a total housing requirement of 40,500 housing units by 2030, of which 34,000 units would be directed toward Fort McMurray. A total of 165 hectares of land will be required to support the development of residential housing in the rural communities, primarily in the community of Anzac.

### Housing Requirement by Dwelling Type, Fort McMurray, 2011 -2030

	2011-2015	2016-2020	2021-2025	2026-2030	TOTAL
Single Detached	3,496	1,767	1,230	1,471	7,964
Semi/Row/Duplex/Townhouse	1,836	1,615	1,148	1,373	5,972
Apartment	4,975	5,331	2,137	5,875	18,318
Mobile	1,092	456	287	343	2,178
Total	11,398	9,170	4,803	9,061	34,432

Source: Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, 2011.

### Housing Requirement by Dwelling Type, Rural Communities, 2011 -2030

	2011-2015	2016-2020	2021-2025	2026-2030	TOTAL
Single Detached	374	344	330	229	1,277
Semi/Row/Duplex/Townhouse	28	10	9	9	56
Apartment	155	102	261	62	580
Mobile	155	102	261	62	580
Total	712	558	861	362	2,493

Source: Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, 2011.

### Housing Requirement by Dwelling Type, Total Region, 2011 -2030

	2011-2015	2016-2020	2021-2025	2026-2030	TOTAL
Single Detached	3,870	2,111	1,560	1,700	9,241
Semi/Row/Duplex/Townhouse	1,864	1,625	1,157	1,382	6,028
Apartment	5,130	5,433	2,398	5,937	18,898
Mobile	1,247	558	548	405	2,758
Total	12,110	9,728	5,664	9,423	36,925

Source: Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, 2011.



# REGIONAL growth management

It is projected that the regional population could grow to 231,000 by the year 2030, an increase in population of 126,700 residents, or 121 percent from the 2010 population of 104,300. The regional growth management strategy supports directing the majority of this growth to Fort McMurray so that the urban area will comprise 85 percent of the region's total population. Growth will also be directed to the community of Anzac, transforming that community, over time, into the region's secondary service centre. Other rural communities in the region will experience modest,

incremental growth. Over the long-term, work camp populations will stabilize near today's numbers, but will experience occasional fluctuations based on the sequencing of construction for new oil sands projects.

Rapid population growth could trigger as many as 40,500 new housing units (including the standing deficit of 3,500 units) and the need for over 16,500 hectares of land for residential, commercial and industrial development. However, the Municipality is committed to sustainable practices that will minimize the need for new land. This will be

achieved by promoting intensification in existing residential areas, and in particular in Fort McMurray's City Centre, and promoting higher overall densities in new residential development.

Meanwhile, work camps in the south and the north will begin to consolidate, locating near one another and offering shared services and amenities. New *in situ* operations in the Conklin area will drive the need for work camps in the south, as these projects are deemed to be outside of a reasonable commuting distance of Fort McMurray. In the north, work camps will continue

REGIONAL  
growth management





housing temporary construction workers and operational workers in remote sites. This strategy is supported by the Government of Alberta's Comprehensive Regional Infrastructure Sustainability Plan (CRISP) and will require collaboration between the Municipality, the Government of Alberta, and the oil sands industry.

This growth strategy depends upon an improved transportation network connecting the workforce to places of industrial employment. More than 90 percent of operational jobs will be within 100 kilometres of Fort McMurray, and about 65 percent within 75 kilometres. These jobs

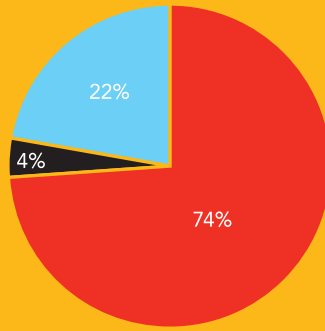
are mostly in large, labour-intensive mining operations to the north of Fort McMurray. Rapid transit systems need to be developed to quickly and reliably transport residents from where they live to where they work.

To the south, employment numbers will be lower as *in situ* operations in this area are generally smaller and require fewer operational workers. There is the potential for over 5,500 operational jobs within 50 kilometres of Conklin, nearly 5,000 of which will be within 25 kilometres of the community. These jobs are well outside the likely commuting distance of Fort McMurray and, as indicated in CRISP,

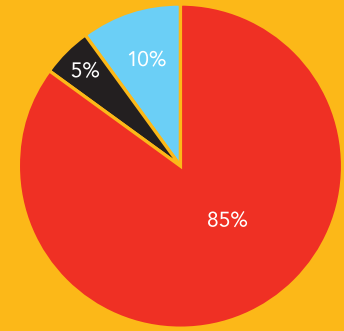
a growth centre in the Conklin area will be required to accommodate these workers and their families.

Ultimately, the goal of the regional growth strategy is to promote permanence and long-term residency in Wood Buffalo by attracting a greater proportion of existing and new workers to settle in communities, particularly Fort McMurray. As such, requirements for land, transportation, and infrastructure become the high priorities as the region's permanent communities prepare to accommodate the rapid growth that will continue over the coming years.

# Population Proportion by Growth Area



2010

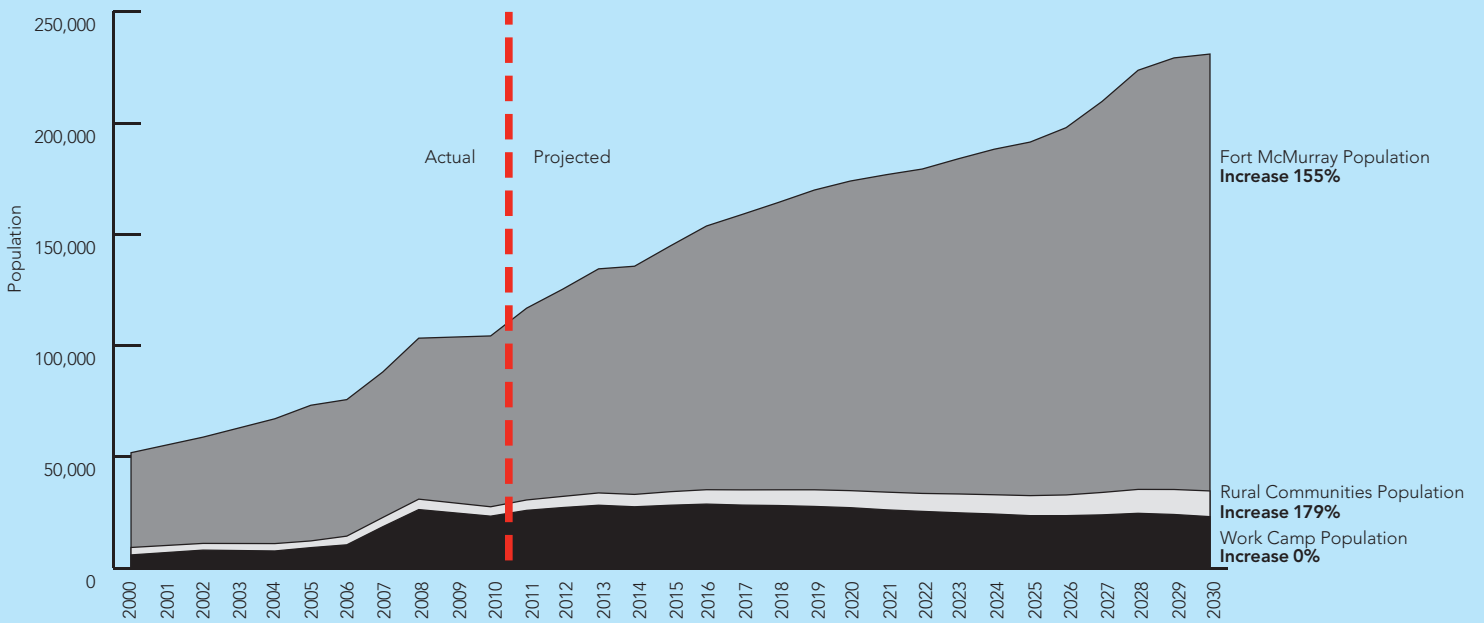


2030



Source: Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, 2000-2011.

# Regional Population Distribution over Time (2000-2030)

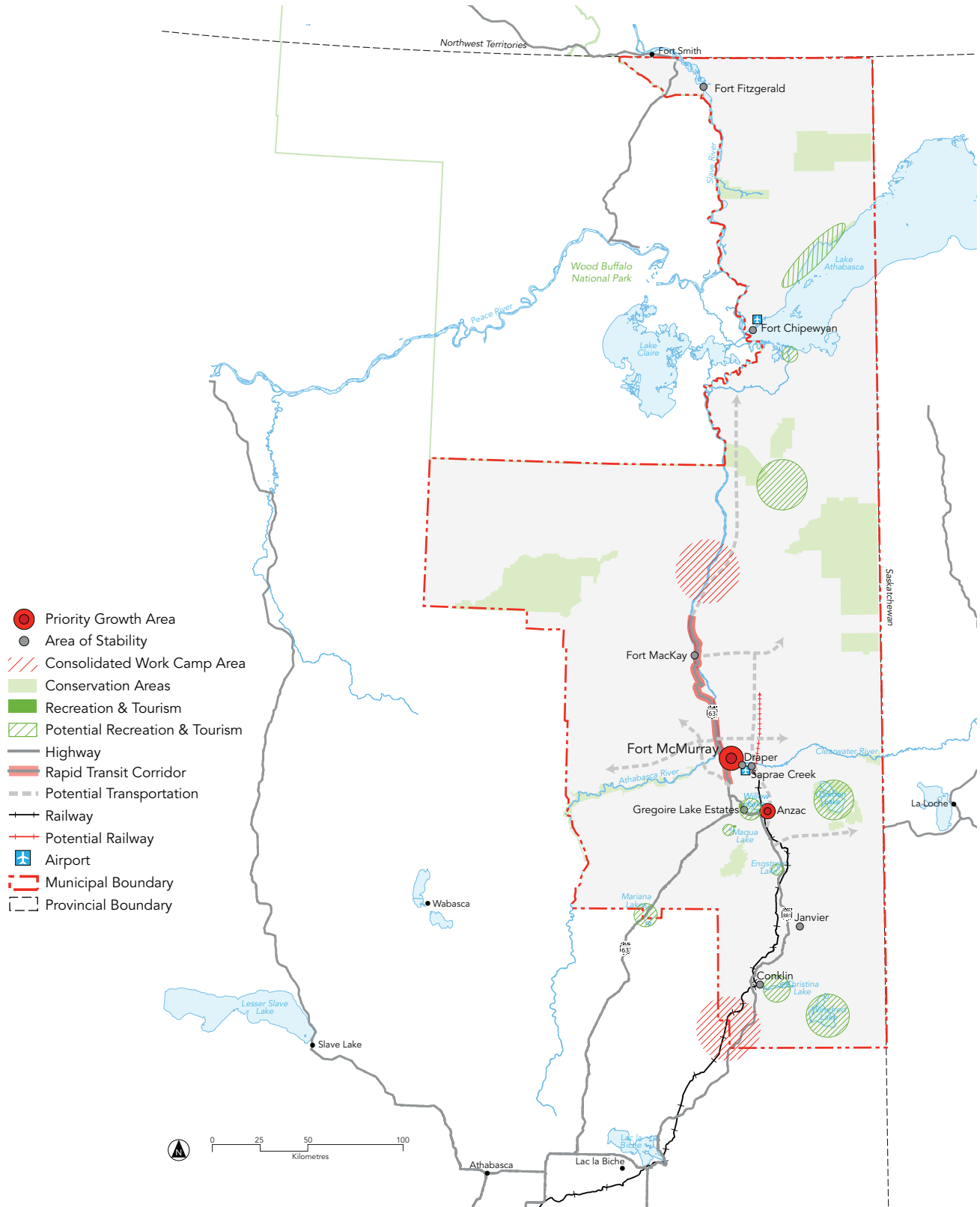


Source: Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, 2000-2011.

**REGIONAL**  
growth management

# REGIONAL GROWTH CONCEPT

Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo



## DIRECTION R.1

### Strategic Regional Population Distribution

The regional growth strategy is to concentrate new development while encouraging new and migrant workers to become permanent residents of the region, thereby minimizing the transient nature of the workforce. Through stability and permanence, municipal service provision will become more sustainable. The Priority Growth Areas of Fort McMurray and Anzac will accommodate the bulk of the growth, while more modest increases in population will be accommodated in other rural communities. Work camps will continue to provide accommodation for those on short-term employment, but long-term operational employees will be encouraged to settle in developed areas. To accommodate the oil sands construction workforce and remote operations, two new consolidated work camps will be supported at locations where significant employment is expected. Consolidated work camps promote efficiency through economies of scale, and are able to provide more amenities to workers.

#### R.1.1

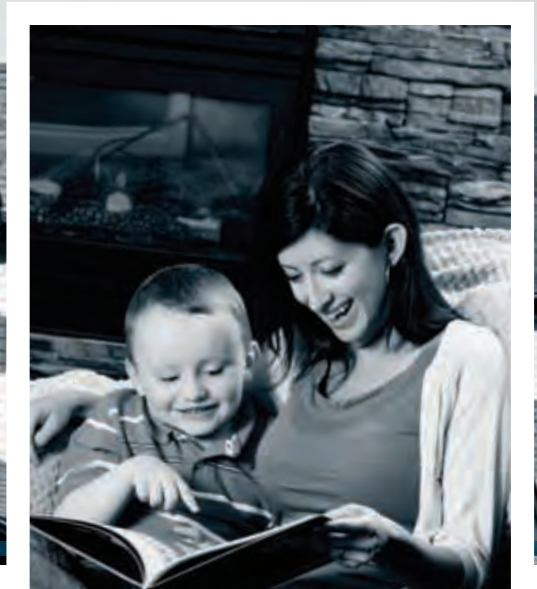
### Direct population growth to Priority Growth Areas

Priority Growth Areas are locations where significant population and service growth will be accommodated. Fort McMurray will continue to be the primary settlement area and service centre for the region. Anzac will also grow substantially to become a small urban centre over time with associated services. To accommodate growth in these two Priority Growth Areas, the Municipality will work with the Province to secure an adequate amount of land for expansion and will ensure the release of these lands for development purposes in an efficient and timely manner.

#### R.1.2

### Protect and enhance Areas of Stability

Areas of Stability are locations where rapid growth is not desired and where the existing character and structure of the community is to be respected. In some of these communities, including Fort Chipewyan, Fort MacKay, Janvier and Conklin, modest, incremental growth will occur in keeping with the desires of local residents. In other communities, including Fort Fitzgerald, Draper, Sapræe Creek, and Gregoire Lake Estates, the capacity for growth will be defined by environmental constraints or community boundaries. In Areas of Stability, service provision will be addressed in accordance with community need, population size, and density.



### R.1.3

## Support the development of Consolidated Work Camps

Work camps associated with oil production will continue to offer a reasonable form of accommodation for some workers, in particular for temporary construction workers and those in remote locations beyond a reasonable commuting distance from settlement areas. However, to the greatest degree possible, work camps should be consolidated to facilitate the provision of services. In partnership with the Province and oil industry, the Municipality will explore opportunities to consolidate work camps, both north of Fort MacKay and in the Conklin area.

### R.1.4

## Encourage permanent residency

It is one of the underlying assumptions of this Plan that long-term operational workers in the oil industry can be attracted to settle in Priority Growth Areas. As community amenities are enhanced, housing solutions are addressed, and transportation solutions are developed, the Municipality will work with the Province and the oil industry to limit the use of work camps within a reasonable commuting distance from Priority Growth Areas as a means of encouraging permanent residency.

## DIRECTION R.2

### Integrated Multi-modal Mobility Systems

As the region grows, comprehensive mobility solutions will be necessary to promote the effective and efficient movement of people and goods. Consistent with the growth management strategy, connections to, from, and within Fort McMurray will be key. However, the Municipality cannot do it alone. Other levels of government, together with the oil sands industry, will need to be partners in the pursuit of an integrated multi-modal system. An important component of the system is a rapid transit service connecting workers residing in Fort McMurray to areas of industrial employment associated with the oil sands. The use of private busing for getting to work sites already represents a significant mode share and regular public transit must complement private service. Airport expansion, private airstrips, rail service, water transportation, and new road networks are also important elements of this multi-modal system.

#### R.2.1

#### Develop rapid transit

Rapid transit is an integral part of the solution to encourage permanent residency in the region by reducing commuting time from communities to oil sands operations throughout the region. The Municipality will commit to the pursuit of rapid transit solutions focusing, as a first priority, on a connection between Fort McMurray's City Centre and places of employment and the consolidated work camp area to the north. This commitment may be approached incrementally, transitioning over time from dedicated bus lanes to Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), and potentially to Light Rail Transit (LRT). New transportation corridors will be designed and developed with consideration for rapid transit.

#### R.2.2

#### Expand regional road transportation systems

A regional roadway system is necessary to facilitate the efficient movement of people and goods throughout the region and to connect to outside markets, helping to stimulate economic growth, reduce travel times, and support desired development. Highway expansion to the east of Anzac and across the Clearwater River will serve to connect to existing highway networks and facilitate the movement of large loads and dangerous goods. This will also divert highway traffic passing through the urban area, as would a bypass road west of Fort McMurray. East-west connectivity can be enhanced by expanding access to Saskatchewan and northwestern Alberta. The extension of a road to the north of the region with access to Fort Chipewyan and Fort Fitzgerald would provide new economic opportunities, particularly in terms of recreation and tourism. The Municipality will work with the Province to establish funding priorities consistent with these goals.

R.2.3

## Explore expansion of rail transportation

Historically, rail transportation has played a significant role in establishing a permanent population in the region. Although its significance has since declined, much of this rail infrastructure remains and there are opportunities to expand rail service as an alternative mode of land transportation. The Municipality will work with Canadian National Railway and other partners to encourage the expansion of rail services where appropriate. Rail services can help bring machinery and other goods into the region and provide an alternative for moving oil and bitumen to the south. Passenger rail services can also be explored. Where possible, existing railbeds and rail rights-of-ways should be acquired and preserved to allow for future rail expansion or alternative transportation options.

R.2.4

## Support aerodromes to facilitate remote access

The size and remoteness of the region requires air solutions as part of an integrated transportation network. With large numbers of mobile workers commuting from outside of the region to oil sands projects, air-related infrastructure has been increasing in the region and will continue to grow. This infrastructure can help secure medical services and the provision of food and other goods to remote areas. It can also assist in reducing road traffic. The Municipality will promote the safe and efficient use of aerodromes and promote consolidation among multiple users in an effort to minimize land disruption and duplication of infrastructure, while also increasing air traffic safety.

R.2.5

## Support the development of Multi-use Corridors

As integrated mobility solutions are developed, efforts to consolidate infrastructure right-of-ways will be pursued as a strategy to reduce land fragmentation and environmental impacts. Where feasible, the Municipality will work with the Province and other stakeholders to support the development of Multi-use Corridors (MUCs) whereby a single right-of-way is established for roadways, pipelines, transmission lines, and other utilities.

## DIRECTION R.3

### Regional Conservation and Recreation

The region is comprised largely of untamed boreal forest that provides wildlife habitat, supports traditional lifestyles, and offers a diversity of year-round recreation activities. A smaller portion of the region's land base has been disturbed through resource and mineral extraction, and urban and rural development. The conservation of sensitive areas and reclamation of disturbed industrial land will help protect and conserve the region's ecological diversity. At the same time, providing increased access to the rich natural surroundings will expand outdoor recreational opportunities that are valued throughout the region. Rivers and lakes, particularly those that are part of existing communities, provide some of the best opportunities to develop year-round recreation in balance with the need for environmental conservation.

#### R.3.1

#### Apply conservation practices to the hinterland

The region consists largely of natural areas where there is competing demand for resource development, residential expansion, passive and active recreation, and ecological preservation. The Municipality will work with the Province to support integrated resource management and planning practices, to identify and establish conservation areas where development would be restricted. Where it has jurisdictional authority, the Municipality will limit development along lakes, rivers, and streams as well as where it would negatively impact wildlife corridors and migratory routes. While limited, agricultural operations in the region will be protected.

#### R.3.2

#### Integrate regional recreation

As the regional population grows, the maintenance and expansion of existing recreational areas as well as the establishment of new recreational areas will be necessary. An integrated regional recreational strategy will help bring opportunities for all residents to enjoy the region's natural surroundings. Many existing recreational areas can be expanded while some of the region's lakes will be explored for opportunities to develop new recreation with the potential for cottage development, recreational lodges, boat launches, day use areas and campgrounds.







## URBAN growth management

The regional growth strategy directs the largest proportion of projected growth in the region to Fort McMurray. In support of sustainable planning practices, the target is to have 85 percent of the region's population residing in Fort McMurray by 2030 in order to concentrate resources, make the best use of existing infrastructure, and build a substantial local market to support the provision of needed services and amenities. This would see the urban population increase from 76,800 to 196,400 over the next 20 years, an

increase of 119,600 people, or 155 percent.

Within Fort McMurray, population growth to 2030 will be accommodated in a manner that makes efficient use of land and infrastructure investments. This will be accomplished in three ways: redeveloping the City Centre with much higher densities combined with commercial, retail, institutional, and other complementary uses; developing Established Neighbourhoods to capacity and promoting some targeted intensification within these

neighbourhoods; and building New Neighbourhoods with a mix of housing options that promote higher average densities.

The City Centre is expected to grow to 48,000 residents, four times the current population. An additional 12,000 residents will be accommodated in Established Neighbourhoods through targeted intensification. New Neighbourhoods will be built to accommodate as many as 72,000 additional residents over the next two decades.

The establishment of an urban reserve will serve to delineate

URBAN  
growth management



the limits of this growth. Neighbourhoods are currently being planned in Parsons Creek and Saline Creek Plateau, while additional New Neighbourhoods can potentially locate near the Horse and Hangingstone Rivers, west of Timberlea and Parsons Creek, and to the northeast of the City Centre across the Clearwater River.

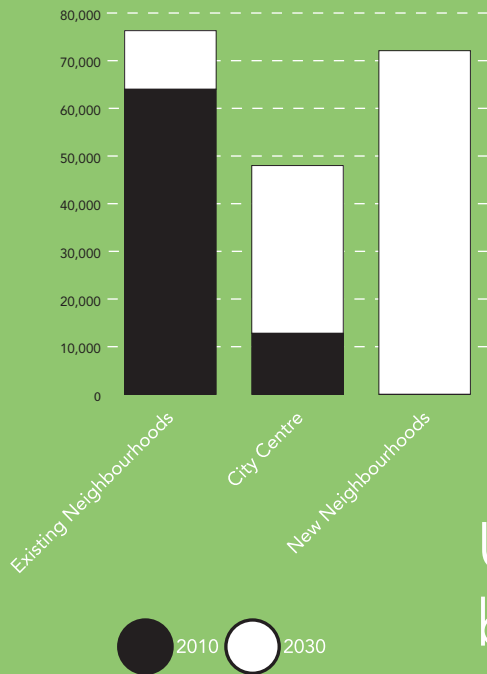
New transportation to the northeast of the City Centre, along with the potential benefit of expanded rail transportation, will provide opportunities for new Employment Lands to locate in closer proximity to

northern oil sands operations. More immediate demand for commercial and industrial land can be met by Employment Lands to the south of the urban area.

This strategy of directing the majority of projected population growth to Fort McMurray hinges upon the creation of an attractive urban area as a desirable place to live. Fort McMurray will offer complete, livable neighbourhoods and an active vibrant City Centre, both supported by effective and efficient transportation options and a full range of services and

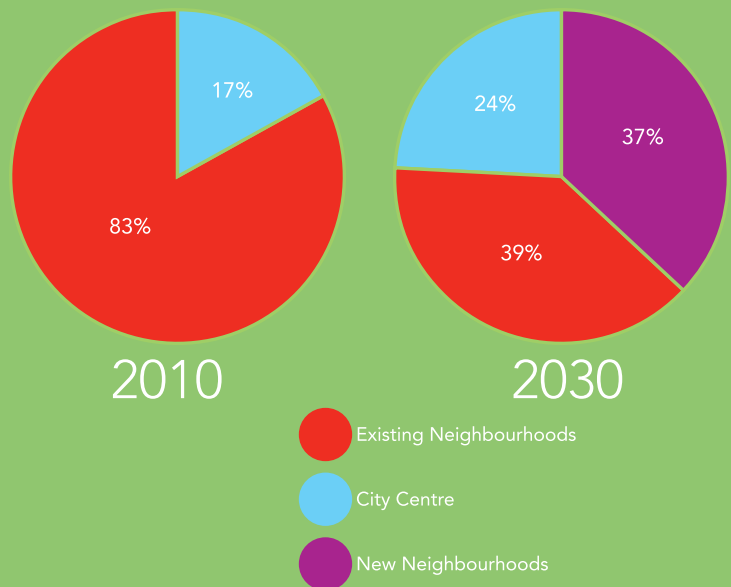
amenities. Through concentration and intensification, municipal service provision will become more sustainable.

# Urban Population and Growth Distribution (2010-2030)



Source: Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, 2011

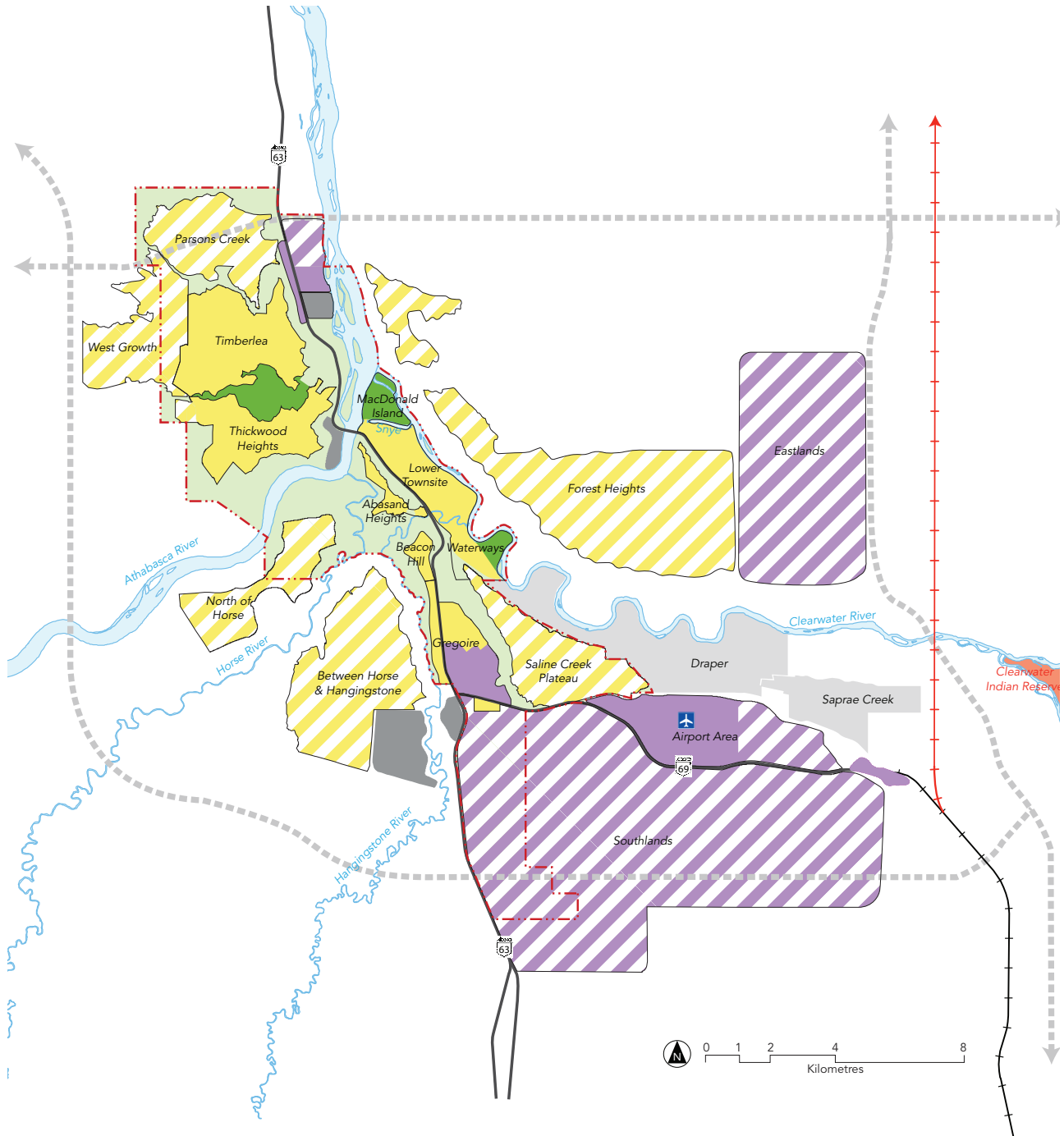
# Urban Population Proportion by Growth Area (2010-2030)



Source: Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, 2011

# Fort McMurray

## Generalized Land Development Concept



- |                           |                          |                             |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Established Neighbourhood | Municipal Infrastructure | Urban Service Area Boundary |
| New Neighbourhood         | Major Recreation         | Road                        |
| Employment Lands          | Open Space               | Potential Transportation    |
| New Employment Lands      | Rural Community          | Railway                     |
|                           | First Nation Reserve     | Potential Railway           |

## DIRECTION

## U.1

### Strategic Urban Development

The most critical component of the urban growth strategy is to reinvigorate the City Centre as the heart of Fort McMurray and the reflection of Wood Buffalo's identity. Revitalization of the City Centre begins with more retail and office space, a much higher residential population, as well as new amenities and entertainment options. Complementing these efforts will be the enhancement of Established Neighbourhoods where increased density in targeted areas will accommodate additional growth. In the immediate future, new growth will find its way into the New Neighbourhoods of Parsons Creek and Saline Creek Plateau with subsequent growth accommodated in New Neighbourhoods located within an urban reserve around Fort McMurray. Establishing an urban reserve ensures the availability of sufficient land to accommodate future growth in keeping with population projections and the need for added residential, commercial, institutional, and industrial development. A reserve allows for the orderly planning of future development and the timely disposal of land to guide the process.

#### U.1.1

### Establish City Centre as focal point

The City Centre consists of some of the urban area's most historic districts in Waterways, the Lower Townsite and MacDonald Island. This area offers significant opportunities for redevelopment and intensification. The Municipality will establish the Lower Townsite as the location of choice for office space, the regional centre for commercial and institutional development, and the area with the highest residential densities in the region. Modest growth will be accommodated in the historic community of Waterways, while MacDonald Island will be the region's premier recreation destination. The City Centre will be the hub for arts, entertainment, and culture, while also establishing Fort McMurray's highest standards for urban design.

#### U.1.2

### Protect and enhance Established Neighbourhoods

In Established Neighbourhoods, the existing neighbourhood structure will largely remain unchanged, with targeted increases in density taking place in selective areas. Intensification will be directed primarily along transit corridors, at transit nodes, and on vacant or underutilized land. Established neighbourhoods will provide an increasingly greater mix of uses including residential, commercial, retail and institutional.



An aerial photograph of a city, showing a mix of residential and commercial buildings, streets, and green spaces. A semi-transparent white box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing text. The text box has a dark circular icon with the text 'U.1.3' inside it. The background image shows a city with a mix of low-rise and mid-rise buildings, some parking lots, and a road with traffic. The overall tone is professional and informative.

### U.1.3

## Promote sustainable development in New Neighbourhoods

New Neighbourhoods will help accommodate population growth that cannot be accommodated in the existing built-up area. These areas will offer a range of housing choices, encouraging higher average densities than existing neighbourhoods, a mix of uses, and compact form. New Neighbourhoods will also offer a range of mobility choices and be developed in a manner consistent with transit-oriented development (TOD) principles, ensuring integration between land use and transportation. New Neighbourhoods will be identified based on proximity and access to the City Centre and major employment areas, servicing costs, geotechnical constraints, and opportunities for future expansion through contiguous development.



U.1.4

## Promote concentration of Employment Lands

Employment Lands refer to areas suitable for employment concentration. As Fort McMurray grows, the Municipality will establish these areas to accommodate major industrial developments, industrial and business parks, and commercial development, while large format retail will be considered where appropriate. Public sector and institutional uses as well as small scale retail development will be limited in these areas and instead be directed to locate in or near the City Centre or in neighbourhoods. Employment lands will promote the development of green technologies, eco-industrial parks, and be well serviced with transit. Opportunities exist to promote off-grid pilot projects that demonstrate energy efficiency and green building technologies.

U.1.5

## Plan for a hierarchy of retail and commercial centres

Retail and commercial centres provide local and regional goods and services, provide employment, and make available publicly accessible spaces. The Municipality will establish a full range of retail and commercial centres to ensure different types and levels of services are provided according to the needs of neighbourhoods. Through land use provisions and supportive transportation and transit, the Municipality will direct appropriate scale and type of retail and commercial development to the City Centre and to neighbourhoods, while supporting the redevelopment of established shopping centres and commercial strips. Large format retail development will be managed so as not to detract from efforts to revitalize the City Centre. Neighbourhood cores will be promoted to address the day-to-day retail needs of residents.

U.1.6

## Support expansion and economic development in Airport Area

As the region grows, air traffic in Fort McMurray will increase. The Municipality will support the expansion of the Fort McMurray Airport, encouraging its transformation from a premier regional airport into an international airport. The Airport Area will become a major employment centre, transportation hub, and centre for economic development. A variety of airside and non-airside uses will be developed in this area to leverage the Airport's ready access to transportation and services.

U.1.7

## Establish an urban reserve

The establishment of an urban reserve can bring greater certainty to the release and development of Crown land. The Municipality will work with the Province to designate and acquire land reserved for urban expansion. New Neighbourhoods and Employment Lands will be sequenced and developed based on market demand and the suitability of raw land to receive development. The Municipality will work to prohibit the development of incompatible industrial activities in and around this reserve that may compromise the suitability of the land for future urban development.

## DIRECTION

## U.2

### Supportive Urban Mobility Systems

As population increases, so too will the need for enhanced transportation options within the urban area. The provision of transit services connecting Fort McMurray's New and Established Neighbourhoods to the City Centre will be of primary importance. Active transportation, such as walking, cycling, cross-country skiing or in-line skating, will be encouraged in all neighbourhoods, which requires that designated streets and sidewalks be designed to accommodate a variety of transportation modes and that a complementary trail network be established. An integrated approach to mobility can help to make a variety of transportation alternatives attractive to users, lead to healthier lifestyles, and reduce the production of greenhouse gases.

#### U.2.1

### Focus on transit

Within the urban area, the Municipality will emphasize the provision of regular transit to connect Emerging and New Neighbourhoods to the City Centre as a destination, and as a connector, through rapid transit to employment in the north. In addition, the Municipality will investigate rapid transit connections between the airport and the City Centre. The Municipality will develop transit systems that are reliable, safe and convenient, as well as accessible throughout the year.

#### U.2.2

### Promote integration of urban transportation systems

As the population grows, it is desirable to have more and more people select alternative modes of transportation. The Municipality will promote alternative modes of transportation by emphasizing convenience, comfort, and efficiency. An integrated approach to transportation planning will ensure smooth interchanges between systems. Bicycle stands and lock-ups, bicycle accommodation on transit, sheltered transit nodes, and park-and-rides, among many other possibilities, will be considered. The Municipality will promote complete streets that provide equal opportunity for all modes of mobility.



## DIRECTION

## U.3

### Integrated Urban Green Space

Managing growth sustainably requires a balance between the accommodation of development needs and the provision of green space including parks, riverbanks, and natural areas. The geography of Fort McMurray, with its many rivers, streams and wet soils, makes possible an abundance of urban green space as development in these areas is challenging. As the population increases so too should a system of green space to accommodate the need for passive and active recreation and leisure. An interconnected network of trails that link nodes of activity can encourage an ongoing exploration of urban activities and participation in urban life.

#### U.3.1

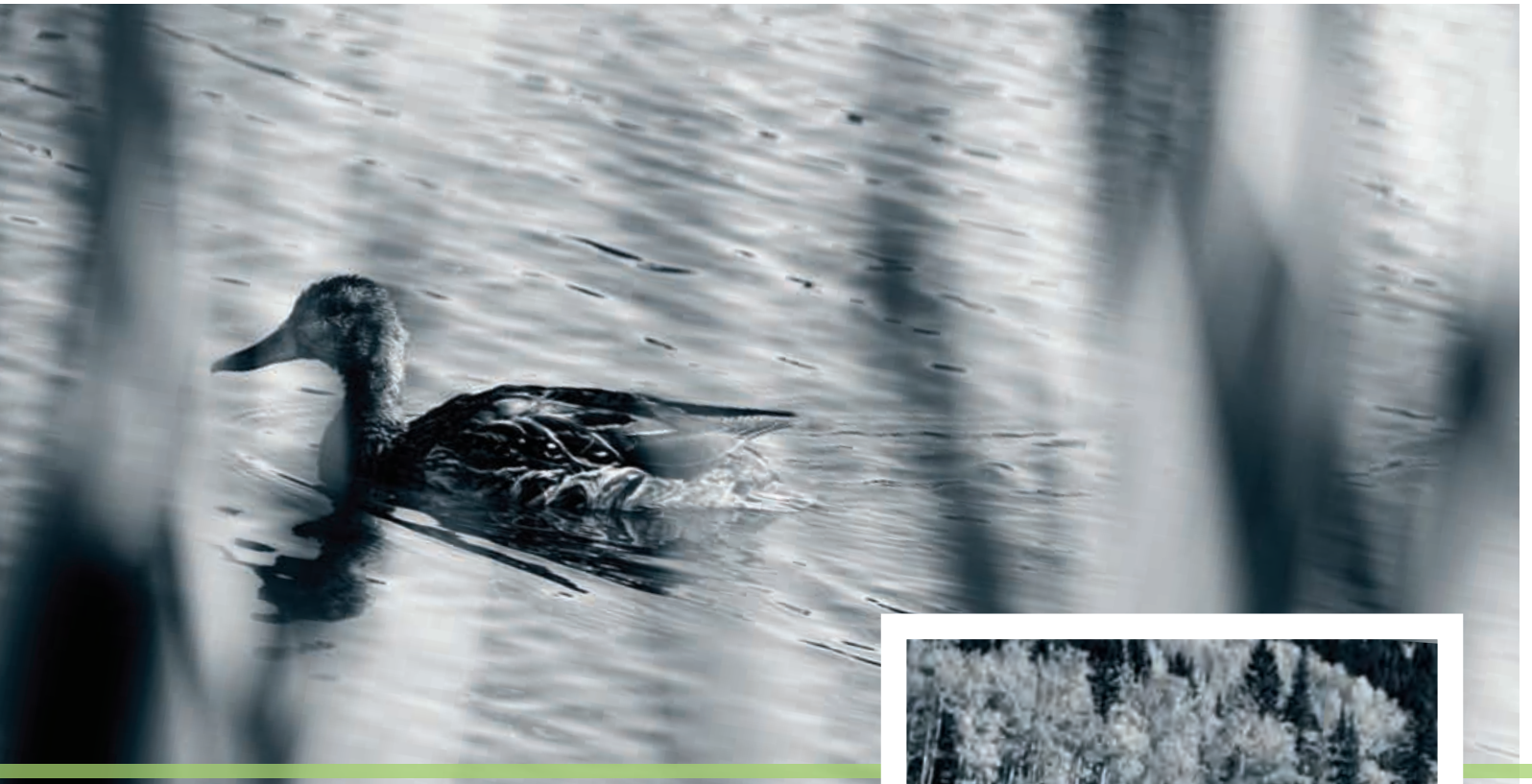
### Develop an interconnected and accessible green network

As the City Centre and surrounding neighbourhoods grow, the Municipality will develop connections between and within these neighbourhoods through a green network of trails connecting built-up areas, parks, and natural areas. The green network will accommodate a variety of active transportation options including walking, cycling, cross-country skiing and in-line skating. The green network will also connect residents and places of employment, encouraging its use as a means of getting to work.

#### U.3.2

### Develop a river trail system

The Clearwater and Athabasca Rivers provide scenic beauty to Fort McMurray. The Municipality will take advantage of this amenity by ensuring that riverbanks within the urban area are secured for public use and enjoyment and by building a river trail system along the banks promoting active living while connecting nodes of activity.



U.3.3

## Promote recreational development around the Clearwater River and Snye

The Clearwater River and Snye within the City Centre offer the urban area's best opportunities for recreation and leisure, both water- and non-water-based. The Municipality will promote development of new urban recreational facilities, parkland, and related recreation in these areas. Furthermore, the Municipality will promote MacDonald Island as a major gathering place for public activities and facilities related to sports, recreation, and leisure.





# RURAL COMMUNITY growth management

The strategies of this Plan accommodate population growth into rural communities in a manner that reflects the unique aspirations of each community. The Plan supports a population increase of approximately 7,500 into the region's nine rural communities by the year 2030. This would see the rural population rise from 4,200 to an estimate of 11,700, an increase of 179 percent over two decades.

The majority of the rural population growth will be directed towards the community of Anzac, which has been

identified as a Priority Growth Area. Over time, this will transform the community into a small urban centre and the region's secondary service centre. The intent is to work toward a threshold population of 10,000 (beyond the life of this Plan), which is deemed to be the size necessary to support a wide range of services capable of meeting the diverse needs of local residents and nearby communities.

The region's other rural communities, identified as Areas of Stability, may see more modest growth.

The amount of growth in these communities will be in keeping with the expansion capacity of the community, while accommodating incremental, natural growth that allows the next generation to live where they were born.

Improvements in rural communities will continue to be addressed on a community-by-community basis in accordance with their unique needs and aspirations. The delivery of municipal services and infrastructure in rural communities in a timely and responsive manner will be important

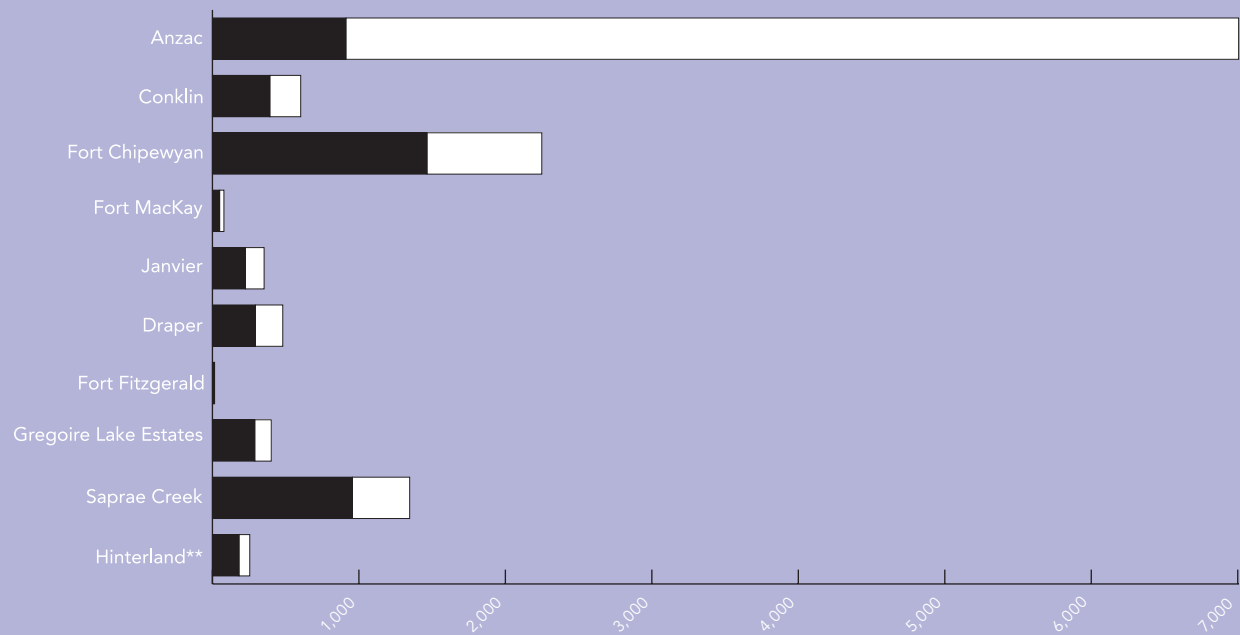
## RURAL COMMUNITY growth management



to accommodate anticipated growth and to enhance the quality of life of existing and future residents.

Several of the region's communities are adjacent to First Nations Reserves. Through the continued use of service agreements, the Municipality will coordinate the provision of services and infrastructure with adjacent First Nations communities to ensure that land use, infrastructure, and servicing needs are met in an efficient and reasonable manner and are complementary to the plans of adjacent communities.

# Rural Population and Growth Estimates\*



Source: Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, 2000-2011.

\* Does not include on-reserve populations or projections.

\*\* Hinterland refers to areas outside of the Urban Service Area and rural communities and also excludes work camp populations.





## DIRECTION

## C.1

### Transformative Growth in Anzac

The majority of the rural population growth will be directed toward the community of Anzac, situated on the eastern shore of Willow Lake, approximately 45 kilometres south of Fort McMurray. An estimated 3,000 jobs could be created in the vicinity of this community over the next 20 years as a result of its proximity to Steam Assisted Gravity Drainage (SAGD) operations. With sufficient land, Anzac is projected to grow to 6,000 to 8,000 residents with a corresponding increase in municipal services. Locating the majority of the operational workforce and their families in Anzac will better provide the population threshold required for improved infrastructure, services, and amenities necessary for sustainable living. The projected population growth will transform Anzac into a more complete community offering a range of housing choices, commercial and institutional services, and a vibrant core. With the timely provision of adequate physical and social infrastructure, Anzac will become the region's secondary service centre capable of offering important services to Janvier and Conklin.

#### C.1.1

### Accommodate economic and population growth in Anzac

For Anzac to evolve into the region's secondary service centre, diverse land uses will need to be met. The Municipality will support the provision of a range of residential options and housing choices to meet a variety of needs. Higher residential density will be encouraged to locate in close proximity to the community core. Commercial, industrial, and institutional uses will be supported in locations that promote the creation of a healthy community, support the efficient use of infrastructure, minimize land use conflicts, and balance development with the protection and preservation of the natural environment.

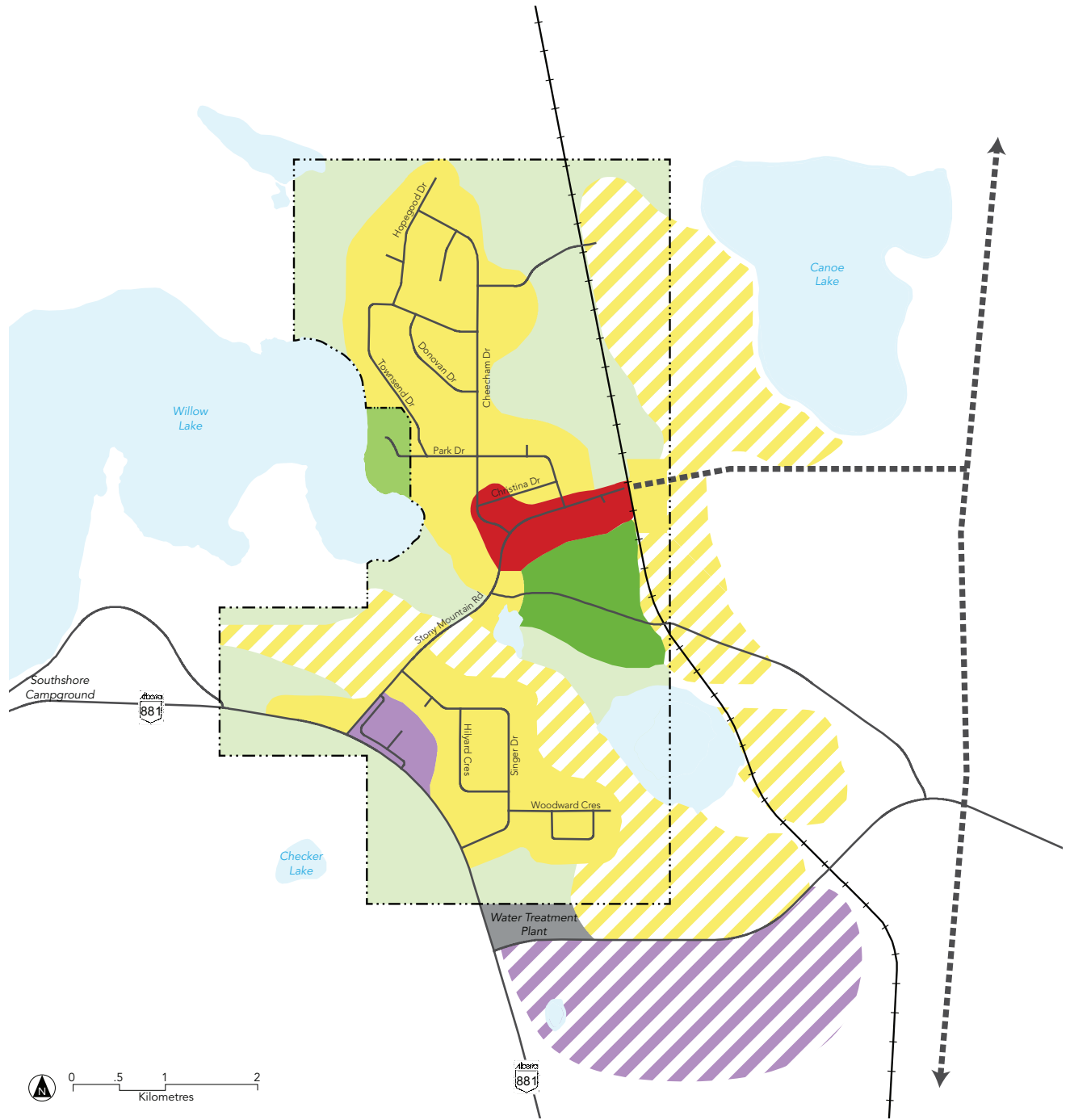
#### C.1.2

### Establish a vibrant Community Core

As Anzac grows, the development of a strong central core will help strengthen its identity. The Municipality will support mixed-use development, including residential, commercial, and institutional uses at a central location along Stony Mountain Road to create a vibrant Community Core. Higher residential densities will be encouraged in close proximity to the Community Core. Connecting the eastern end of Stony Mountain Road into a new north/south corridor to the east of the community will be encouraged and will serve to enhance the development of the Community Core.

# Anzac

Generalized Land Development Concept



- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:10px; background-color:red; border:1px solid black;"></span> Community Core  | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:10px; background-color:gray; border:1px solid black;"></span> Municipal Infrastructure | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:10px; border:1px dashed black;"></span> Community Boundary   |
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:10px; background-color:yellow; border:1px solid black;"></span> Established Neighbourhood  | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:10px; background-color:green; border:1px solid black;"></span> Major Recreation        | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:10px; border-bottom:1px solid black;"></span> Road   |
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:10px; background: repeating-linear-gradient(45deg, transparent, transparent 2px, yellow 2px, yellow 4px); border:1px solid black;"></span> New Neighbourhood     | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:10px; background-color:lightgreen; border:1px solid black;"></span> Provincial Park    | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:10px; border-bottom:1px dashed black;"></span> Potential Transportation  |
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:10px; background-color:purple; border:1px solid black;"></span> Employment Lands   | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:10px; background-color:lightgreen; border:1px solid black;"></span> Open Space         | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:10px; border-bottom:1px solid black; position: relative; top: -2px;"><span style="position: absolute; top: -5px; left: 5px;">+</span></span> Railway |
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:10px; background: repeating-linear-gradient(-45deg, transparent, transparent 2px, purple 2px, purple 4px); border:1px solid black;"></span> New Employment Lands |  |  |

## DIRECTION

## C.2

### Balanced Growth in Rural Communities

The general strategy for the communities of Conklin, Janvier, Fort MacKay and Fort Chipewyan is to accommodate modest population growth while promoting a variety of land uses. Modest population growth in these communities is interpreted to be in line with anticipated natural growth. This would allow the next generation to remain within the community. This growth would be accommodated while encouraging the evolution of these communities over time into more complete communities capable of offering residents opportunities to work, live, play, and shop, in accordance with their daily needs. This requires a range of uses including multiple housing options, public institutions, commercial uses, local services, and recreational facilities within close proximity. Such communities also have a healthy, identifiable core and may accommodate a number of convenient mobility options.

#### C.2.1

### Accommodate balanced growth in Conklin

Conklin is located 160 kilometres southeast of Fort McMurray at the confluence of Christina Lake and the Jackfish River. Close proximity to present and future SAGD operations will create growth pressures on the community that will be alleviated through the establishment of a consolidated work camp in the area. Despite the increasing demands for development, the Municipality will support modest growth in Conklin. The existing development pattern of single family residential will be respected as limited new residential areas are added. A range of housing choices will be encouraged near the Community Core to satisfy the needs of all ages and income levels. Highway commercial and light industrial uses will be encouraged to the west of Highway 881 while neighbourhood commercial uses will be supported in the Community Core to create opportunities for local business and neighbourhood services. Future development in Conklin will ensure protection of water sources and areas deemed significant to the community such as Christina Lake, the Jackfish River, and Wassassi Park. Development along watercourses will be restricted.

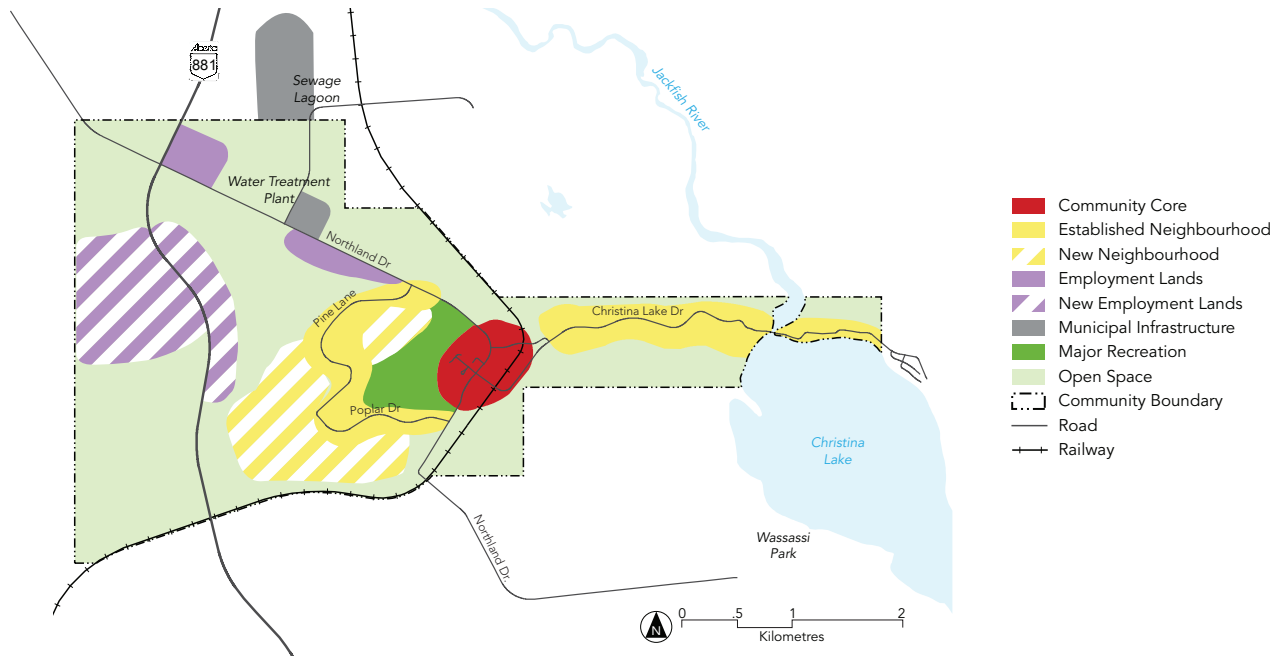
#### C.2.2

### Accommodate balanced growth in Janvier

The community of Janvier is located approximately 100 kilometres southeast of Fort McMurray, adjacent to the Chipewyan Prairie Dene First Nation. The community will continue to experience modest growth. The Municipality will support incremental increases in residential development recognizing that the existing single family residential development pattern will, for the most part, remain the pattern for new development. New industrial and commercial development consistent with the desires of the community will be encouraged to facilitate opportunities for local economic development. The Municipality will also encourage the protection and preservation of the natural environment and areas deemed to be significant to the community.

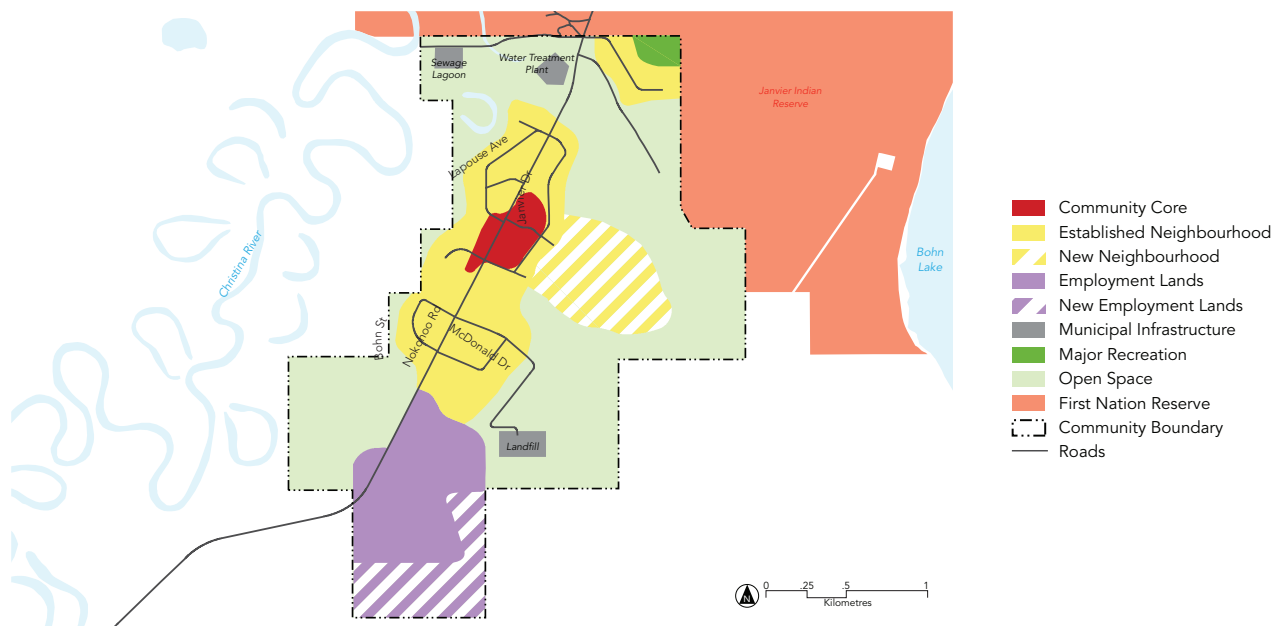
# Conklin

## Generalized Land Development Concept



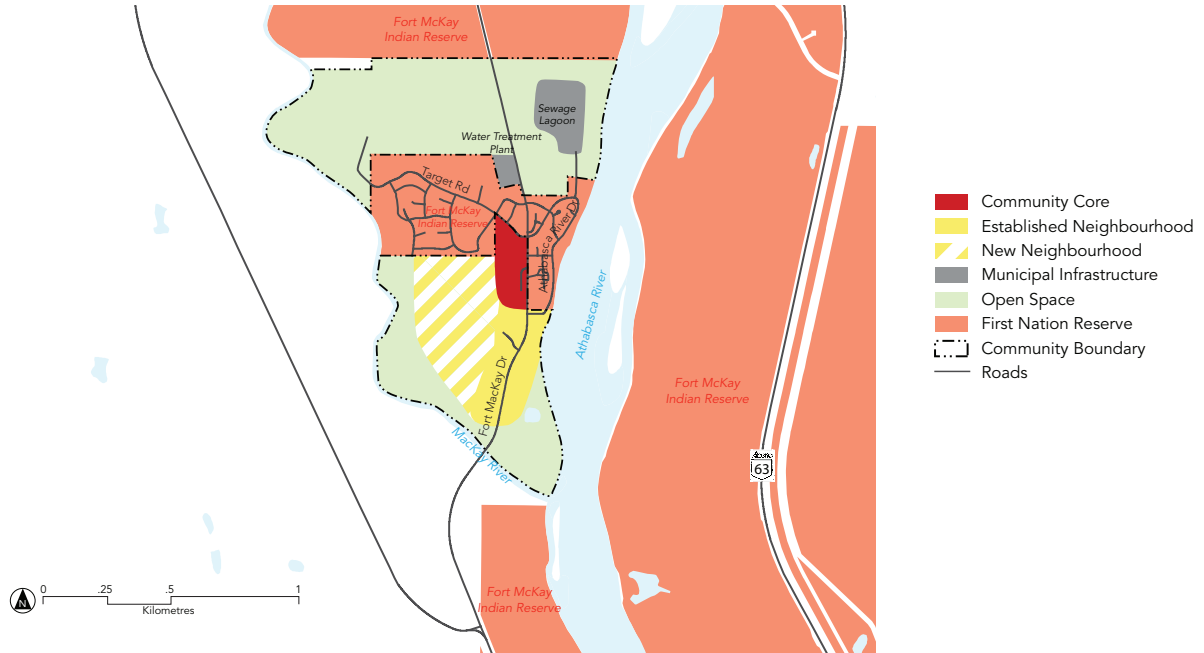
# Janvier

## Generalized Land Development Concept



# Fort MacKay

## Generalized Land Development Concept



### C.2.3

## Accommodate balanced growth in Fort MacKay

Located at the confluence of the Athabasca and Mackay Rivers, Fort MacKay is a community comprised of First Nations and Métis people and lies adjacent to the Fort McKay Indian Reserve. The community is in close proximity to mining operations in the north, which creates opportunities for employment and may increase the need for additional housing. The Municipality will support modest growth on land leased by the Fort MacKay Métis to provide for some residential development together with complementary commercial and institutional uses that can assist in the creation of a defined Community Core. Although large lots with single detached housing will remain the primary residential form, a wider range of housing forms and densities will be encouraged to satisfy the needs of all age and income groups. The demand for industrial lands is best accommodated outside the community in locations that allow for greater accessibility while minimizing land use conflicts.

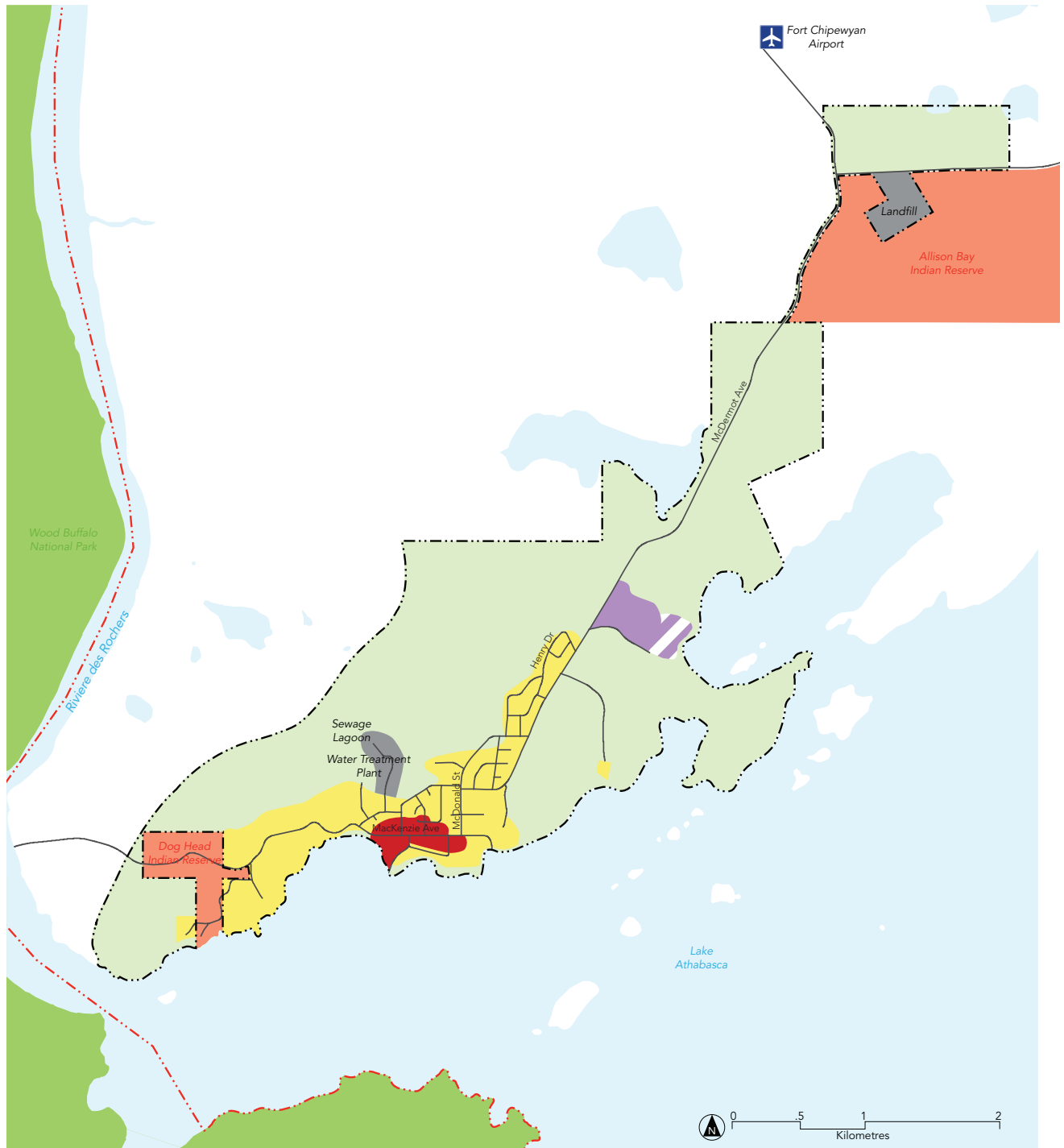
### C.2.4

## Accommodate balanced growth in Fort Chipewyan

The community of Fort Chipewyan, located on the western shores of Lake Athabasca, is Wood Buffalo's most historic community and the oldest continual settlement in Alberta. Its population is expected to increase modestly over the next two decades. The Municipality will support the provision of a range of housing in the existing community and in new residential areas in order to satisfy the needs of residents of all ages and income levels. Areas to be identified for future development will be encouraged to concentrate near the Community Core and infill development will be encouraged to make efficient use of underutilized lands both in the Community Core and surrounding areas. Development in areas identified as significant to the community or environmentally sensitive areas will be limited to ensure these areas remain protected. Lakefront areas will be protected and preserved and made accessible to all. Local food production will be encouraged to ensure a more self-sustaining community.

# Fort Chipewyan

## Generalized Land Development Concept



- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: red; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Community Core   | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: grey; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Municipal Infrastructure | <span style="display: inline-block; border-top: 1px dashed black; border-bottom: 1px dashed black; width: 15px;"></span> Community Boundary     |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: yellow; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Established Neighbourhood   | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: lightgreen; border: 1px solid black;"></span> National Park      | <span style="display: inline-block; border-top: 1px dotted black; border-bottom: 1px dotted black; width: 15px;"></span> Municipal Boundary     |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: purple; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Employment Lands  | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: lightgreen; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Open Space         | <span style="display: inline-block; border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 15px;"></span> Roads   |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: purple; border: 1px solid black; border-image: linear-gradient(to top right, transparent 49%, black 49%, black 51%, transparent 51%) 1;"></span> New Employment Lands |   | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: orange; border: 1px solid black;"></span> First Nation Reserve |

## DIRECTION C.3

### Protected Character of Residential Communities

There are communities in the region that are not intended to develop into communities that offer a wide range of housing options, land uses, or services. These communities, including Draper, Sapræe Creek, Gregoire Lake Estates, and Fort Fitzgerald are almost entirely residential in nature with a specific form of development and a consistent, prevailing density. These communities will be protected from development that would adversely impact their existing character. Growth will be accommodated only to the extent of capacity, that is, where there is the ability to extend the existing pattern of development within the boundaries of the community.

#### C.3.1

### Preserve residential character of Draper

Draper is a small community adjacent to Fort McMurray composed primarily of residential units on large acreages. The Municipality will require that development be consistent with the existing pattern of acreage on large lots in flood risk areas while avoiding the fragmentation of lands suitable for agricultural uses. Country residential styled development may be allowed in areas that are considered environmentally sound. Emphasis will be placed on protecting and preserving the natural environment, enhancing recreational opportunities, and providing for local economic development.

#### C.3.2

### Preserve residential character of Sapræe Creek

Sapræe Creek is a residential community built on the crest of the Clearwater River Valley, approximately 25 kilometres southeast of Fort McMurray. Physical expansion of this community is limited. The Municipality will support the modest expansion of Sapræe Creek to the south and east in a form consistent with prevailing densities. The main focus will be to encourage development that is in harmony with the natural setting, creating a pedestrian-friendly environment, and respecting and enhancing the unique character of the community.



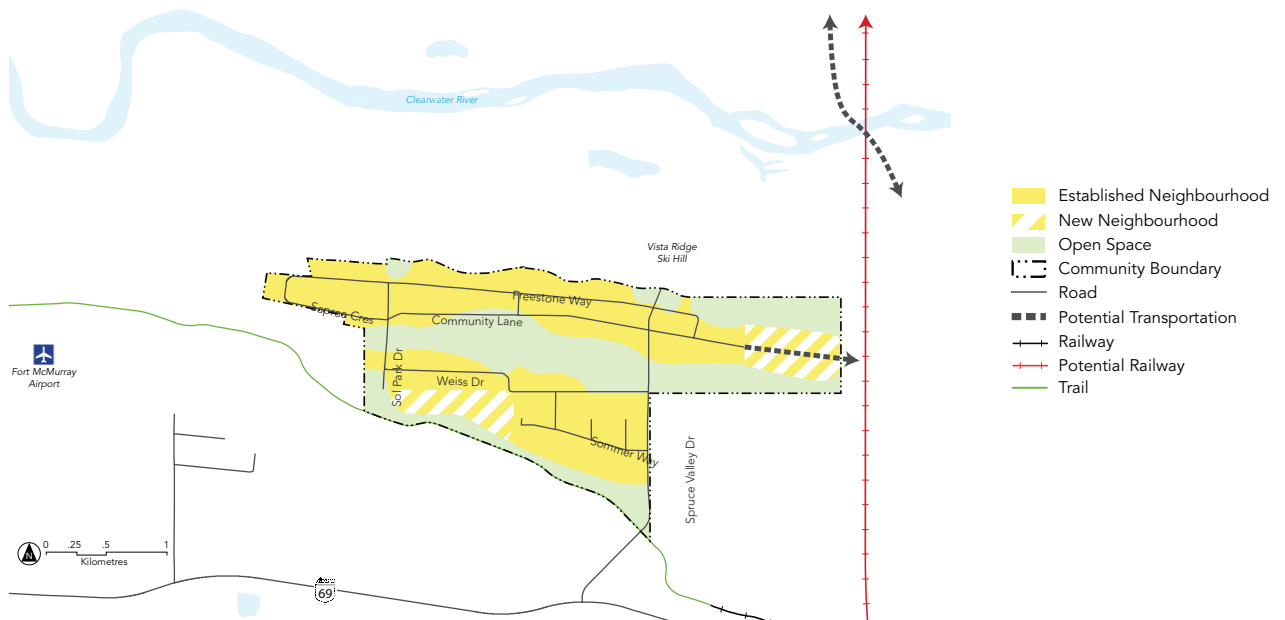
# Draper

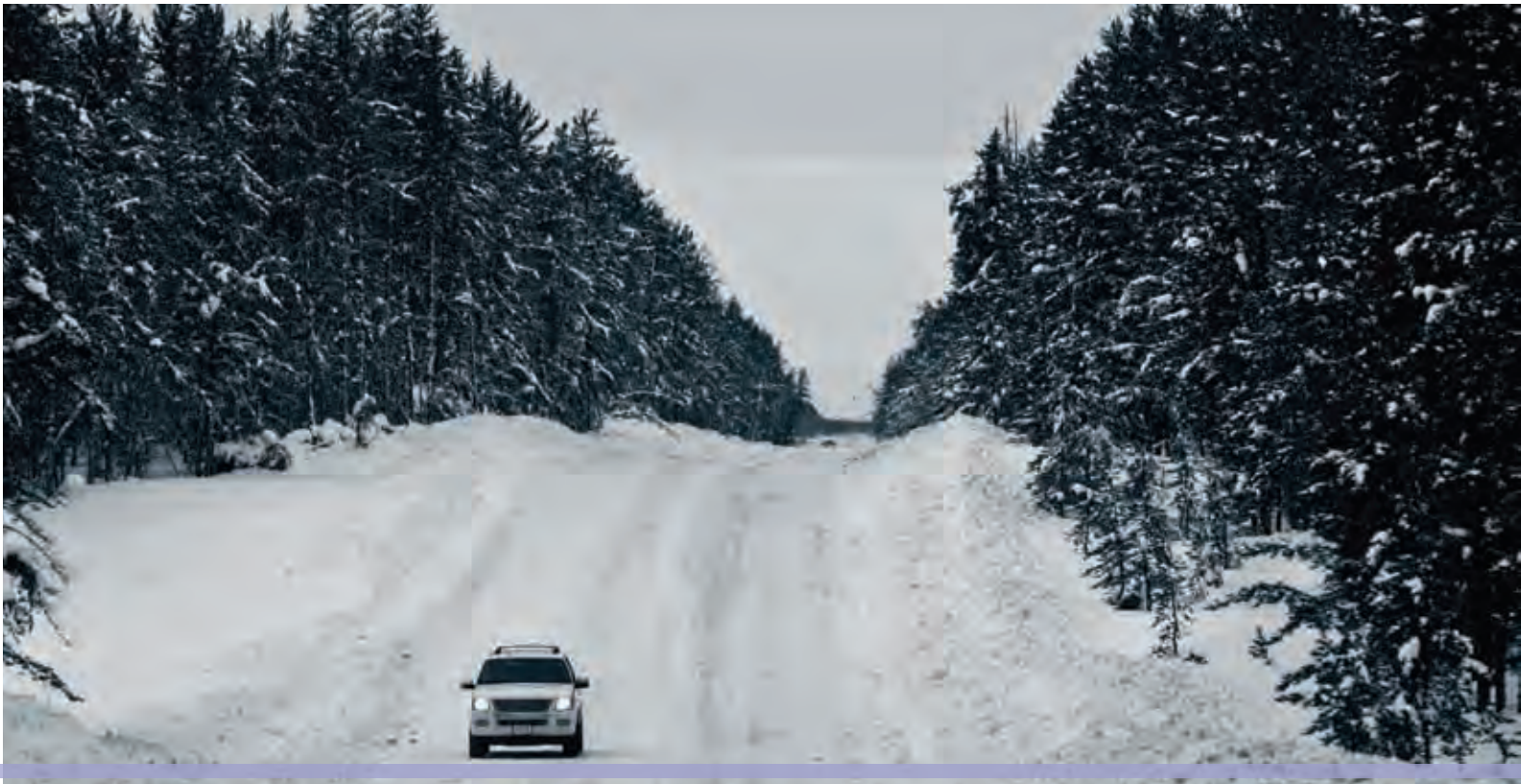
## Generalized Land Development Concept



# Saprae Creek

## Generalized Land Development Concept





### C.3.3

## Preserve residential character of Gregoire Lake Estates

Gregoire Lake Estates is a community adjacent to Gregoire Lake Provincial Park and Willow Lake, approximately 32 kilometres south of Fort McMurray. Mainly residential, the community is fully built out with major constraints to physical expansion. The Municipality will protect the existing pattern of development characterized by single family housing. No physical expansion of the community will be accommodated. Community access to Willow Lake will be enhanced while ensuring minimal impact on the lake environment and other natural features.

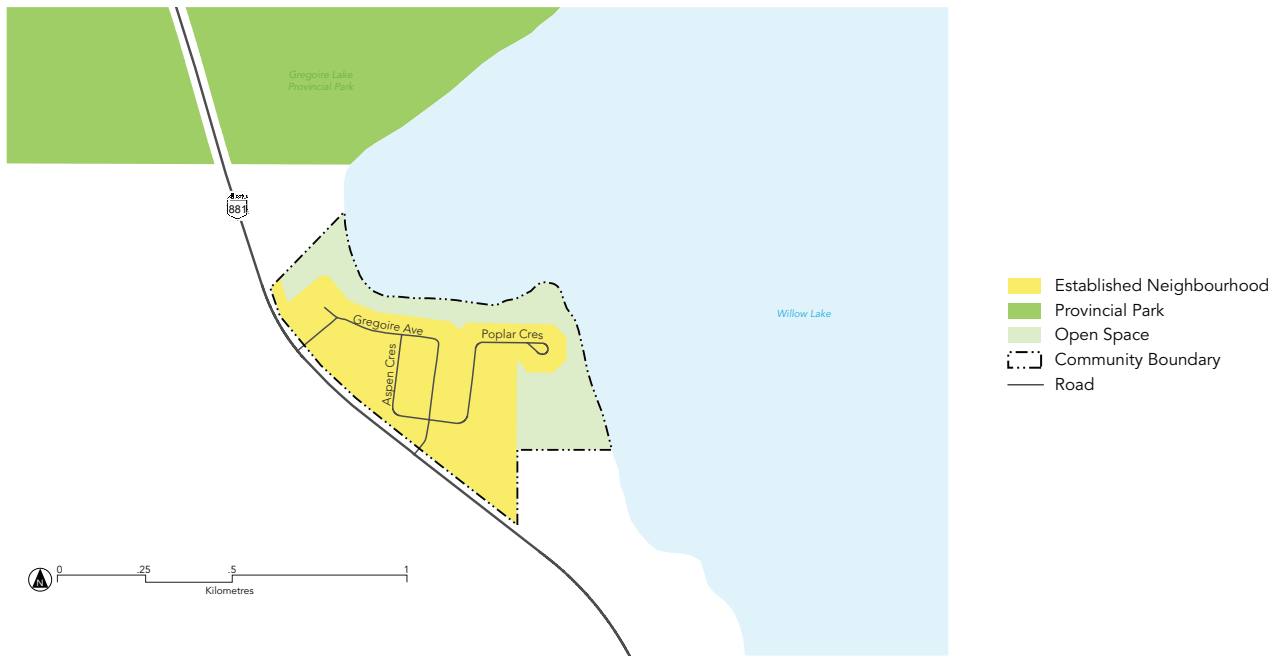
### C.3.4

## Preserve residential character of Fort Fitzgerald

Fort Fitzgerald is the most northern community in the region and is located on the border of Alberta and the Northwest Territories and adjacent to the Smith's Landing First Nation. The nearest centre for Fort Fitzgerald is Fort Smith in the Northwest Territories, located 25 kilometres to the north. The community of Fort Fitzgerald has a very small residential population and is not expected to increase significantly beyond its current population. The Municipality will support modest increases in population in line with the existing pattern of residential development.

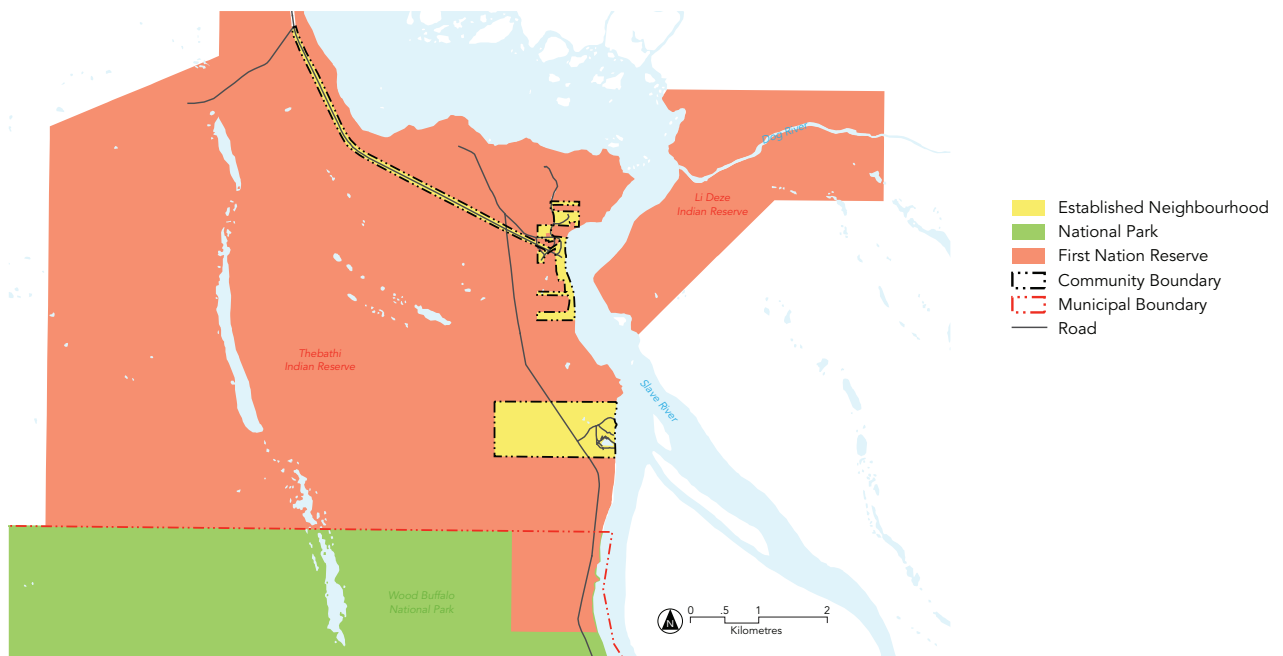
# Gregoire Lake Estates

Generalized Land Development Concept



# Fort Fitzgerald

Generalized Land Development Concept





# building SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

A commitment to sustainability hinges upon the need to build attractive, healthy places to live, work, and enjoy across the region. Key considerations include developing urban and rural areas that are more community and neighbourhood centred, are transit and pedestrian oriented, and have access to a greater mix of housing, commercial and retail uses. It also means respecting our natural environment, preserving open space, and offering more recreational amenities.

Ultimately, sustainable communities in Wood Buffalo will come about through responsible development, environmental stewardship, economic resilience, a sense of home and belonging, a vibrant culture, and working together.



CANADA



## GOAL 1 RESPONSIBLE development

- 1.1 Sufficient Land for Urban and Rural Development
- 1.2 Comprehensive Development Practices
- 1.3 Responsible Investment in Municipal Infrastructure
- 1.4 Reduced Risk to Environmental Hazards

RESPONSIBLE  
development



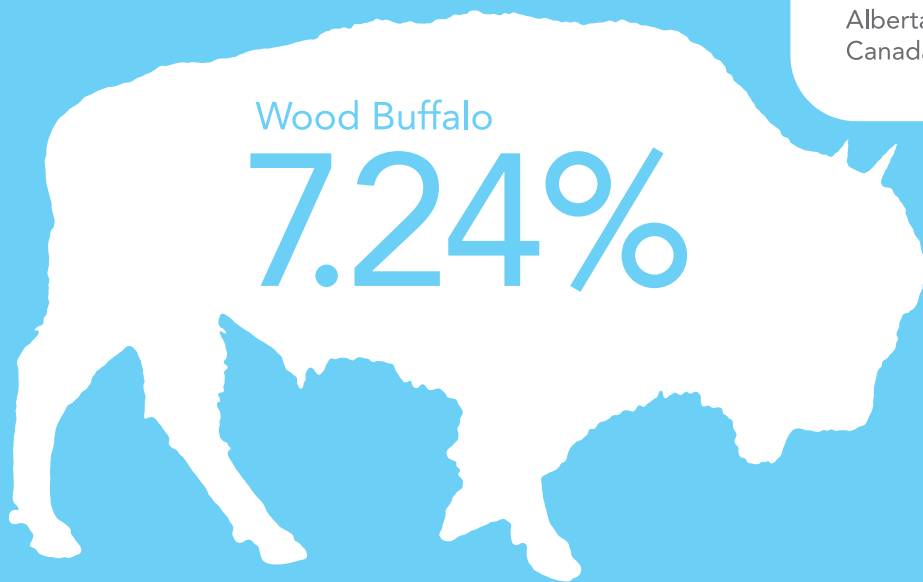
Over the next two decades, the population of the region is projected to more than double. Accommodating such significant growth within one generation of time requires careful planning and management of both land and natural resources. The region's prosperity depends on the ability to anticipate and guide growth in a manner that allows for long-term sustainable development.

The vast majority of land in the region is owned by the Crown. While the region continues to experience growth rates considerably higher than provincial and national averages, collaboration with the Province for the timely transfer of land will be an important part of stimulating ongoing regional development. Since 2004, there has been at least 1,000 development permit applications processed annually throughout the region, with more than 2,500 processed in 2007 alone.

A commitment to develop responsibly means integrating land use, transportation, and the provision of infrastructure while minimizing the impact of development on the natural environment. Making efficient use of land and shifting towards transit-oriented development will provide for complete and livable communities. It will also lower long-term costs on fuel and infrastructure maintenance and reduce the overall carbon footprint of the built environment. A well-functioning and highly efficient regional transportation system is the key to allowing for the timely movement of people and goods to, from, and within the region.

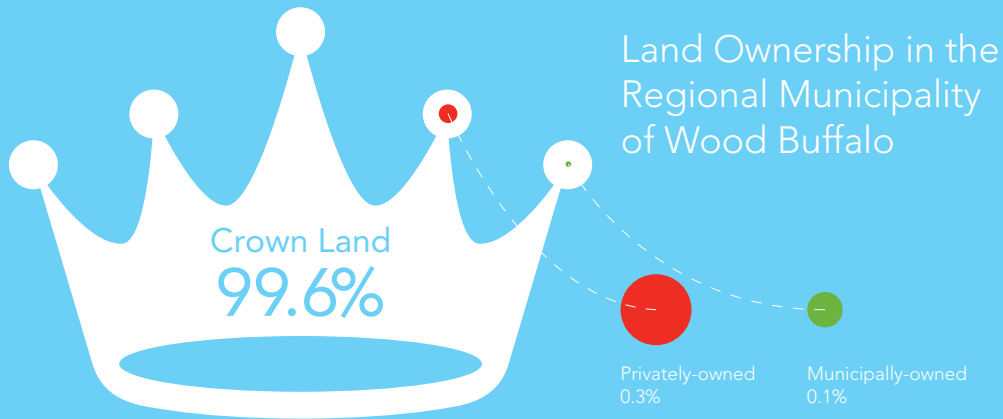
# Annual Growth Rate (10 Year Average)

Calgary	2.60%
Edmonton*	1.90%
Red Deer	3.21%
Lethbridge*	2.31%
Alberta	2.10%
Canada	1.10%



Sources: Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo; City of Edmonton Historical Population, 2008 Edmonton Municipal Census, 2009; City of Red Deer Municipal Census, 2000, 2010; City of Lethbridge Municipal Census, 1999, 2009; Alberta Municipal Affairs, 2000, 2010; Statistics Canada, 2000, 2010.  
\* Lethbridge and Edmonton's average annual growth rate is based on the years 1999-2009.

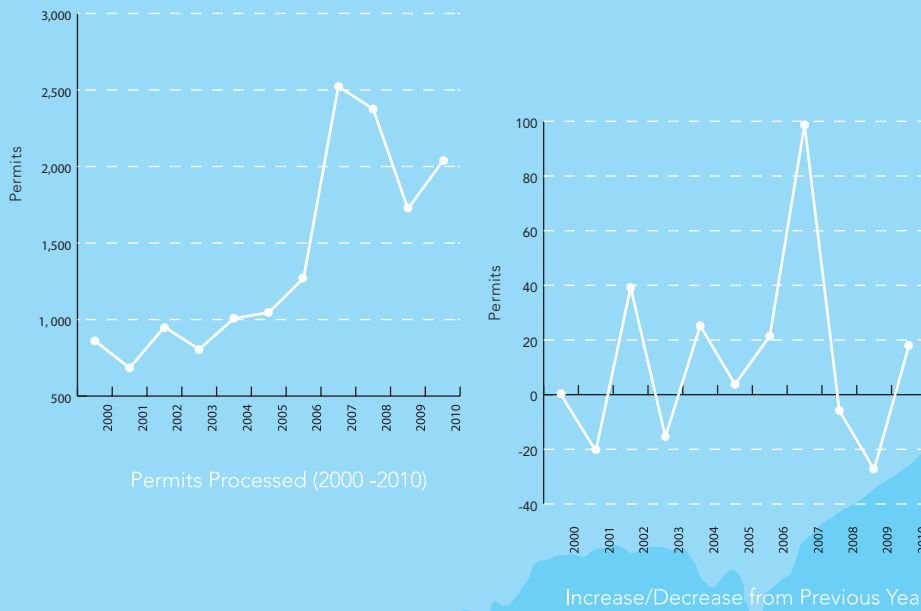




Source: Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, 2011

Note: There are a number of First Nations Reserves surrounded by the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, but these are outside of municipal jurisdiction.

## Annual Number of Development Permit Applications Processed (2000 -2010)



Source: Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, 2011.

Note: Data consists of commercial, home business/occupation, industrial, institutional, recreational, residential, and sign development permits.

## DIRECTION 1.1

### Sufficient Land for Urban and Rural Development

Wood Buffalo has among the most expensive residential, commercial, and industrial land prices in Canada. Prices have escalated due to rapid growth and a limited supply of land. Ensuring that the region's communities have land to accommodate anticipated growth will help stabilize land value and housing costs, promote investment, and stimulate regional economic development. The vast majority of land in the region is Crown land under provincial administration. As a result, land for future growth will require negotiations with the Province for the timely release of land for development and for the proper consideration of leased lands for oil exploration. The Municipality can be better prepared to address the pressures of growth in the region if it assumes control of an adequate supply of land and ensures the timely disposal of that land as market demand requires for residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional development.

#### 1.1.1

#### Make efficient use of available land

Land available for development will be optimized in a manner that promotes sustainability. The highest priority for intensified land use and higher densities will be Fort McMurray's City Centre. Where appropriate, the Municipality will also promote higher densities in new communities and neighbourhoods and through infill and redevelopment of existing communities and neighbourhoods. The rehabilitation and redevelopment of brownfield sites or derelict lands will be made a priority to further minimize the need for greenfield development. New development in the region that is contiguous to existing built-up areas can help make communities compact and ensure new infrastructure is provided efficiently.

#### 1.1.2

#### Establish development reserves

Rapid economic and population growth has resulted in an accelerated need for land. To develop land in a timely fashion, the Municipality will take measures to secure land in advance by working with the Province to identify and acquire sufficient land to comprise development reserves for future residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional development. The highest priority is the establishment of an urban reserve for Fort McMurray with a similar initiative required to accommodate growth in Anzac.



1.1.3

## Make land available for development

To manage growth effectively and stimulate development and investment, the Municipality will dispose of land in a timely manner. The Municipality will strive to make land available to private interests in advance of when it is required and in coordination with the provision of major infrastructure and transportation.



## DIRECTION 1.2

### Comprehensive Development Practices

The Municipality is committed to fostering an environment that is conducive to economic development and urban growth. This requires a holistic approach, one that balances these interests with a strong commitment to best practices in sustainability, and ensures that social and environmental goals are not compromised. This includes policies and procedures that facilitate processes for development, while ensuring that Municipal requirements and expectations for a healthy, livable region are met. Sustainable transportation and infrastructure planning are of critical importance, as they set the stage for community building in ways that are cost effective and financially responsible.

#### 1.2.1

#### Lead with integrated, comprehensive planning

A wide range of planning tools can be used when and where appropriate to help guide orderly and sustainable development that balances the need for residential, recreational, commercial, institutional, and industrial development. The Municipality will prepare comprehensive, integrated plans to guide development and balance the need for statutory plans such as Area Structure Plans and Area Redevelopment Plans, and non-statutory plans such as Transportation and Infrastructure Master Plans. It will also undertake specific focused plans or studies where appropriate. In support of these plans, the Land Use Bylaw will provide more detailed direction for specific development projects.

#### 1.2.2

#### Coordinate land development with transportation and infrastructure

Plans for new and existing growth areas must be coordinated with strategic transportation and infrastructure planning. The development and implementation of infrastructure plans for water, sanitary, stormwater, transportation, transit, parks, and solid waste infrastructure will help ensure long-term sustainable development that meets current needs while having the ability to accommodate changes in land use over time. New developments will be planned in a manner that makes optimal use of existing infrastructure capacity or is based on an economical and logical extension of infrastructure. Urban and regional transportation and infrastructure will be integrated while considering life cycle operational costs.



1.2.3

### Ensure the provision of public lands

Provincial legislation requires a land dedication to ensure the provision of public areas or green space within new developments. Alternatively, cash can be provided in lieu of land. To ensure access to green space and opportunities for recreational development, the Municipality will minimize the cash-in-lieu option, placing greater emphasis on maximizing the provision of land accessible for public use within new development areas through municipal, school or municipal, and school reserves. Furthermore, the Municipality will coordinate with local school boards to establish reserve lands for schools in new neighbourhoods to ensure school reserves address proper site considerations and accessibility needs.



## DIRECTION 1.3

### Responsible Investment in Municipal Infrastructure

The provision of infrastructure is fundamental to the building of communities and the health and well-being of residents. The Municipality is responsible for the provision and maintenance of public infrastructure and services including water supply, sanitation services, stormwater management, and public utilities (through franchise agreements). As communities grow, so too will the need for services in accordance with population thresholds. A coordinated approach to the delivery of these services and infrastructure can reduce overhead and costs, eliminate jurisdictional conflicts, and increase the level of service to residents.

#### 1.3.1

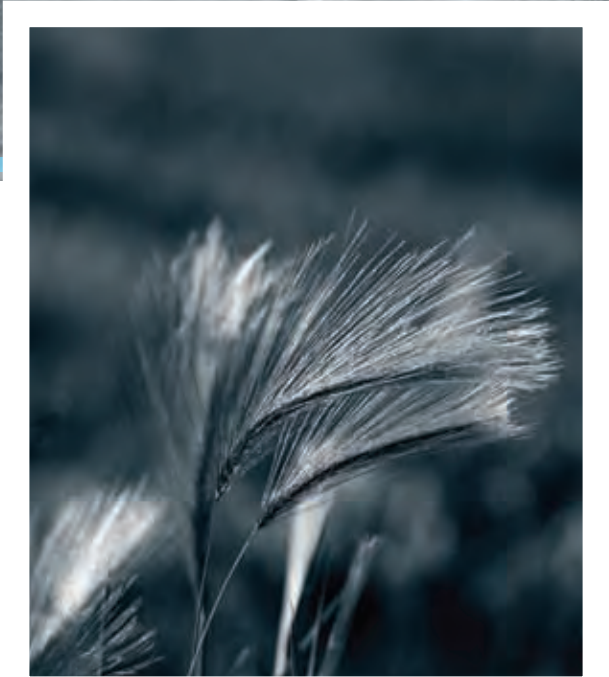
#### Provide safe, reliable water infrastructure

Access to safe, reliable drinking water and reliable wastewater systems is critical to the health and well-being of residents. The strategic planning and timely construction of water infrastructure is required not only to advance new development areas, but also to serve the needs of industrial activities. The Municipality will meet or surpass all federal and provincial guidelines and standards in the treatment of potable water and provision of wastewater services. Determining priorities and appropriate levels of services offered to communities and new developments will be based on population and density. Requirements for industrial activity and full life cycle costing will also be considered. The Municipality will work with industry and other stakeholders to establish efficient water infrastructure services that meet the needs of the region.

#### 1.3.2

#### Manage surface drainage

The proper management of land drainage can minimize the impact rain, storms, and snow melt may have on people, development areas, and the environment. Consideration of grading and drainage is an important part of the development review process to prevent flood, erosion, and sedimentation damage to adjacent properties. The Municipality will promote the development of stormwater management systems that adhere to best practices, including principles of Low Impact Development. Parks and open space strategies will consider the incorporation of retention ponds as recreational amenities in new developments.



1.3.3

### Coordinate the delivery of franchised utilities

The Municipality is responsible for coordinating the provision of a number of shallow utilities through franchise agreements, including gas, electrical power, telephone, and cable. The Municipality will regularly review and update these agreements, work with utility companies, and provide line assignments for combined utility provision in an effort to ensure safe and efficient delivery of these services.

# DIRECTION

# 1.4

## Reduced Risk to Environmental Hazards

All of the region’s communities are surrounded by large tracts of wilderness. As a result, the safety of residents from natural hazards, such as floods and wildfire, is a critical concern of the Municipality. The risks from these hazards can be mitigated and managed through careful planning, design, and development. This includes ensuring that there is safe access not only for residents, but also for personnel responding to emergency situations. One key concern is the proximity and impacts of industrial land uses on residential areas. These present unique circumstances, and the Municipality needs to be a key player in identifying how these land uses will be managed.

### 1.4.1

#### Regulate incompatible land uses near human settlements

The region is home to many types of industrial developments that are deemed to be incompatible with residential development. These developments include facilities related to oil sands operations and sour gas facilities. Through proactive land use planning and consideration of provincial regulatory guidelines, these facilities will be located away from current and future residential development. Conversely, the Municipality will strive to minimize the encroachment of residential development on non-compatible industrial development. The Municipality will work to prevent the development of incompatible industrial operations inside or in close proximity to the region’s communities.

### 1.4.2

#### Ensure emergency preparedness and management

Emergency preparedness and management is critical to the safety and well-being of residents as well as the protection of property in the event of flooding, wildfires, severe weather, industrial accidents, or other disasters. Through urban, rural, and regional emergency preparedness planning, the Municipality will be better prepared for a prompt and coordinated response to emergencies. Where feasible, establishing a minimum of two access routes in rural communities, and urban neighbourhoods not only improves mobility for residents, but also provides alternate routes in the case of an evacuation.



### 1.4.3

## Mitigate flood hazards

Some settlement areas in the region fall within a flood hazard zone, posing a risk to residents and property. The Municipality and Province have identified flood prone areas and, where appropriate, these lands will be set aside as Environmental Reserve or protected through flood abatement strategies. While restrictions can be applied regarding the development of new settlement areas and other forms of development in flood hazard zones, innovative mitigation solutions for existing development may allow for redevelopment in specific areas.

### 1.4.4

## Mitigate fire hazards

Effective fire prevention for wildfires and structural fires can safeguard lives and property. To protect against wildfires that are common in the region, the Municipality will promote FireSmart communities designed in accordance with wildfire prevention best practices. It will also ensure that work camps are built in compliance with FireSmart and emergency management guidelines. Wildfire risks and fire service access are primary considerations in decisions regarding land use. Fire mitigation information will be provided to residents and visitors in the region.

### 1.4.5

## Mitigate geotechnical hazards

Steep slopes, unstable soils, wetlands, and other natural features present challenges for all types of development that, if inappropriately addressed, can lead to hazards such as landslides and soil erosion. Appropriate land uses and setbacks will be established and legislative entitlements of environmental reserve will be utilized to minimize potential negative impacts of geotechnical hazards.

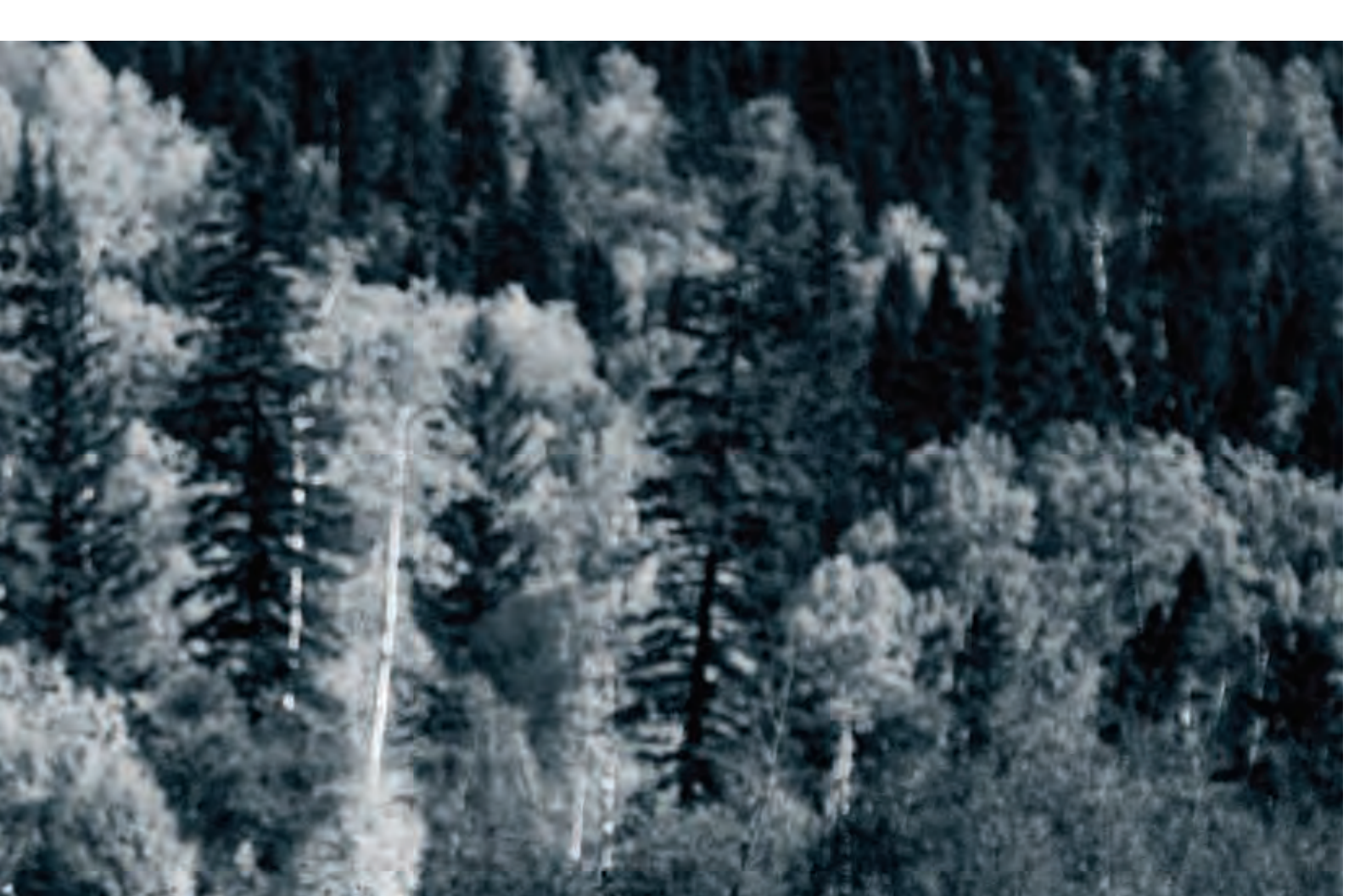


## GOAL 2

# ENVIRONMENTAL stewardship

- 2.1 Healthy Ecosystems that Support Biodiversity
- 2.2 Taking Action on Climate Change
- 2.3 Access to Clean Air and Water
- 2.4 Responsible Waste Management

ENVIRONMENTAL  
stewardship



Wood Buffalo is among Canada's largest municipalities by area, the vast majority of which is pristine wilderness. Environmental stewardship entails working with the Province as the principal land administrator to ensure the proper management and protection of sensitive natural areas, including watersheds, wetlands and riparian zones, while valuing the integrated role the natural environment plays in the health of the region. At the same time, while Wood Buffalo continues to be a major supplier of a source of world energy, the region must effectively manage its own energy consumption and limit the production of greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs).

Vehicle use and building construction and operations have a major impact on the environment. Buildings account for significant energy consumption, use of extracted

resources, and greenhouse gas emissions. These are areas where the Municipality can exert significant influence. Furthermore, managing competition for water resources among different users is important as water needs increase with population growth.

Environmental stewardship means developing exemplary practices in how the natural environment is managed and protected to minimize the adverse effects of development. The goal is to respect the natural systems and their limits, minimizing the region's ecological footprint as growth is thoughtfully and sensitively accommodated. As well, there is a responsibility to develop innovative solutions for reducing waste, energy, and water consumption and for developing green infrastructure to minimize dependence on non-renewable resources.

## Recycled Materials (2008 and 2010)



**+78%**

Cardboard



**+7%**

Paper



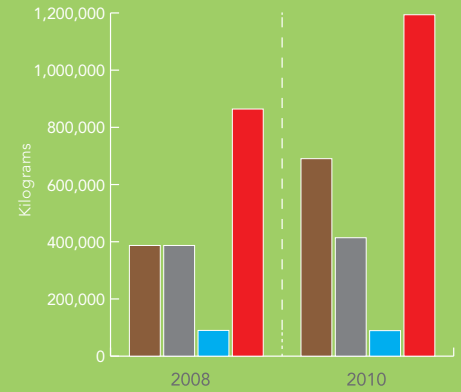
**-1%**

Plastic/Tin/Glass



**38%**

Total Products  
Diverted from Landfill



Source: Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, 2008, 2010.

## Environmental Impact from Buildings in Canada (Construction and Operation)



**50%**

Extracted Resources



**35%**

Greenhouse Gas Emissions



**33%**

Energy Consumption



**25%**

Landfill Waste

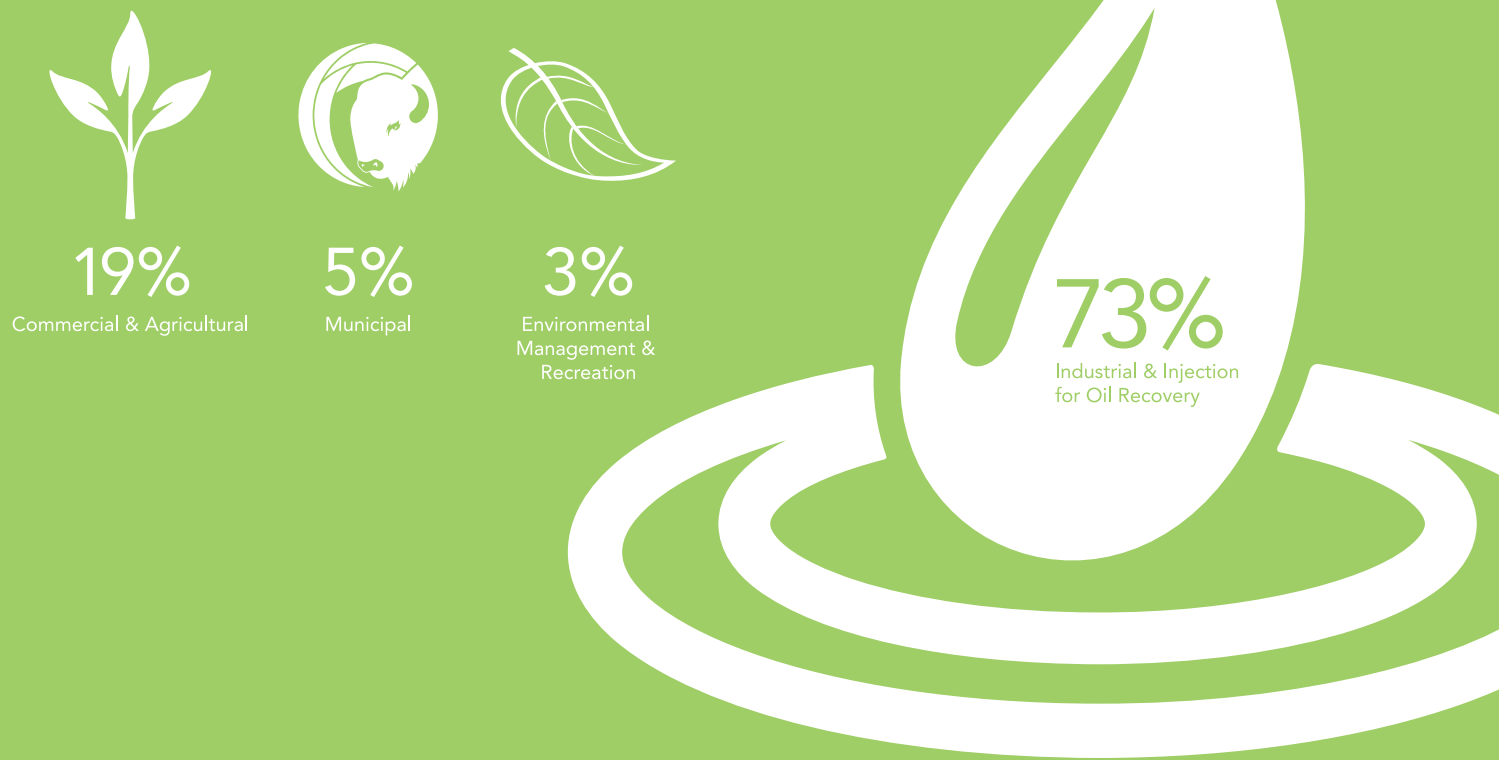


**10%**

Airborne Particulates

Source: Pembina Institute, "CANMET Energy Technology Sector - Buildings Group," January 2004, and Riccones, Dianna "The Green Buildings Resource Guide. US EPA Region 5," 2000.

# Water Allocation from Athabasca River Basin



Source: Alberta Environment, 2011

Note: This accounts for approximately 4.2% of the daily water flow of the Athabasca River Basin.

## DIRECTION 2.1

### Healthy Ecosystems that Support Biodiversity

Healthy and well-functioning ecosystems support the region's rich biodiversity, its economic development, an outdoor lifestyle, and the overall well-being of residents. As the population and economy grows, associated development is placing increased pressure on the natural environment. Protecting and managing the natural environment, as well as minimizing the impact of development, is fundamental to achieving a sustainable future for our region. Action on the environment often requires a multi-jurisdictional approach, with the coordination and collaboration of different levels of government, industry, and private landowners.

#### 2.1.1

### Respect natural habitats and ecological corridors

Natural habitats and ecological corridors become increasingly vulnerable as the region experiences more development pressure. Where appropriate, the Municipality will promote collaboration between other orders of government, industry, First Nations, Métis, and environmental organizations to enhance the regional network of conservation areas, as well as protect and enhance significant fish and wildlife habitats. The Municipality can also influence the manner in which land disturbed by resource extraction is reclaimed. Where it has authority, the Municipality will regulate recreational activities, such as the operation of off-highway vehicles, and provide enforcement for activities such as illegal camping.

#### 2.1.2

### Protect and restore riparian areas and wetlands

Riparian areas and wetlands help reduce flood and erosion, protect water quality, contribute to the natural beauty of the land, and provide food and shelter for wildlife. By limiting development that negatively impacts riparian zones and wetlands, and by applying the principles of Low Impact Development, the Municipality will help conserve the health and function of these vital areas. The Municipality will work with the Province to manage these areas, while also helping educate private landowners on the benefits of riparian areas and wetlands. In some cases, these areas may be used for passive recreation and parks.



2.1.3

### Adhere to environmentally responsible practices

Managing the natural environment using environmentally responsible practices will protect ecosystems and contribute to healthier communities. Where warranted, the Municipality will require the consideration of site-specific environmental factors and provision of environmental studies to assess the impact of new development. Furthermore, the Municipality will lead by example with its own practices regarding environmental protection, energy use, waste management, green building, and more.



## DIRECTION 2.2

### Taking Action on Climate Change

Energy used by our region's industry, buildings, and vehicles generate greenhouse gases (GHGs) that contribute to climate change. The Municipality shares in many of the responsibilities for managing risks associated with a changing climate. By promoting and adhering to green practices, the region will reduce GHG emissions, and help residents and businesses save on energy costs. As the region expands, so will its energy requirements. Addressing the energy challenge will be important to the region's future prosperity. While the Municipality, along with other levels of government, industry and other stakeholders, can strive towards the reduction of GHG emissions, it is still important to address climate change adaption through effective collaboration, monitoring, and risk management practices.

#### 2.2.1

### Demonstrate Municipal leadership in addressing climate change

The Municipality will lead by example in taking action on climate change by reducing emissions and energy consumption associated with municipal operations. This will require optimizing municipal facilities and infrastructure for energy efficiency, reducing fossil fuel consumption through alternatively-fueled fleet vehicles, and establishing a high standard in green building for public sector developments. Additionally, the Municipality will consider carbon footprint impacts in all lifecycle cost analyses and help to raise awareness on climate change issues and mitigation strategies throughout the region.

#### 2.2.2

### Promote development practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions

Thoughtful planning and design of neighbourhoods and buildings can reduce the production of GHGs and the carbon footprint of development. The Municipality will encourage the development of neighbourhoods and buildings that limit the production of GHGs. The Municipality will also adopt land use and transportation plans that reduce automobile use, plan for mixed use and walkable neighbourhoods, compact development, and establish building standards that reduce energy consumption and the production of GHGs.



2.2.3

## Support green building construction

Green buildings can have a significant impact on reducing water and energy use, GHG emissions, and the use of natural resources. Additionally, green buildings can improve the health of their occupants and add to increased productivity in an office environment. The Municipality is the facilitator of urban development and, as such, will use planning tools and incentives to encourage green building construction throughout the region.

2.2.4

## Explore renewable energy sources

Wood Buffalo is an energy leader, producing nearly half of Canada's total oil exports. The region also has an opportunity to be a leader in diversifying energy use, complementing efficient carbon-based energy sources with renewable energy sources. The Municipality will work with stakeholders in identifying, researching, and developing alternative and renewable energy sources as part of its commitment to take action on climate change. The Municipality will encourage new developments to include renewable energy sources such as solar heat, geothermal energy, geo-heat exchange, district heating, and heat recovery systems.

2.2.5

## Address the need for climate change adaptation

To ensure the region and its citizens can effectively respond to the potential impacts of climate change, the Municipality will collaborate with the Province, industry, and other stakeholders to effectively monitor and identify climate change trends. This data will be used to identify and mitigate risks associated with a changing climate. Climate change data will be used to inform Municipal decision-making with an understanding that long-term decisions must be adaptive to an uncertain climatic future.

## DIRECTION 2.3

### Access to Clean Air and Water

Access to water is vital to sustain all of the activities within the region. The competing demands on water within the region include municipal allocation for potable water, environmental needs including aquatic habitat, industry needs for oil sands activities, and recreational needs. Furthermore, protecting our air is vital to safeguarding human health. In addition to emissions from oil sands activities, other sources of airborne pollutants within the region include vehicle exhaust, dust from construction activities, and smoke from forest fires. Senior levels of government have primary authority over air and water, but the Municipality is committed to working with these and other stakeholders to ensure continued access to clean air and water now and in the future.

#### 2.3.1

#### Ensure continued access to water resources

Balancing competing needs for water requires proper management of our finite water resources. It is vital that all communities throughout the region have continued access to clean water to meet their long-term needs. The Municipality will encourage collaboration among different groups that regulate, use, affect, or are affected by the region's water resources in the creation of water management plans.

#### 2.3.2

#### Protect and enhance water quality

Water quality must support the needs of residents and the local environment. Protecting the region's aquatic resources can be achieved through land use controls, by managing discharges and outlets, and controlling pollution in water bodies. Acting within its jurisdictional responsibilities, the Municipality will meet or surpass all regulatory requirements for water discharges and pollution controls and support water quality monitoring and reporting programs in water bodies. Working with the Province and industry, the Municipality will also promote public awareness to prevent pollutant discharges into water bodies.



2.3.3

### Encourage water conservation

Water conservation efforts can reduce the costs of treating water and defer the high cost of expanding infrastructure required to meet future growth. The Municipality will promote water conservation in new and existing buildings through the use of high-efficiency fixtures and grey water recycling, and through restrictions on water use when necessary. Incentives may be adopted to support water reduction practices either at the household level or for large-scale development. Public awareness campaigns can help residents understand the impacts of their water use decisions on the region's long-term water security.

2.3.4

### Protect and enhance air quality

Protecting and enhancing air quality is important for safeguarding health. The Municipality will work toward reducing traffic volumes and congestion. The Municipality will also protect its green spaces and, where possible, increase vegetation densities in communities and preserve a portion of existing vegetation in areas of new development. Additionally, the Municipality will continue to work with stakeholders to monitor air quality throughout the region.

## DIRECTION 2.4

### Responsible Waste Management

Effectively dealing with different forms of waste—solid waste, wastewater, and waste heat—can add to increased efficiency, create new economic opportunities, and extend the capacity of infrastructure by minimizing impacts on landfills and treatment facilities. Where waste is managed, it can be done in an environmentally responsible and cost-effective manner. To date, some successful advances have been made in terms of recycling and reduction of solid waste, although opportunities exist to divert more waste from landfills in the future. In many cases, what is discarded as waste still retains some residual economic potential or can be used as an energy source. The re-use of grey water and effluent and the potential for harnessing energy from waste heat present new opportunities for collaboration and innovation.

#### 2.4.1

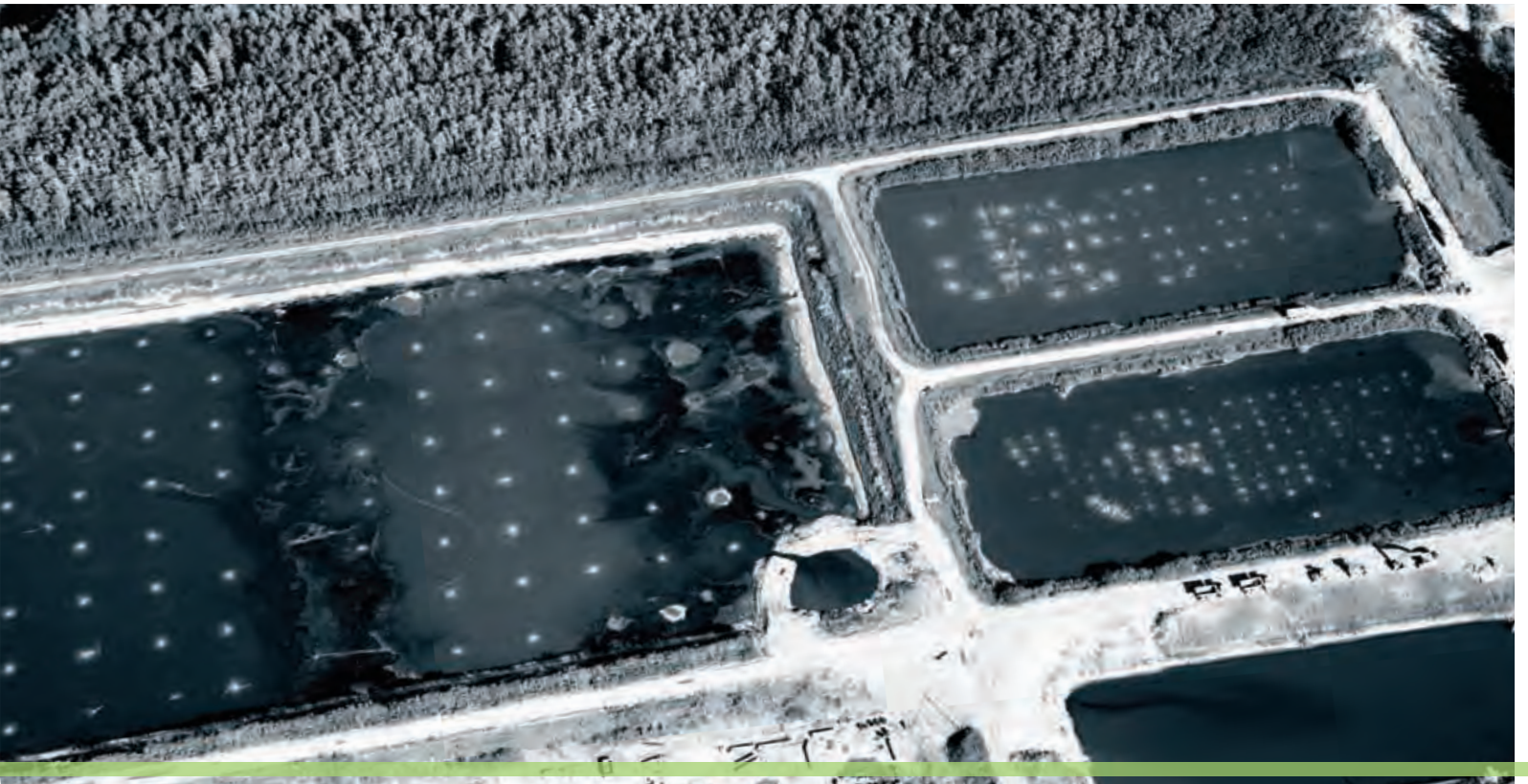
#### Practice responsible solid waste management

An effective waste management program can benefit the health of residents, save costs, and reduce pollution. A shift towards renewable and reusable products, increased access to recycling, enforcement of littering and illegal dumping, and public education on waste and recycling will help reduce the amount of solid waste going to the landfill. Working closely with industry, the Municipality will advance the concept of zero-waste through the consolidation of waste management at the Fort McMurray regional landfill facility.

#### 2.4.2

#### Optimize use of wastewater

Reducing the amount of wastewater being sent to treatment plants or sewage lagoons helps to expand the long-term capacity of these facilities. The re-use of grey water in buildings is one way to effectively reduce the amount of wastewater being treated and, as such, will be encouraged as part of developing more green buildings throughout the region. Innovative opportunities will be explored for using effluent from wastewater treatment plants for oil sands activities, which will require cooperation between the Municipality and industry.



### 2.4.3

## Optimize energy captured from waste heat

The wastewater treatment plant, sanitary landfill, and industrial plant sites are all significant sources of waste heat, and this thermal energy can be reused to increase energy efficiency. Northern climates have significant energy and heating needs, and utilizing waste heat capture can be an efficient means of meeting that need. The Municipality will explore the feasibility of co-generation to produce electricity or as a means of using waste heat for other heating purposes, such as district heating systems. On a smaller scale, buildings and pipelines also emit waste heat and harnessing that energy can also play a role in advancing green practices.

### 2.4.4

## Mitigate the risks associated with hazardous waste

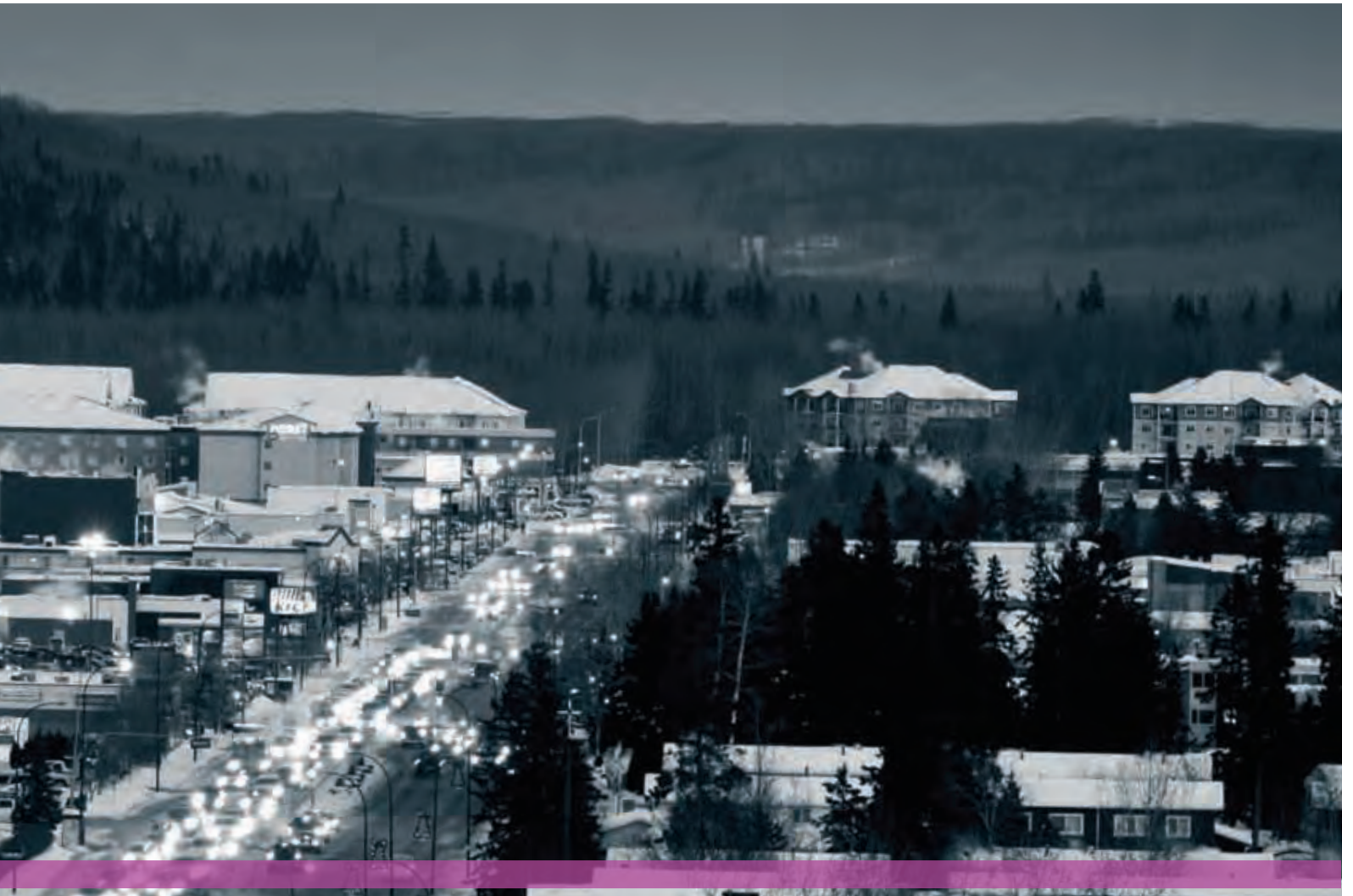
Hazardous waste generated in the region from industrial, commercial, and domestic sources can pose a threat to people and the environment. Together, the Municipality, the Province, and industry will collaborate to find regional solutions for hazardous waste handling and disposal including the designation of transportation routes for the transfer of hazardous waste and dangerous goods. As well, the Municipality will encourage the remediation and reclamation of contaminated sites including decommissioned landfills and brownfield sites.



## GOAL 3 ECONOMICresilience

- 3.1 Diversified Regional Economy
- 3.2 Integrated Regional Economic Development
- 3.3 Responsible Natural Resource Development
- 3.4 Skills and Knowledge Development

ECONOMIC  
resilience



Wood Buffalo is a region rich in natural resources including minerals, aggregates, timber, and the bitumen deposits that have given rise to the oil sands industry. However, history has shown that resource-based economies can experience boom and bust cycles, or rapid growth followed by periods of relative stability, as has been the case in Wood Buffalo. The region first thrived in the fur trade, then salt mines, and today oil sands development. Dependence on a single economic driver can make a seemingly strong economy vulnerable to changes in market demand, technology, competition, industry and government policies, and other conditions that shape an economy over time.

Compared to Alberta overall, Wood Buffalo has four times the level of resource-based employment and two and a half times the level of construction employment while lagging significantly in all other sectors. Consequently, Wood Buffalo has fewer small businesses than the Alberta average,

and there is an emphasis on trade and college education as opposed to university.

Economic resilience means having the ability to anticipate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from changes that may affect the economy. A resilient economy is one in which the key industry is able to adapt and respond to changing conditions within its sector and also to diversify where opportunities are created. Therefore, a key part of achieving economic resilience is supporting the responsible development of the oil sands industry by helping create the conditions that will generate new knowledge and technological innovation. The Municipality will also focus on supporting existing local companies and encouraging new businesses to provide goods and services to industry and the region's growing population. A growing service sector and commercial base will promote spending within the region and contribute to a stronger, more diverse local economy.

# Educational Attainment



The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo	11.2%	22.7%	18.5%	26.2%	21.3%
Alberta	13.6%	24.4%	9.8%	22.2%	30.0%

Source: Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, 2010.

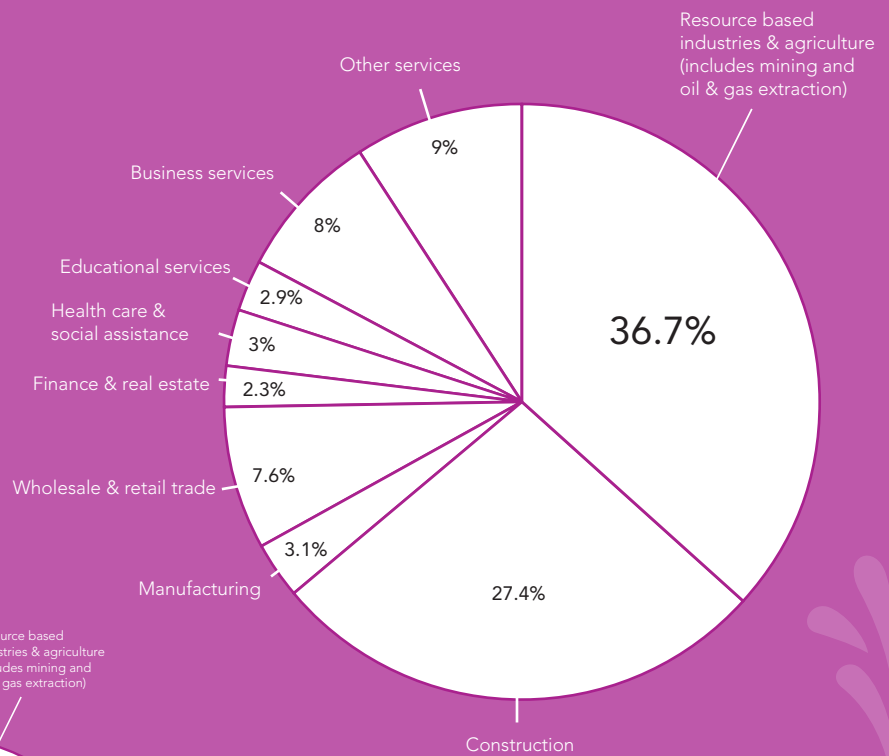
# Annual Resident Spending Outside of the Region

23%	27%	20%
\$0 - 999	\$1,000 - 4,999	\$5,000 - 9,999
14%	6%	10%
\$10,000 - 14,999	\$15,000 - 19,999	\$20,000+

Source: Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, 2011.  
 Public Survey (April 13-19, 2011);  
 Note: Data based on public survey with 358 respondents. Participants were asked: "How much money do you spend annually on products and services outside of Fort McMurray?"

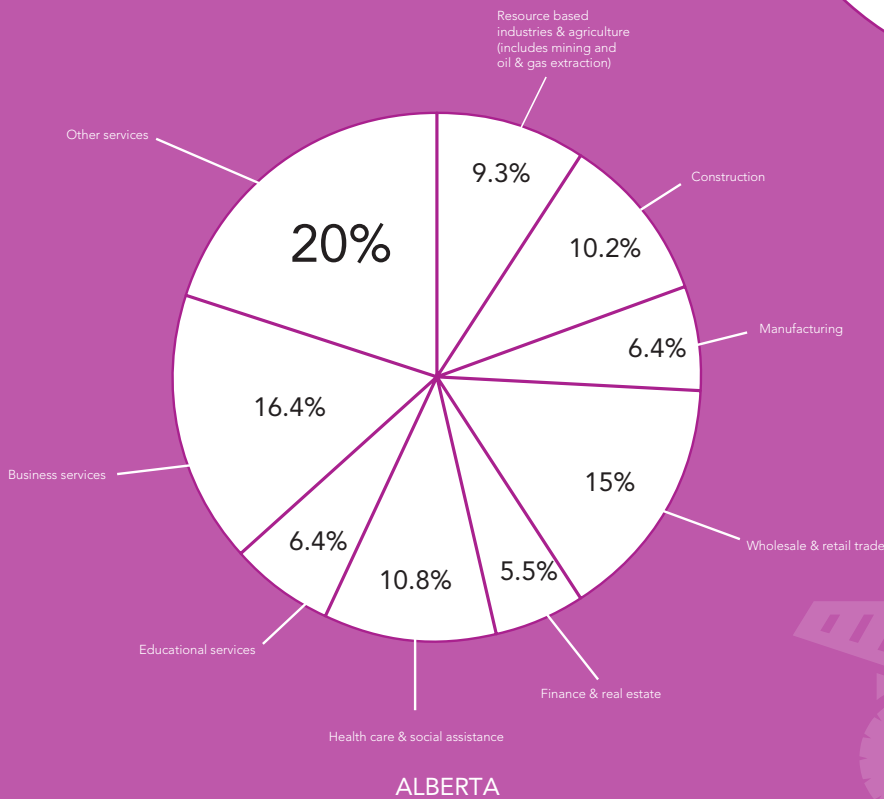


# Employment by Sector (Alberta and Wood Buffalo)



## WOOD BUFFALO

Source: Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo  
Notes: Population and Employment Model  
(Estimate based on 2010 Municipal Census);  
Alberta – Employment by major industry groups,  
seasonally adjusted May 2010, Statistics Canada.



## ALBERTA



# DIRECTION

## 3.1

### Diversified Regional Economy

Dependence on a single industry makes the local economy vulnerable to potential changes in market demand, the introduction of new technology, workforce shortages, and other conditions that can impact the industry over time. The rapid pace of growth of the oil sands industry has not been matched by growth in other sectors of the regional economy. The oil and gas sector accounted for 47 percent of jobs and 96 percent of investment in 2010. Although the oil sands will continue to be the economic engine for the region, progress toward economic resilience requires other sectors to be successfully developed to create a more balanced and diversified regional economy and employment profile.

#### 3.1.1

### Promote commercial and retail development

Wood Buffalo is experiencing a shortage in commercial and retail services that results in residents spending their money on goods and services outside of the region. In the commercial sector, the most notable gaps include accommodation, arts and entertainment, health care, and education services. New retail opportunities are also in significant demand as limited shopping is available throughout the region. The Municipality will strive to ensure there is an adequate supply of land for commercial and retail development and will work to attract and retain businesses that fill identified gaps in the commercial and retail sectors.

#### 3.1.2

### Support strong secondary industrial sectors

Manufacturing, fabrication and other secondary industries such as construction and transportation are needed to support the region's natural resource development. Such industries would provide the added benefit of creating more varied job opportunities for existing and new residents. The Municipality and industry have roles to play in targeted marketing initiatives that can help fill identified gaps in these sectors. The Municipality will also address the need for more developable land that will in turn stimulate the development of these secondary industrial sectors.



### 3.1.3

## Promote the development of local small business

Local businesses, and small business in particular, play a critical role in a region's economy, yet are under-represented in the economic profile of Wood Buffalo. The Municipality will prioritize support for small business and help ensure affordable commercial and retail space is available. Where appropriate, the Municipality will also support the development of home-based businesses, consider developing incubator units for small business, and assist small business in accessing federal and provincial funding.

### 3.1.4

## Pursue tourism opportunities

Wood Buffalo has the potential for increased tourism through cultural and historical activities, industrial tourism, guiding, and eco-tourism. The Municipality will work with the tourism industry, conservation groups, and other partners towards tourism strategies that promote the creation of new tourism facilities and services along with the maintenance and expansion of existing recreation and tourism facilities, such as campsites, lake beach areas, day-use facilities, and boat launches. Hunting and fishing opportunities in the region provide among the best opportunities for attracting tourists. Industrial tourism, including existing and historical plant sites, provide unique tourism opportunities for Wood Buffalo.

# DIRECTION

## 3.2

### Integrated Regional Economic Development

Embracing the needs, aspirations, and interests of all communities and stakeholders within the region can bring greater depth and relevance to Wood Buffalo’s economic development. The Municipality will promote collaborative efforts with regional stakeholders while encouraging that economic development activities and training opportunities for all, including Métis and First Nations. Areas of common economic interest can include higher education, research, tourism, and alternative energy, among others.

#### 3.2.1

#### Encourage joint economic development initiatives

Embracing the needs, aspirations, and interests of all communities and stakeholders within the region can bring greater depth and relevance to Wood Buffalo’s economic development. The Municipality will promote collaborative efforts with regional stakeholders while encouraging that economic development activities and training opportunities for all, including Métis and First Nations. Areas of common economic interest can include higher education, research, tourism and alternative energy, among others.

#### 3.2.2

#### Support rural economic development

Many rural communities have the potential for industrial and commercial growth, including the development of local small businesses. The Municipality will work collaboratively with its individual communities to ensure that the unique needs and reasonable expectations of each community are addressed. In particular, the Municipality will help to eliminate barriers for small business development in rural communities. The availability of serviced land and supportive infrastructure could benefit economic activity in rural communities.

## DIRECTION

## 3.3

### Responsible Natural Resource Development

Wood Buffalo is a region rich in natural resources including most of the Athabasca Oil Sands Area. This deposit has allowed the region's oil sands industry to become the dominant economic driver in Wood Buffalo, but other natural resources also contribute to the region's economy including timber and aggregates. Furthermore, there is the potential of other resource and mineral extraction throughout the region. Such opportunities help diversify the economy, but must be pursued in a responsible fashion with high regard for the environment. The Municipality recognizes it has a limited role to play in this regard, but will strive to influence positive outcomes.

#### 3.3.1

#### Support the responsible development of the oil sands industry

Oil sands development will continue to be the primary economic activity in the region and must be developed in a responsible, collaborative, and innovative manner. The Municipality and industry can work together to overcome challenges and capitalize on economic opportunities associated with the restoration and reclamation of the natural landscape and the innovative use of bi-products from oil sands operations. To optimize economic benefit, secondary industries related to oil sands development and operation will be encouraged. Where possible, the Municipality will support and advocate for infrastructure improvements such as rapid transit that support sustainable practices associated with oil sands operations.

#### 3.3.2

#### Expand responsible natural resource development

The extraction and harvesting of other natural resources in the region, other than bitumen, will aid economic growth and diversification. Exploration of the potential of other natural resources can be encouraged, provided it is conducted in an environmentally responsible manner. Where possible, it is best to coordinate the extraction of natural resources, such as forestry and mining, to minimize the overall land disturbance. Resource extraction should not adversely impact the aesthetics of the natural area near communities.

## DIRECTION 3.4

### Skills and Knowledge Development

Leading economies are driven by research and innovation, and Wood Buffalo's ability to compete and lead in the global economy will be influenced by its commitment to do the same. A culture of research and innovation can drive the sustainable expansion of the oil sands industry and create new successful complementary industries, which in turn can provide Wood Buffalo with a competitive advantage to fuel its economic and social growth. Skills and knowledge help foster research and innovation and it is here that the Municipality, working with key partners, can make a difference.

#### 3.4.1

#### Develop skills locally

To build skills locally, the Municipality will encourage the development of local expertise required by industry and provide improved access to training and skills development. It will support joint research and innovation ventures, as well as scholarships, apprenticeships, and internship programs. It will also support residents in their desire to continue education and skills upgrading by partnering with educational institutions. Distance education through the use of technology can be promoted to overcome the challenges of remote locations.

#### 3.4.2

#### Enable a culture of innovation

The invention and commercialization of new products, services, technologies, and processes is a major driver of long-term economic growth. To enable a culture of innovation, the Municipality will support the development of centres for innovation for education, research, and product development. Furthermore, it will strive to attract increased private-sector investment in research and development.



3.4.3

### Support labour force development

To fully realize opportunities stemming from economic development in the region, an ample supply of skilled labour must be available for business and service development throughout Wood Buffalo, in addition to the required skill sets for industrial development. The Municipality will support efforts to identify labour deficiencies, while assisting to develop and implement labour force attraction and retention initiatives.





GOAL 4  
**HOME**&belonging

- 4.1 Complete, Livable Communities
- 4.2 Diverse and Attainable Housing Choices
- 4.3 Safe and Secure Region
- 4.4 Caring Communities that Support Wellness

**HOME** &  
belonging





Wood Buffalo will become home to an increasing number of people in the coming years. It must be healthy, accessible, livable and safe to attract residents to stay, put down roots, and raise a family. Connecting people to the region will not only retain talent and maintain economic competitiveness, it will also ensure sustainable and healthy growth. A sense of belonging means that regardless of age, income, ethnicity, or gender, the region can be experienced as a compassionate, caring place characterized by tolerance and social harmony where people are valued and treated with dignity and respect.

Age and gender profiles vary significantly from the Alberta average. As might be expected given the dominance of the oil industry, Wood Buffalo's population is more male dominated and has fewer seniors and children. The average age is 32 years, with more than half of

the region's residents between the ages of 20 and 45. Housing prices are nearly double the national and provincial average while rental rates are more than double—the highest in the country. Crime rates are showing a positive downward trend and the general sense of well-being among residents is positive with lower than average stress levels, but a weaker sense of belonging.

Making the region home means creating a place where residents exhibit regional and community pride. The goal is to develop inclusive and complete communities where people who may have been attracted to the region for its economic opportunities choose to stay for the high quality of life afforded to them and their children. In support, the Municipality will encourage a range of housing choices, ensure community safety, support active lifestyles, and foster social well-being.

# Average Housing Prices in Fort McMurray (2000-2010)



2 Bedroom  
Average Rental Rate

**\$2,210**



Average Single  
Detached House Price

**\$685,970**

Location	2 Bedroom Average Rental Rate	Average Single Detached House Price
Medicine Hat	\$691	\$291,874
Edmonton	\$1,015	\$355,270
Calgary	\$1,069	\$441,341
Toronto	\$1,123	\$433,946
Vancouver	\$1,195	\$797,868
Alberta	\$1,036	\$344,805
Canada	\$860	\$344,257

Source: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, October 2010.

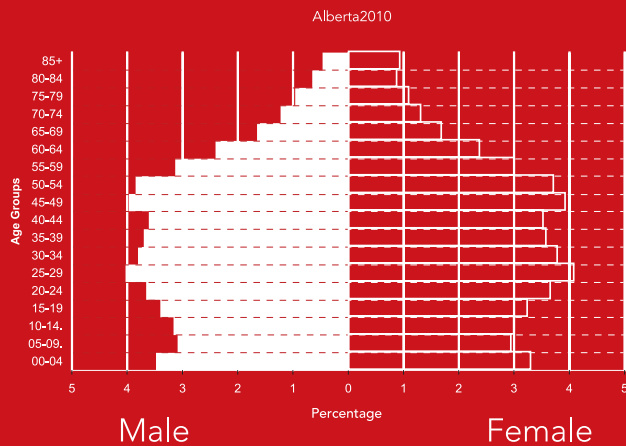
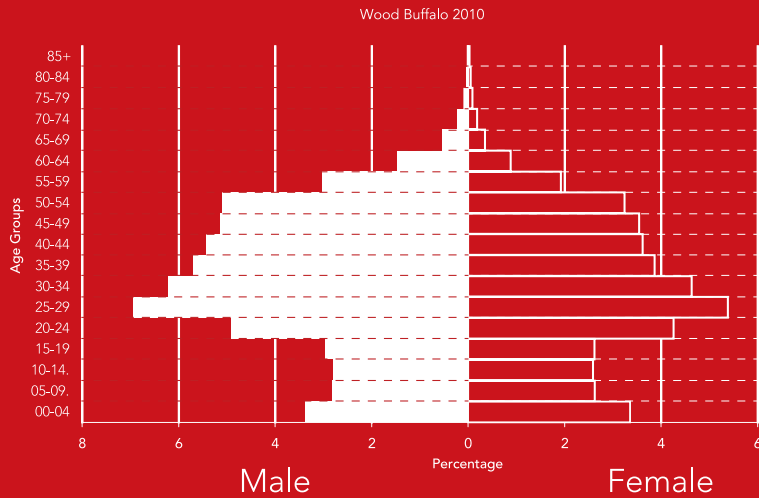
## AVERAGE SINGLE DETACHED HOUSE PRICES IN FORT MCMURRAY, 2000 - 2010

Year	Price	Percent change
2000	\$203,211	
2001	\$218,921	8%
2002	\$247,270	13%
2003	\$269,552	9%
2004	\$314,364	17%
2005	\$408,946	30%
2006	\$457,372	12%
2007	\$583,550	28%
2008	\$678,135	16%
2009	\$634,332	-6%
2010	\$676,047	7%

Source: Fort McMurray Real Estate Board, 2010.

HOME &  
belonging

# Age & Gender Profile for Wood Buffalo and Alberta (2010)



Source: Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, 2010.

Notes: Information excludes the homeless and the population in Fort Fitzgerald (8), Hotels/Motels, and the estimated population for Work Camps.



# DIRECTION

## 4.1

### Complete, Livable Communities

Livable communities provide for residents’ basic needs close to where they live. A variety of land uses, including residential, commercial, institutional, and recreational, can be integrated to enable a range of activities in close proximity of one another. These communities are walkable, with convenient access to transit where appropriate, thereby providing residents with sustainable options for how they move. Neighbourhoods and communities also have a strong sense of orientation with identifiable centres and they can be designed in a manner that supports the concept of complete communities by offering and supporting a variety of lifestyle choices. Given the region’s northern location, attention needs to be paid to how communities are designed to suit the climate, particularly with respect to improving access and comfort during the winter season.

#### 4.1.1

### Encourage a mix of land uses

Integrating housing, retail, business, institutions, and recreation creates a more dynamic environment where residents travel short distances for daily services. Mixed use development and compact form provide for the most efficient and cost-effective use of land and infrastructure, and allow for the widest range of mobility options. The Municipality will promote a mix of uses in communities and neighbourhoods and encourage compact, mixed-use development where appropriate, primarily in urban neighbourhoods and in the core areas of rural communities.

#### 4.1.2

### Foster opportunities for social interaction

Friendly interactions in the community can promote social well-being, increase personal security, and foster citizen engagement. Creating environments where people can congregate will provide more opportunities for social interaction. The Municipality will promote housing and building design that encourages neighbour-to-neighbour interaction. Through neighbourhood design, the Municipality will plan for the provision of a variety of public spaces such as parks, plazas, and community halls, and will explore neighbourhood and housing design options that help foster increased social interaction.

### 4.1.3

## Plan for a variety of mobility choices

An integrated and well-connected street, sidewalk, and trail network can help promote walking and cycling as well as enhance the viability of transit. This, in turn, can serve to reduce congestion and greenhouse gas emissions while providing residents with options for how they move. The Municipality will prioritize pedestrian movement and transit to reduce dependence on single occupant vehicles. Streets will be designed as complete streets with consideration for the comfort, safety, convenience and visual interest of all users, including cyclists, transit riders, and pedestrians of all ages and abilities. Subdivisions and communities will be planned in a manner that places emphasis on active transportation and walkability.

### 4.1.4

## Design with a sensitivity to climate and environment

The region experiences four distinct seasons with extremes between summer and winter. The Municipality will ensure that communities are planned with consideration for comfort during the bright and warm summer months as well as the dark and cold winter months. Recreation opportunities will be developed to take advantage of the long summer days while winter city principles will help to mitigate the impacts of winter by addressing snow, ice and wind on streets and sidewalks, incorporating warm colours and seasonal lighting, and designing communities and housing for maximum solar exposure. In an effort to create a four-season lifestyle, public facilities and public spaces will be designed with flexibility, allowing them to be used throughout the year.

### 4.1.5

## Enhance access to recreation

The need for recreational opportunities will increase as the region continues to grow. The Municipality will provide more access to recreation facilities in urban neighbourhoods and rural communities based on assessed needs and population size, while supporting recreation programs and local sports teams for families and individuals of all ages. The Municipality will also develop multi-use, all-season facilities whenever possible and work to optimize the use of land for both active and passive recreation.

# DIRECTION

# 4.2

## Diverse and Attainable Housing Choices

Housing is one of the most important issues in Wood Buffalo. Housing prices and rents have escalated sharply in the past decade, making secure accommodation difficult to attain for many of the region’s residents. Currently, Fort McMurray has the highest rental rates and second highest average housing prices in all of Canada. An adequate supply of affordable housing can facilitate recruitment and retention of workers to the region, thereby encouraging economic development. It also increases the likelihood that new residents will make long-term investments in the region. It will take time to work towards a more diverse housing stock where ownership and rental units are attainable for different segments of the Wood Buffalo population, but a long-term solution is critical for encouraging permanent residency.

### 4.2.1

#### Encourage a diverse range of housing

The region’s diverse population requires an equally diverse housing choice. A wide range of housing types, densities, sizes and tenures for different income, age and demographic groups should be available throughout the region. The Municipality will plan for a wider range of housing choices in new subdivisions and in new housing developments in existing neighbourhoods and communities. The Municipality will promote infill and mixed-use development, where appropriate, which will contribute to diversity within the region’s housing stock.

### 4.2.2

#### Expand affordable housing supply

Affordable housing units are intended for low- and medium-income residents who would otherwise spend more than 30 percent of their gross income to pay for average market rent. The Municipality will actively work with land developers, home builders, government and non-government agencies to increase the proportion of affordable housing units. Smaller, less costly units can reduce rents, while land use policies, regulations and standards will be made flexible to support affordable housing. Placing affordable housing units close to transit and amenities will reduce additional costs for those in need.



### 4.2.3

## Promote housing innovation

The Municipality will work with homebuilders and developers to promote innovative housing designs that will help address important housing issues in our region. In particular, housing innovations that address the northern climate or promote affordability will be encouraged. Where possible, new products, experimental designs, green building practices, and pilot projects will be promoted and showcased through conferences or demonstrations to help advance local knowledge and inspire continued innovation.

# DIRECTION

# 4.3

## Safe and Secure Region

Safety and security are fundamental components of any strong and healthy region. Streets and neighbourhoods need to be safe and all residents should feel a sense of security as they go about their day-to-day activities. Furthermore, residents and business owners should expect their property to be treated with respect. This can be achieved by delivering effective and efficient crime prevention and response, law enforcement, public education, and regional emergency services. It can also be achieved by designing safe communities, fostering a sense of ownership, and encouraging shared responsibility in the community.

### 4.3.1

#### Promote community safety

Community safety is most effective when residents and law enforcement officials work together. The Municipality will collaborate with local agencies to develop safety and security programs, such as neighbourhood and rural community watch programs, together with education and outreach initiatives. A sense of security can be provided by a visible police presence in public areas, while crime reduction and prevention initiatives will continue to make the region safer. The Municipality will promote community and neighbourhood design that addresses safety and security by incorporating natural surveillance and access control, lighting, and clearly delineated public and private space.

### 4.3.2

#### Promote safe mobility

With increasing mobility choice comes a responsibility to ensure that streets and sidewalks are designed to be shared safely among different users. The Municipality will promote safety measures to ensure that transit services are safe and secure during all seasons and at all hours of operation. The Municipality will also adopt traffic calming measures, clearly designated crosswalks and school zones, well-lit streets, and timely road maintenance to keep our streets safe. In the more remote areas of the region, winter roads require special attention and care to ensure their safe use.





#### 4.3.3

### Promote accessibility through universal design

Universal design refers to the design of public and private space that ensures equal access for individuals of all ages and physical abilities. Through universal design, safety and mobility are not compromised for those with physical limitations. The Municipality will apply universal design principles in the planning and design of communities, buildings, and transportation networks in consultation with those who have special needs. The Municipality will ensure the application of universal design in all public development and will also encourage these standards be met in private development projects.

#### 4.3.4

### Maintain high standard in emergency response and preparedness

Timely emergency response in relation to fire suppression, rescue service, or medical care is a critical component of safety and security in the region. The Municipality will provide efficient emergency and protective services to the entire region and its residents and will undertake research and development on improvements to fire protection systems.

# DIRECTION

# 4.4

## Caring Communities that Support Wellness

Communities can be defined by the consideration they exhibit to their most vulnerable populations and by the manner in which they welcome newcomers. A caring community removes barriers that inhibit residents from meeting their basic needs for food, shelter, and good health. Other levels of government and a number of social service agencies play a role in this regard, but the Municipality itself will undertake initiatives and work actively with others to ensure successful outcomes. Residents can have a greater sense of wellness when they have access to fresh, nutritional food, and are supported with reliable, quality health services.

### 4.4.1

#### Promote access to local food

Local food production and distribution can provide reliable, secure access to healthy food while helping build a sense of community. It can also help address the challenges associated with food delivery in remote areas of the region, making food more readily available and affordable. The Municipality will promote local food production through land use policies and regulations that allow opportunities for growing, processing, and distributing food, such as backyard and community gardens, greenhouses, markets, and by preserving the limited agricultural land that exists in the region. The Municipality will also support farmers' markets as social gathering places with the potential of attracting vendors and buyers from neighbouring communities and municipalities.

### 4.4.2

#### Enhance assistance and support to people in need

Supporting vulnerable populations builds a stronger community. The Municipality will work in partnership with other levels of government and local agencies toward assisting and supporting the homeless and people in need through counselling services and social programs. The Municipality will also cooperate with local charity and faith-based groups to help provide for vulnerable populations. Furthermore, it will offer recreational programs and facilities to help address the needs of at-risk youth.



#### 4.4.3

### Promote access to health care and social services

Wellness is an outcome driven by the delivery of health services and social support. The Municipality will work with health service providers and other agencies to improve access to quality health care and will encourage the provision of a wide range of services, particularly community-based care. It will also advance local interests to increase the amount of provincial investment in health care facilities in the region and further explore improved regional health care related transportation services.

#### 4.4.4

### Provide a welcoming environment for newcomers

Wood Buffalo attracts workers from around the world and the region will be enriched and made more sustainable over the long term if these newcomers choose to settle and raise families in the region. The Municipality will address this opportunity through programs that meet the various needs of newcomers and that promote inclusivity and cultural diversity.



GOAL 5  
**VIBRANT**culture

5.1 Thriving Heritage, Culture, and Diversity

5.2 Vibrant Arts and Culture

5.3 Culture of the Outdoors

5.4 Regional Pride

**VIBRANT**  
culture



Wood Buffalo is a vibrant region with a constantly evolving culture. It begins with the legacy instilled by Métis and First Nations. The richness they bring to Wood Buffalo is evident in their cultural practices: ceremonies, prayers, dances, music, and traditional regalia. This legacy continues today and is complemented by a diverse and dynamic cultural fusion comprising new residents from across Canada and around the world.

Supporting the region's cultural development enhances quality of life for all, generates economic benefits, and facilitates the additional attraction and retention of newcomers and their families. Relative to other comparable municipalities in Alberta, Wood Buffalo is underserved in terms of arts and

culture facilities. Investing in the region's arts and cultural infrastructure can strengthen regional pride and identity, as can promoting and supporting the local arts and cultural sector, and integrating culture and heritage into the design of neighbourhoods.

For many residents, Wood Buffalo is a place where culture is closely tied with the natural environment. Nearly 12 percent of Fort McMurray is comprised of parks and open space, and the urban area is interwoven with 135 kilometres of trails. Capitalizing on the region's natural environment and surrounding landscape by encouraging recreation in all seasons will celebrate a culture of the outdoors throughout the region.

# Arts & Culture Facilities 2010



Theatre /  
Performing  
Arts Centres

2



Museum

3



Art Centres

0



Galleries / Studios

3

Arts & Culture Facilities, 2010

Facilities	Wood Buffalo	Red Deer	Lethbridge
Population	104,338	90,084	86,659
Art Centres	0	1	2
Galleries / Studios	3	9	8
Theatre / Performing Arts Centres	2	3	3
Museum	3	6	1
Total	8	19	14

Source: Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, 2010; Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, 2011; City of Red Deer, 2010, 2011; Central Alberta Theatre, 2011; Red Deer College, 2010; City of Lethbridge, 2010, 2011; University of Lethbridge, 2011; Bowman Arts Centre, 2011.

Note: Includes both public and private facilities.

Length of Trails  
in Fort McMurray

**136 km**  
Total

## Parks & Open Spaces, 2010

Total Area Fort McMurray 8691 (ha)

Total Parks and Open Space 805 (ha)



Source: Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, 2011; City of Calgary, 2009.  
Notes: \*Excludes new development areas of Parsons Creek and Saline Creek.

Source: Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, 2011.

# DIRECTION

## 5.1

### Thriving Heritage, Culture, and Diversity

Wood Buffalo is culturally rich with long-standing First Nations and Métis communities, residents from across Canada, and a more recent influx of residents from around the globe. This diverse population brings breadth and depth to the region’s culture and enhances the quality of life of all residents. For many, First Nations and Métis groups in particular, the region’s natural environment is closely tied to cultural heritage. For those groups who have been here for generations, cultural heritage often consists of practices such as dance, music, and traditional costume, but also practices of traditional lifestyles. To others, cultural heritage may be strongly tied to language, art, cuisine, and religious practice.

#### 5.1.1

### Celebrate cultural diversity

Cultural diversity, grounded in a rich First Nations and Métis heritage, and broadened more recently by an influx of new residents from around the globe, gives the region its unique character. Increasingly, cities worldwide have started to draw attention to cultural diversity as a strategy to attract and retain skilled workers and their families. The Municipality will promote cultural diversity by partnering with others to support multicultural programs, services, and events. The Municipality will also accommodate multiculturalism through the services it offers, the facilities it provides, and the development projects it supports.

#### 5.1.2

### Conserve areas of cultural and historic significance

Heritage sites, historical buildings, and culturally significant areas connect residents and visitors to the region’s rich legacy. In some cases, areas of historical significance including archaeological and paleontological sites can be used for educational, interpretive, or scientific purposes. The Municipality will support the efforts of heritage, First Nations, and Métis groups in their efforts to develop inventories and other tools to help conserve traditional lands, historic sites, heritage buildings, and cultural artifacts.





### 5.1.3

## Support traditional lifestyles

Traditional lifestyles such as hunting, fishing, trapping, and plant collecting are valued among Métis and First Nations and communities throughout the region. The Municipality will continue to respect traditional and historic uses of the natural environment as a fundamental element of the region's cultural identity. The Municipality will support efforts to identify and conserve culturally significant areas such as berry patches and plant-collecting sites to ensure traditional lifestyles can continue to be practiced throughout the region.



# DIRECTION

# 5.2

## Vibrant Arts and Culture

Arts and culture are major contributors to quality of life. A heightened quality of life shapes, defines, and enriches a region making it easier to attract and retain long-term residents. It begins with arts and cultural infrastructure comprising a variety of facilities, programs, and services, and balances major public institutions with privately-operated enterprises. A commitment to public art, which reflects a place’s identity, can provide additional support, and add a highly visible and vital ingredient in the region’s arts and cultural fabric. Public events and festivals are another means to increase public exposure to arts and culture in the region. These events bring life to the street, adding a dimension of vitality and animation.

### 5.2.1

#### Support arts and cultural programs, services, and facilities

The development of arts and culture in the region will depend upon shared funding agreements and collaboration between the Municipality, other levels of government, and the private and non-for-profit sectors. The Municipality will explore opportunities to attract permanent institutions to the region, such as art galleries, theatres, concert halls, and museums. Furthermore, municipally-supported facilities, including library services, will be maintained, improved, and expanded as required. An emphasis will be placed upon providing multi-purpose facilities.

### 5.2.2

#### Encourage public art initiatives

Public art provides an opportunity to share and display the region’s rich heritage, culture, and identity. Public art policies and programs can guide the funding and development of public art that is relevant to the region, engaging and interactive, and enriches the quality of public space for all. The Municipality will incorporate public art in public spaces and public-sector developments, while also encouraging public art contributions to be part of large private-sector developments. The Municipality will partner with schools, institutions, community groups, local artists, First Nations, Métis, and the private sector to develop a wide range of public art throughout the region.



### 5.2.3

## Promote public events and festivals

Public events and festivals increase exposure to arts and culture among residents and visitors alike and help instill a sense of community. The Municipality will promote public events and festivals throughout the region and throughout the year. Appropriate space that promotes convenient access will be made available for major attractions, events, and festivals, such as winter carnivals, Métis and First Nations celebrations, and multicultural events. Through the collaboration of many stakeholders, the region will strive to host large national and international events that stimulate local economic development and raise the profile of Wood Buffalo. In communities and neighbourhoods, the Municipality will support street and block parties, local fairs, and other events that promote social interaction and cohesion.

### 5.2.4

## Enhance collaboration in the arts community

Collaboration among arts and culture service providers, not-for-profit organizations, and individual artists can help augment access to funding and resources for the development of the region's arts, entertainment, and cultural sectors. The Municipality recognizes the valuable role of local artists and groups in the region and will support their continued development. A formal arts and culture council or network could play a key role in this collaboration, while also providing access to intergovernmental funding and offering advice on arts, entertainment, and culture-related policy development for the Municipality.

# DIRECTION

## 5.3

### Culture of the Outdoors

Wood Buffalo is characterized by a culture of the outdoors, including activities such as hiking, camping, fishing, and off-road vehicle use. For many residents, access to outdoor activities was a factor in choosing to settle in the region. For others, it may be what attracts them to the region as visitors or tourists. A culture of the outdoors sets the region apart from many other municipalities and can be promoted as such, enhancing quality of life for individuals and families and promoting healthy lifestyles.

#### 5.3.1

### Ensure access to parks, open spaces, and natural areas

Access to green space is one of the hallmarks of living in Wood Buffalo. The Municipality can ensure access to green spaces such as neighbourhood parks, open spaces, and trail networks through community design, meeting the needs of both urban and rural populations. Integrated trails as part of regional or community green networks can help support active lifestyles by providing space for walking, jogging and cycling.

#### 5.3.2

### Promote responsible use of off-highway vehicles

Many of the region’s residents enjoy the recreational use of off-highway vehicles (OHVs). The Municipality will provide safe staging areas for OHVs and identify community-specific OHVs policies to address unique needs and conditions. Working with the Province, the Municipality can integrate OHV staging areas, Municipal trails, and trails on surrounding Crown lands. The Municipality will also support the continuous development of OHV trails throughout the region. Education and trail safety measures will help ensure the responsible use of OHVs and reduce conflicts with other trail users.



### 5.3.3

## Promote waterfronts as community recreational features

Many of the region's communities are built along waterfronts. These waterfronts present opportunities for developing year-round recreation and centres of community activity while connecting residents to the natural beauty of the region. The Municipality will explore opportunities where lakes and riverfronts can be made publicly accessible and integrated into communities, especially as part of a green network. Recreational opportunities can be accommodated around waterfronts while respecting environmental sensitivities. Where waterfronts have fallen into disrepair, the Municipality will explore options to transform these areas into either vibrant gathering places and areas of active recreation, or promote their reclamation as natural areas with opportunities for passive recreation.

# DIRECTION

## 5.4

### Regional Pride

Pride of place emanates from the quality of the natural and built environment and can be shaped through high standards of design. A cohesive identity founded in regional pride can help communicate a better, more complete understanding of who we are to the world, while addressing misconceptions about the region. Community placemaking can reinforce the region’s identity by creating a sense of community, fostering local pride in a neighbourhood, and improving public awareness of the community’s context. Neighbourhood and community design, which includes public spaces, streetscapes, and built forms, is another major ingredient for a region’s expression of identity. And finally, pride is also reflected in the position the region holds as a player on the national and global scene and the achievements of its residents.

#### 5.4.1

### Promote a richer understanding of our region to the world

The Wood Buffalo identity may be affected by inaccurate pictures, stories, and perceptions formulated by outside sources. To communicate a complete and richer understanding of our region to the nation and the world, the Municipality will work with others to proactively promote and highlight the positives of the region while establishing and reinforcing the region’s identity through national and global public relation initiatives. The Municipality will also encourage residents to act as ambassadors of the region.

#### 5.4.2

### Establish high standards of neighbourhood and community design

High quality environments can elicit a sense of pride. Quality design can reflect the distinctive cultural values and characteristics of our neighbourhoods and communities. The Municipality will lead by example by establishing high standards of design for all public development and infrastructure, including the possible use of national and international competitions for major public projects. The Municipality will encourage private sector development to meet similar design standards.

### 5.4.3

## Promote community placemaking and beautification

Placemaking and beautification can have a marked effect on a community's image. The Municipality will promote the creation of squares, plazas, parks, vibrant streetscapes, and waterfronts that offer opportunities for people to gather and interact while contributing to community identity and pride. The Municipality will also help build positive urban and rural images for residents and visitors through such things as litter control, deterring and preventing graffiti, sidewalk and road repair, banner installation, tree and flower planting, and ornamental lighting. The Municipality will also continue to support and promote community-led initiatives such as Adopt-a-Park.

### 5.4.4

## Support young talent in the region

Regional pride can be built around performing individuals and teams that shine in diverse areas of excellence. As representatives of the future, youth are particularly important in this regard. The Municipality will work with others to support programs to energize the region's youth to reach for outstanding performance in knowledge, arts, sports, and civic activities.

### 5.4.5

## Position the region as a provincial, national and international player

There is pride in knowing the region is a key player on the world stage. The Municipality will pursue hosting provincial, national, and international events and competitions to showcase the region's strengths and attract a broader scope of activities and opportunities for residents and local businesses. The Municipality will also pursue the creation or relocation of sport teams or leagues to the region.

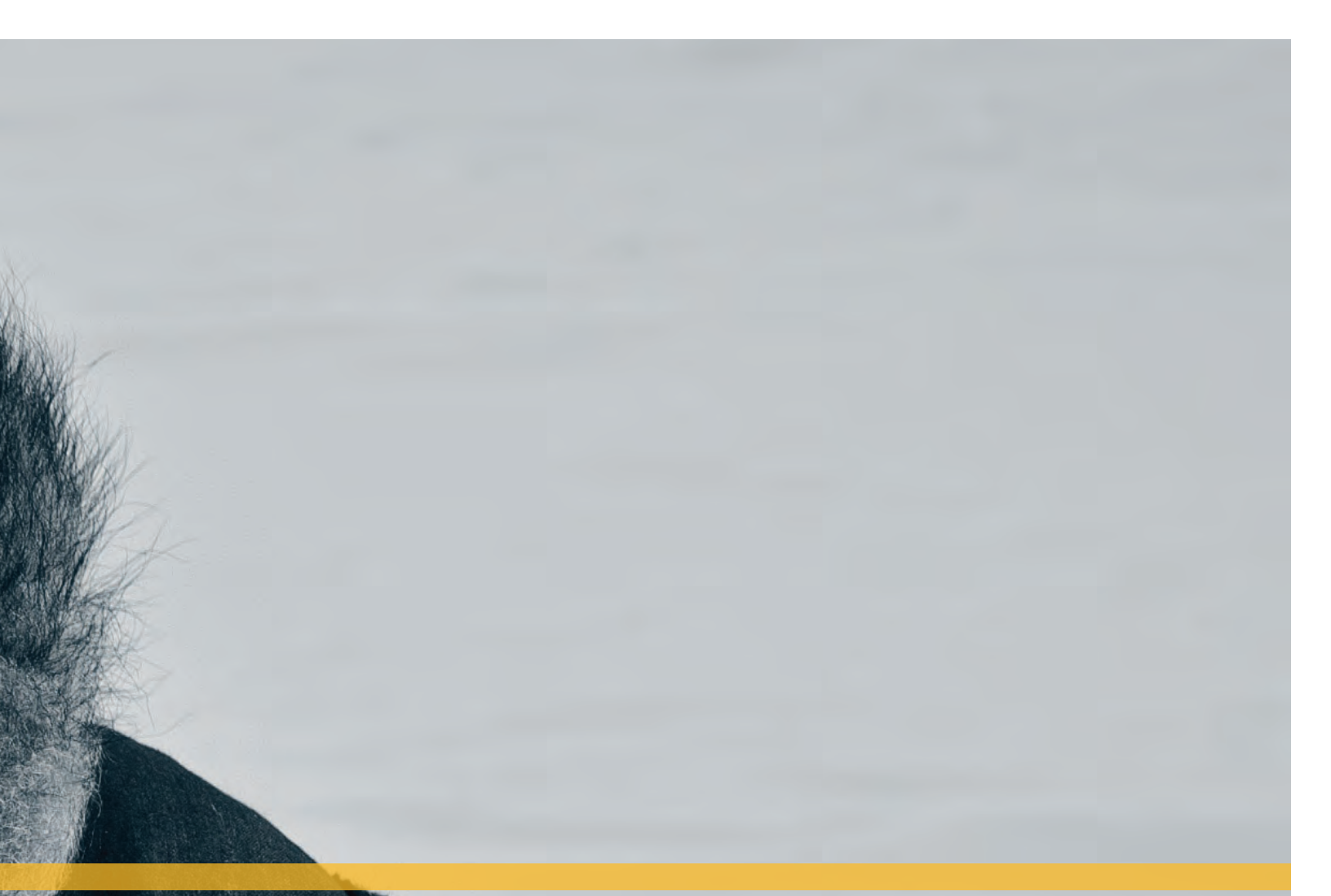


GOAL 6  
**WORKING**together

- 6.1 Good Governance
- 6.2 Valued Services
- 6.3 Engaged Citizens
- 6.4 Effective Partnerships

**WORKING**  
together





Wood Buffalo is a large, complex region operating under a single municipal government. Success depends on a large variety of stakeholders working together to achieve goals that continue to improve the quality of life for all residents. This begins with strong leadership exhibited by elected officials and their commitment to working together toward the provision of good governance. In return, residents seek to be engaged in municipal affairs and to uphold the concept of collective social responsibility. Collaborative decision-making is the result.

In Wood Buffalo, over 92 percent of residents have expressed a desire to be engaged as part of the process for municipal projects and initiatives. Furthermore, the number of visits to the Municipality's website has nearly doubled over the past two years. These are hallmarks of an engaged citizenry that can lead to enhanced levels of collaboration.

Working together means providing opportunities for all of the region's stakeholders to constructively work toward a shared vision for the future. Partnering with local businesses, agencies, and not-for-profit groups, and building on strong relationships with First Nations and Métis will foster opportunities for mutual success. At the same time, collaboration with industry and other orders of government on common goals can leverage resources and promote efficiency. In the end, municipal government is a service provider. Working together helps promote sustainable practices and ensures that citizens and business interests are provided with valued services.

# Comparable Locations by Area



Wood Buffalo  
**63,401** km<sup>2</sup>



Scotland  
78,782 km<sup>2</sup>



New Brunswick,  
Canada  
72,908 km<sup>2</sup>



Nova Scotia,  
Canada  
55,284 km<sup>2</sup>



Taiwan  
36,008 km<sup>2</sup>



Belgium  
30,520 km<sup>2</sup>

# Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo

## Webpage activity, 2008-2010

2008	Visits – 443,430 Page views – 2,112,535
2009	Visits – 603,769 Page views – 2,880,343
2010	Visits – 856,334 Page views – 3,853,665



### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & INITIATIVES

Public preference for involvement in municipal projects	
Surveys	56%
Open houses and information sessions	32%
Participatory workshops	38%
Social media (Municipal website, Facebook, Twitter)	38%
I don't want to be involved	8%

Source: Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo; Public Survey (March 16-23, 2011);  
Notes: Data based on public survey with 951 respondents. Participants were asked:  
"How would you prefer to be involved in Municipal projects?"

# DIRECTION

## 6.1

### Good Governance

Elected officials work together with the electorate to provide regional leadership. The needs of residents and other stakeholders vary widely from community to community and all must work together to define goals and priorities. Open and transparent decision-making processes are fundamental to this relationship. As well, sound legislative, administrative, monitoring, and service delivery systems help to establish accountability. Some residents are challenged to access certain services and facilities and the Municipality will strive to eliminate these barriers. In the end, elected officials are committed to making fiscally responsible decisions recognizing that fiscal sustainability is one of the pillars of a sustainable municipality.

#### 6.1.1

### Provide open and transparent decision-making processes

The Municipality has a responsibility to balance the broad interests of the region and the various communities within it. Elected officials are required to make important decisions on a regular basis. Transparency in decision-making helps ensure that the reasons for those decisions are clearly understood by all stakeholders and affected parties. The Municipality will strive to ensure that decisions are made in open forums where interested parties can voice their opinions.

#### 6.1.2

### Demonstrate accountability

Reporting openly on results demonstrates accountability for decisions made and actions taken. The Municipality will continually improve its reporting mechanisms on service delivery and corporate performance, and on actions it is taking throughout the region. The Municipality will also provide financial performance information where appropriate.



### 6.1.3

## Ensure fiscal responsibility

Taxpayers want the comfort of knowing that tax dollars are spent wisely. The Municipality will ensure there is a fair and equitable assessment base and will match its expenditures to sustainable, predictable, long-term sources of revenue. It will also promote a fiscal policy that matches expenditure to need, enacting the principles of predictability, stability, and transparency.

### 6.1.4

## Pursue advanced administrative practices and structures

Rapid growth has transformed the Municipality into a large, complex entity that requires sophisticated municipal governance practices and structures. The Municipality will explore new ways and means of service delivery to promote effectiveness and efficiency including the possible creation of special operating agencies and arms-length corporations to address functions such as land management, transportation, City Centre development, and others.

# DIRECTION

## 6.2

### Valued Services

Effectiveness, efficiency, and quality are the cornerstones of service provision. Services must be deemed to be appropriate based upon an understanding of needs, must be seen as competitive in the use of resources, and must generate satisfaction on the part of users. Working with a variety of user groups and with the community at large, the Municipality can ensure its services meet high standards. The changing needs of a growing and diverse population will require a nimble organization capable of adjusting its services in a manner that continually generates value. The Municipality can be a leader in innovative service delivery practices.

#### 6.2.1

### Promote effectiveness in service provision

Effective services are those that meet the needs and reasonable expectations of residents, business interests, and other stakeholders. The Municipality will conduct regular needs assessments, establish and monitor indicators of service effectiveness, review existing procedures and agreements to meet changing needs, and ensure the alignment of corporate and departmental initiatives and priorities. Collecting and analyzing demographic and socio-economic information, through such initiatives as the annual Municipal Census, will enhance service delivery by providing a better understanding of those using the service.

#### 6.2.2

### Promote the efficient use of resources in service delivery

The cost of providing services is an ongoing concern of the Municipality, and assurance is needed that taxpayer dollars are expended reasonably. In pursuit of efficiency, the Municipality will evaluate service delivery against accepted service standards, against the cost of similar services provided by others (public and private), and against past practices. As well, the Municipality will coordinate service provision with external stakeholders and encourage the sharing of resources.



### 6.2.3

## Promote innovation in service delivery

Improvements to services often are the result of innovation. A commitment to innovation can mean adhering to best practices, but it can also mean leading best practices through creative, dynamic thinking. The Municipality will adopt practices that promote and encourage innovation in the workplace, that support research, idea-sharing, and learning, and that build synergies across functions both internally and externally.

# DIRECTION

## 6.3

### Engaged Citizens

An engaged citizenry is a sign of good community health. Engaged citizens work with one another and with their elected representatives to help direct the affairs of the Municipality. It begins with knowledge and understanding of municipal affairs, and is founded on the sharing of information, responsiveness to service requests, and the provision and support of good, comprehensive communication. In return, citizens become more committed to the concept of citizenship, and participate in democratic processes, including voting. An active and engaged citizenry is more likely to assist in community improvement through volunteerism and participation in public engagement initiatives.

#### 6.3.1

### Facilitate access to municipal information

To be engaged, citizens need reliable, accurate information upon which to voice informed opinions and initiate dialogue regarding municipal matters. Through a variety of media, the Municipality will promote a well-informed citizenry. The development and maintenance of a regional portal to provide best available real-time data will encourage data-sharing among stakeholders as well as ensure corporate knowledge is up-to-date and easily accessible for internal and external stakeholders.

#### 6.3.2

### Ensure responsiveness to citizen requests

Citizens need to know the Municipality is listening and takes their concerns seriously. They also need timely responses to inquiries or complaints. The Municipality will commit to responsive action on citizen requests and consider establishing such things as turnaround times for staff responses or undertaking follow-up surveys to gauge citizen satisfaction regarding municipal responsiveness.





6.3.3

### Establish consistent and effective engagement practices

People want to help shape decisions that affect their lives and, as the order of government closest to the people, there is an expectation of high levels of participation at the municipal level. The Municipality will commit to effective, comprehensive public engagement practices that will be tailored according to the specific needs of each community and which can evolve over time as needs change. It will also work collaboratively with the provincial and federal governments, First Nations and Métis communities, adjacent municipalities, and industry to improve the coordination of community engagement processes.

6.3.4

### Promote the concept of social responsibility

Through their sense of social responsibility, individuals recognize they have a role to play in upholding a healthy, democratic system. The Municipality will help promote and encourage the concept of social responsibility in its residents by encouraging individuals to become informed, participate in municipal affairs, exercise their right to vote, and support civil society through volunteerism.

## DIRECTION 6.4

### Effective Partnerships

Future success depends upon stakeholders working effectively in partnership to achieve a common vision for the region. This means creating collaborative and inclusive relationships built upon trust and respect. It also means being creative and innovative in finding new ways of doing business. Partnerships can create efficiencies and can leverage resources such that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. Senior governments, approval authorities, businesses, industries, community groups, non-government organizations, service providers, First Nations, and Métis peoples all play active roles in the development of the region and provide opportunities for meaningful, effective partnerships.

#### 6.4.1

### Facilitate the formation and management of partnerships

A commitment to partnerships requires focused attention and dedicated internal resources to assist in the formation and management of partnerships. The Municipality will advocate partnering and facilitate partnering agreements to assist in the delivery of programs, services, and operation of facilities, including public-private partnerships and leasing arrangements. These partnerships will also facilitate the development of major infrastructure, transportation, and municipal facilities. Other orders of government, industry, the not-for-profit sector, and other service providers all offer opportunities for effective partnerships.

#### 6.4.2

### Foster a relationship of mutual respect with Métis

Métis people provide an historic and cultural dimension to the region. The Municipality will help foster a relationship of mutual respect with Métis as joint sponsors of regional development initiatives and will work toward a heightened engagement of Métis people in municipal decision-making and service delivery processes. The Municipality will continue to acknowledge Treaty and Aboriginal rights declared in the *Constitution Act, 1982*.



#### 6.4.3

### Foster a relationship of mutual respect with First Nations

The region has a rich First Nations presence both on and off reserve. The Municipality currently partners with First Nations through servicing agreements and will continue to build increasingly strong, effective partnerships. Further, the Municipality will continue to acknowledge Treaty and Aboriginal rights declared in the *Constitution Act, 1982* and work with First Nations as another order of government. It will also continue to work with First Nations on those initiatives and service delivery processes where the Municipality and First Nations have a shared interest.

#### 6.4.4

### Seek international alliances

The Municipality has a global presence that can be leveraged into international alliances. Cooperative agreements between municipalities in geographically and politically distinct areas can be beneficial in promoting cultural and commercial ties. The Municipality will actively pursue the establishment of mutually beneficial sister city agreements with other regional municipalities.

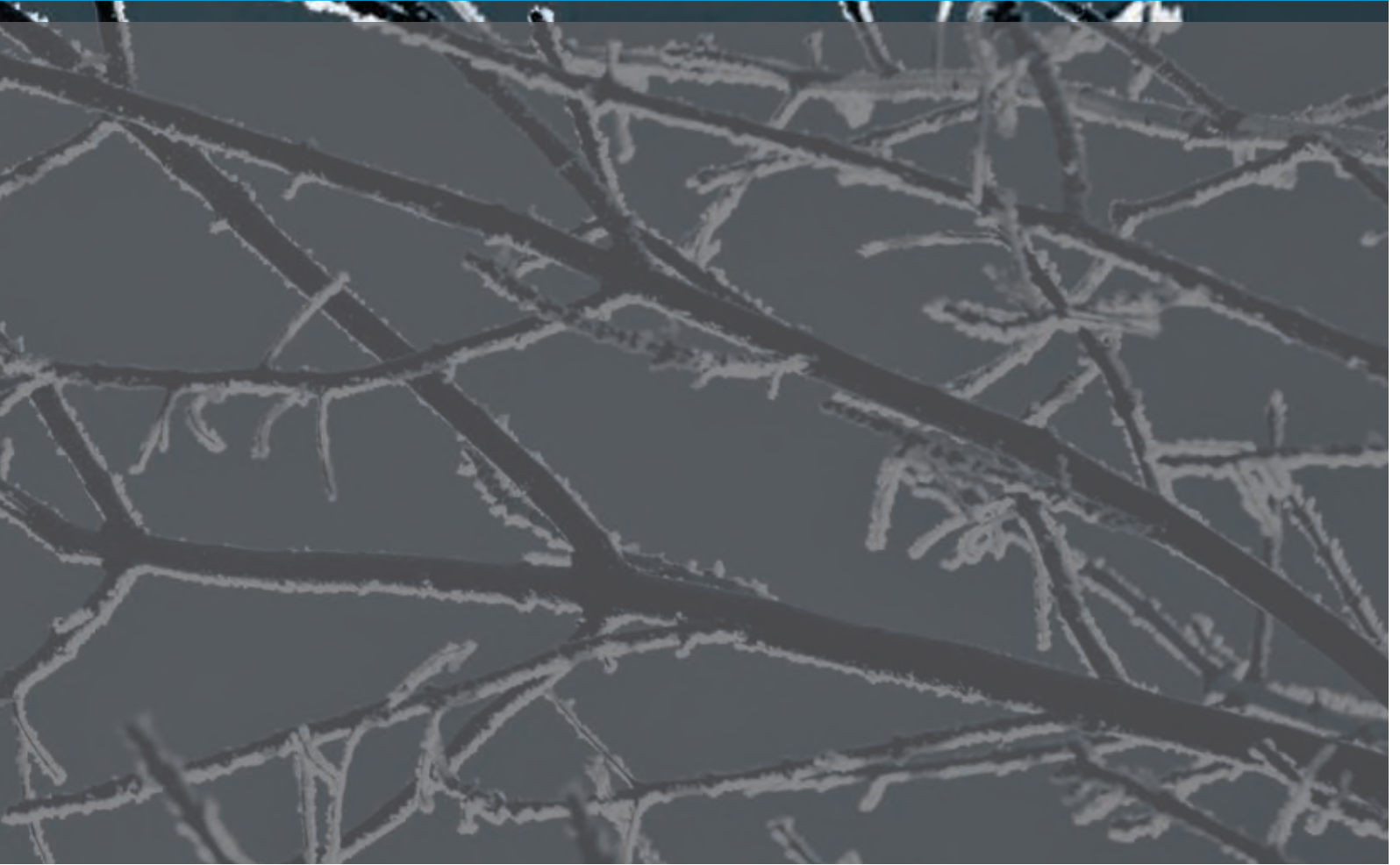


# a commitment to IMPLEMENTATION

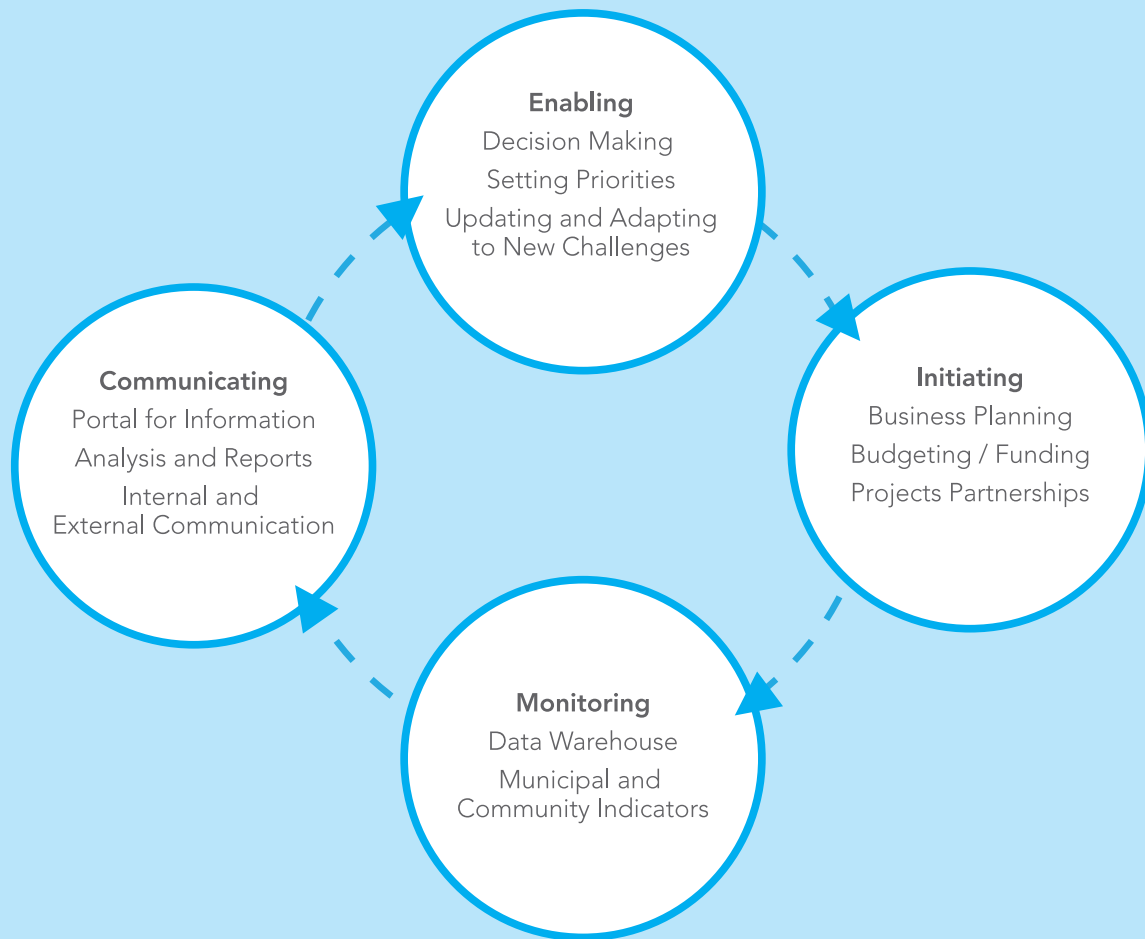
A successful Municipal Development Plan turns vision into actions and results. This is achieved through an ongoing process of implementation that identifies key actions that are linked to responsibilities, timelines, and budgets. Our approach to implementation follows a continual

process of enabling action to take place, initiating and monitoring those actions, and communicating results back as the process begins anew. This process will be carried out with a commitment founded on the principles of coordination, accountability, and transparency.

A COMMITMENT  
to implementation



# Implementation Process



## **ENABLING**

The enabling component of the process will determine what will be done. The Plan, public and Council priorities, and current issues will determine our priority actions and targets. This is also where any adjustment to the Plan or the implementation approach will take place to react to new and emerging opportunities and challenges. Implementation will be guided by establishing regulations, incentives, partnerships, and policies that help achieve the desired outcomes of the Plan.

## **INITIATING**

The initiating component of the process will determine how actions will get done, when, and by whom. Strategic and business planning will ensure that actions, responsibilities, and decisions align to the Plan. This process will result in municipal business plans and regional partnerships that outline actions, timelines, budgets, responsibilities, and coordination efforts consistent with the Plan.

## **MONITORING**

The monitoring component of the process will measure progress towards desired outcomes. A series of indicators will be developed to reflect changes in the community over time, and evaluate whether we are achieving the goals of the Plan. A comprehensive database will be used to assist in developing and tracking indicators.

## **COMMUNICATING**

The communicating component of the process will report on the Plan's progress. The Plan requires that the Municipality openly shares information about its processes and decisions, and remains accountable for its action and targets. Communication with stakeholders and the public will be essential in achieving this, and will serve as a platform for the Municipality to acknowledge and celebrate successes.



### PLAN REVIEW

While the Plan was developed with a 20-year time horizon, it is not intended to remain static and will need to be adjusted as circumstances change. Over time, projections will need to be adjusted, assumptions revisited, and the soundness of directions and strategies evaluated.

The Plan will be reviewed periodically. At a minimum, the Plan will undergo an interim five-year review and a comprehensive review within ten years. Given the rapid pace of growth and change expected for the region, these time frames may need to be accelerated. This will ensure the Plan remains relevant and effective over the long-term.

### AMENDMENTS

When considering an amendment, a rationale must be provided for why the amendment is required while also demonstrating how it meets or enhances the overall intent of the Plan. The Plan is adopted by Municipal Council through the approval of a municipal bylaw. Section 191 of the Municipal Government Act states that the authority to adopt a bylaw includes the authority to amend it. Amendments to the Plan should follow Municipally-established amendment processes before being submitted for Council consideration.

**A COMMITMENT**  
to implementation





### **PLAN INTERPRETATION**

The Plan consists of a series of numbered Directions and Strategies. Each is provided with a paragraph of explanatory text. The explanatory text is provided to enhance the understanding of the Plan's intent. In the event of a conflict between the Strategies, Directions, and/or text, the Strategy should prevail, followed by the Direction, followed by explanatory text. Where Municipal commitments are outlined in text, the Municipality will comply unless circumstances make it impractical or impossible. In such cases, a different course of action will be required and the Plan may require amendment.

### **MAP INTERPRETATION**

Land development concepts in the Plan present a broad and conceptual illustration of the proposed development structure of the region, urban area, and rural communities, and shall be interpreted as general intent only. These maps do not provide site specific direction.

# GLOSSARY of terms

## **Aboriginal**

Descendants of the original inhabitants of North America. The Canadian Constitution recognizes three groups of Aboriginal people – Indian (First Nation), Métis, and Inuit. These are three separate peoples with unique heritages, languages, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs.

## **Acreage**

A land use typically containing more than one acre or any large parcel of land.

## **Action**

Efforts necessary to implement Strategies.

## **Active Transportation**

Any form of human-powered transportation, such as walking, cycling, using a wheelchair, in-line skating, skateboarding, and skiing.

## **Aerodrome**

Any area of land, water (including the frozen surface thereof) or other supporting surface used that is set apart for the use and movement of aircraft and includes any buildings, installations and equipment associated with its operations.

## **Affordable Housing**

Housing that meets the needs of households that earn less than the median income for their household size and pay more than 30 percent of their gross annual household income on shelter.

## **Amenities**

Social and economic facilities and services that increase comfort in a community. These include recreational and health care facilities, shops, supermarkets, and daycare centres, among others.

## **Areas of Stability**

Existing rural communities where rapid, transformative growth is not desired and where the existing character and structure of the community will be respected.

## **Barrels Per Day (bpd)**

A measurement used to describe the amount of crude oil produced or consumed by an entity in one day.

## **Best Practices**

A method or technique that has consistently shown results superior to those achieved with other means, and that is used as a benchmark.

## **Biodiversity**

The number, range or variety of all life forms, including plants, animals and micro-organisms, and the ecological systems of which they form a part.

## **Brownfield**

A site or property that has been previously developed. These may be former commercial or industrial uses that may be contaminated or just perceived as such.

## **Business Plan**

A plan of how a municipal department will achieve the Municipal Development Plan goals and directions, as well as departmental objectives. The business plan is a statement of departmental strategies and actions, and the capital and operating budgets required to deliver supporting projects and initiatives.

## **Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)**

A system of buses that operate like a conventional rail system to provide faster and efficient transit service. The goal is to approach the service quality of rail transit while still enjoying the cost savings and flexibility of bus transit. A form of rapid transit.

## **City Centre**

Includes the Lower Townsite, Waterways and MacDonald Island, and is situated between Highway 63, the Clearwater River and the Athabasca River. This area features some of Fort McMurray's oldest settled neighbourhoods.

## **Climate Change**

The change in global climate patterns apparent from the mid- to late-20th century onwards. Attributed largely to the increased levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide produced by the use of fossil fuels.

### **Co-generation**

The process of capturing and utilizing by-product heat or steam often derived from energy generation, thus generating two forms of energy simultaneously.

For example, use of waste heat from an electrical generating plant for other purposes or use of waste heat from an industrial process to generate electricity.

### **Community**

A settled geographic area with defined boundaries. A community, if large enough, may consist of a group of interconnected neighbourhoods, and can be defined by the relationships that occur on a larger scale.

### **Community Core**

The geographical node within rural communities where a combination of commercial, retail, institutional, and residential uses are clustered to establish the community's primary centre and identity.

### **Complete Community**

Communities that offer the opportunity to work, live, play, shop and learn while meeting the daily needs of residents. Within a complete community there may be a range of uses, such as multiple housing options, jobs, commercial uses, local services and community facilities within close proximity. Often there are a number of convenient mobility options to choose from that provide access to these services.

### **Complete Streets**

Design of streets and urban spaces that support all modes of transportation with an emphasis on accessibility, safety, universal design, and active pedestrian uses.

### **Comprehensive Regional Infrastructure Sustainability Plan (CRISP)**

A guideline prepared by the Government of Alberta for the long-term infrastructure development in the Athabasca Oil Sands Area (AOSA) that supports Responsible Actions, the Government of Alberta's strategic plan for development of its oil sands resource. The CRISP focuses on community development and identifies infrastructure needs related to transportation, water and wastewater servicing, primary and secondary education, and health care.

### **Conservation**

The protection, enhancement and management of the natural environment and natural resources including natural areas, features, processes, biological diversity, and renewable and non-renewable resources for sustainable ecosystems and communities.

### **Conservation Area**

A clearly defined geographical space dedicated and managed to achieve the long-term conservation of biological diversity and ecosystem processes, including areas such as Provincial Parks, Wildland Provincial Parks and Ecological Reserves.

### **Crown Land**

An area registered in the name of "Her Majesty the Queen in right of Alberta as Represented by the Minister of the Crown" and remains under the administration of the province until the land is sold or transferred via legislation, such as Order-in-Council.

### **Crude Bitumen**

Petroleum that exists in the semi-solid or solid phase in natural deposits. It is typically heavy and viscous and will not flow unless heated or diluted.

### **Demographic**

A term used to describe the population of a place or territory. It refers to figures, images, and data pertaining to the characteristics and composition of the population. This may include age, gender, ethnicity, religion and other socio-economic status information.

### **Development Reserve**

A defined area of land surrounding an urban area or rural community that recognizes future urban or rural expansion as the long-term intended use of the land.

### **Direction**

Statements of intent that provide direction for Strategies of the Plan.

### **District Heating**

System for distributing heat generated in a centralized location for multiple residential and/or commercial heating requirements such as space heating and water heating. The source of energy may be derived from traditional methods or co-generation.

### **Ecological Corridor**

A continuous and connected corridor that allows the movement of wildlife or other organisms between two areas.

### **Ecological Footprint**

Standard measurement of a unit's influence on its habitat based on consumption and pollution. It compares human demand with earth's ecological capacity to regenerate.

# GLOSSARY of terms

## **Ecosystem**

The dynamic interaction between plants, animals, and microorganisms and their environment working together as a functional unit.

## **Employment Lands**

Land suitable for employment concentration including commercial (business and office parks), large format retail, light and heavy industrial, together with compatible ancillary uses including recreation.

## **Environmental Stewardship**

Managing and protecting sensitive natural areas, including watersheds, wetlands and riparian zones, while valuing the integrated role our natural environment plays in the health of the region.

## **Envision Wood Buffalo (EWB)**

An Integrated Community Sustainability Plan developed to define and advance the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo's long-term commitment to sustainability. Developed with community members across the region, EWB sets sustainability principles and goals for environmental, cultural, social, and economic dimensions of Wood Buffalo.

## **Established Neighbourhood**

Established areas with residential, commercial, retail, institutional, recreational and/or other ancillary uses.

## **FireSmart Communities**

Community design located near or within forested and other natural vegetated areas that incorporates the guidelines of FireSmart (developed by Alberta Sustainable Resource Development) in order to reduce the risk and potential of fire hazards and events.

## **First Nation**

A term that came into common usage in the 1970s to replace the word "Indian." Although the term First Nation is widely used, no legal definition of it exists. Among its uses, the term "First Nations peoples" refers to the Indian peoples in Canada, both Status and non-Status. Some Indian peoples have also adopted the term "First Nation" to replace the word "band" in the name of their community.

## **Goal**

Overarching themes in the Plan (six in total) that, together, build sustainable communities.

## **Governance**

Process of decision making and the process by which decisions are implemented. There are many types of governance, but, in the context of the Plan, governance is used as "municipal governance."

## **Government of Alberta (GoA)**

Government of the Province of Alberta, which is primarily responsible for delivering and managing the services of education, health and social services, natural resources, the environment, and the administration of justice and municipal government.

## **Green Building**

The practice of creating structures by utilizing processes that are environmentally responsible and resource-efficient throughout a building's life cycle.

## **Greenfield**

Type of land where there has been no previous development.

## **Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG)**

A gas in an atmosphere that absorbs and emits radiation within the thermal infrared range. It is widely acknowledged that emissions of GHGs contribute to global climate change.

## **Green Infrastructure**

An approach to natural systems or engineered structures designed to be environmentally friendly, and mimics natural processes and features to provide services. Examples include green roofs, constructed wetlands, and maintaining and enhancing existing natural areas that are integrated into neighbourhoods and communities.

## **Green Network**

Connected areas of green spaces within an urban, suburban or rural setting. These can provide a range of social, ecological, and economic benefits such as increasing the quality of life within an area and creating sustainable communities.

## **Green Spaces**

Undeveloped land preserved in a natural state or land developed for outdoor recreation uses (for example, parks, woodlands, conservation areas or waterfronts), depending on the land's characteristics.

### **Grey Water**

Wastewater that has been used in the home, including dish, shower, sink and laundry water, and excluding water from toilets (referred to as black water).

### **Hinterland**

Land surrounding and outside of urban areas and rural communities.

### **Human Settlement**

Area for a permanent or temporary community in which people live. These range in size and can include rural communities or urban areas, and conventionally includes a range of infrastructure, services and facilities for use by residents.

### **Indian Reserve**

A tract of land where the legal title is held by the Crown that has been set apart for the use and benefit of a First Nations band. While Indian Reserve is the legal term, First Nations Reserve is also used in the Plan.

### **Industry**

General term to describe economic activity. In the Plan, industry refers to natural resource extraction (for example, forestry and oil sands), manufacturing (also referred to as secondary industry), and service industry (for example, commercial, retail, and tourism).

### **Infill**

Development in an existing built-up area using vacant or under-utilized lands, behind or between existing development, which is consistent and compatible with the characteristics of the surrounding development.

### **Infrastructure**

Municipally-owned facilities such as water and sewer systems and treatment facilities, roads, sidewalks, bridges, civic buildings, land, street lights, transit buses, etc. Infrastructure may also include privately-owned utility facilities and equipment that provide power, gas, telephone, and cable television to the municipality.

### **Initiative**

A specific program, policy instrument or service that supports action. Initiatives should be defined by a start date, an end date, responsibility, and a budget.

### **In Situ**

In position or place, *in situ* recovery refers to various methods used to recover deeply buried bitumen deposits. Also see Steam Assisted Gravity Drainage (SAGD).

### **Intensification**

Describes an increase in the density of neighbourhoods, transportation corridors, commercial areas or mixed-use areas. This is often achieved through redevelopment activity in existing areas or areas identified at the onset of creating a new development area that will have a higher density.

### **Land Development Concept**

Illustrative concepts that outline the existing and future structure and/or land use of the community.

### **Land Use Bylaw (LUB)**

Adopted by Municipal Council pursuant to the Municipal Government Act for the establishment of land use districts and the regulation of development.

### **Light Rail Transit (LRT)**

An electric railway system that provides fast and efficient transit service. A form of rapid transit.

### **Livable Community**

Communities that provide and promote civic engagement and a sense of place through safe, sustainable choices for a variety of elements that include housing, transportation, education, cultural diversity and enrichment, and education.

### **Lower Townsite**

The urban neighbourhood considered the downtown in the Fort McMurray Urban Service Area. Situated in the valley on the west side of the Clearwater River between the neighbourhood of Waterways and Highway 63, it is referred to in this Plan as part of the City Centre.

### **Low Impact Development (LID)**

A land development approach of using various planning and design techniques that minimize the effect that development will have on the quality of the surrounding environment. This includes conserving and protecting natural resource systems and reducing infrastructure costs. This allows land to still be developed in a cost-effective manner that helps mitigate potential environmental impacts.

### **Major Recreation**

Land used for recreation activities (indoor and outdoor) on a large scale to serve the broad community or the region as a whole.

# GLOSSARY of terms

## **Master Plan**

A comprehensive long-term strategy for the physical growth or development of a community.

## **Métis**

People of mixed First Nations and European ancestry who identify themselves as Métis, as distinct from First Nations people, Inuit or non-Aboriginal people. The Métis have a unique culture that draws on their diverse ancestral origins, such as Scottish, French, Ojibway and Cree.

## **Mixed-use**

Existing or proposed development comprised of more than one complementary land use, either in the same building, in separate buildings in close proximity, or in a district. The mix of land uses may include residential, commercial, industrial, or institutional uses.

## **Multi-modal Transportation**

Mobility systems that account for various means of transportation such as public transit, walking, biking and personal vehicles. This includes planning for the connections and synergies among various modes that play a role in the overall transportation system.

## **Multi-use Corridor (MUCs)**

A dedicated land area for co-location of linear infrastructure that supports critical economic linkages to markets. These corridors may include public highways, electric transmission, rail, pipelines, water management, telecommunications towers, underground fibre optic cables, and recreational trails.

## **Municipal Development Plan (the Plan)**

A plan that functions as a municipality's overall policy guide for future growth and development. It is a statutory plan adopted by a Municipal Council under the authority of Section 632 of the Municipal Government Act. The plan outlines the direction and scope of future development, the provision of required transportation systems and municipal services, the coordination of municipal services and programs, environmental matters and economic development.

## **Municipal Government Act (MGA)**

Provincial legislation that outlines the power and obligations of a municipality.

## **Municipal Infrastructure**

Infrastructure maintained by the Municipality to provide services to its residents. In Land Development Concepts, Municipal Infrastructure refers to specific sites used for water and wastewater treatment facilities, sewage lagoons, and landfills.

## **Municipal Land**

Land owned by the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo or land designated as municipal reserve, school reserve, municipal and school reserve, environmental reserve or public utility lot.

## **Muskeg**

Waterlogged, spongy ground, consisting primarily of mosses and acidic, decaying vegetation that may develop into peat.

## **Natural Features**

Describes all natural objects, including mountains, plateaus, rivers, lakes, islands, waterfalls, monoliths, escarpments, ravines, as well as woodlands, forests, trees, hedgerows, and meadows.

## **Natural Habitat**

An ecological or environmental area that is inhabited by a particular species of animal, plant or other type of organism.

## **Neighbourhood**

A geographic area smaller than a community, which is often defined by main streets or other natural boundaries, that may share common characteristics such as geographic features or shared services. These can vary in size and often reflect the residents that live within it and their social relationships. A number of uses and services can be found in a neighbourhood, such as different types of housing, retail, commercial or schools; however, these vary from neighbourhood to neighbourhood.

## **New Neighbourhood**

Area identified for new or potential neighbourhood development that includes the development of residential, retail, institutional, recreational and/or ancillary uses.

## **Non-permanent Population**

People that work in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, but do not reside there permanently. Also referred to as mobile workers, these are people that temporarily live in hotels, motels, campgrounds or some sort of work camp used to house workers on a temporary basis.

### **Non-renewable Resources**

A natural resource which cannot be produced, grown, generated, or used on a scale that can sustain its consumption rate; once used there is no more remaining. These resources often exist in a fixed amount and are consumed much faster than nature can create them.

### **Off-highway Vehicle (OHV)**

A vehicle registration class for motor vehicles including all-terrain vehicles, off-highway motorcycles, and off-road vehicles such as 4x4 trucks or jeeps.

### **Oil Sands**

Sedimentary rocks (sand, clay and rock material) containing heavy oil or bitumen that cannot be extracted by conventional petroleum recovery methods.

### **Oil Sands Developers Group (OSDG)**

A non-profit, industry-funded association located in Fort McMurray, Alberta. This association represents oil sands operators and developers, and works in cooperation with related industries, government, Aboriginal peoples, and other organizations active in the Athabasca Oil Sands Area to define and address regional issues related to oil sands development.

### **Open House**

A method of public engagement that consists of an open forum to exchange information with the general public.

### **Open Space**

Natural areas including land suitable for formal recreational use (e.g., parks, trails) or infrastructure development. These areas may be unsuitable for development due to steep slopes, unstable soils, wetlands, or being located in areas prone to flooding.

### **Partnership**

An arrangement where parties agree to cooperate to advance their mutual interests. Partnership is used in a broad sense in the Plan and may cover legally-binding partnerships, partnerships at will and any other type of partnerships that fall between the two ends of the spectrum.

### **Planning Tools**

Full range of statutory and non-statutory plans used to guide development and implement the Strategies of the Plan.

### **Potable Water**

Water that is treated in a mechanical process and is safe for human consumption.

### **Principle of Sustainability**

A total of 16 principles identified under the four pillars of sustainability in Envision Wood Buffalo.

### **Priority Growth Areas**

Communities where substantial, transformative population growth and associated services will be accommodated.

### **Private Sector**

All organizations in an economy or jurisdiction that are not controlled by the government. This includes privately-owned business and not-for-profit organizations.

### **Public Art**

Works of art in any media that have been planned and executed with the specific intention of being sited or staged in a public space (outside or inside publically accessible buildings) and accessible to all

### **Public Engagement**

A process that provides an opportunity for citizens, municipal administration, Municipal Council and appointed officials to share information and gain an understanding of issues based on experience and knowledge, and to combine their energy to create a plan or to develop a course of action.

### **Rapid Transit**

A mass transportation system that has a high capacity and frequency, and is often physically separated or provides advantages over other modes of traffic in order to increase efficiency and shorten travel times. This may refer to rail or bus.

### **Recreation**

Includes all of those activities that an individual chooses to participate in during his/her leisure time, and is not confined solely to sports and physical recreation programs, but includes artistic, creative, cultural, social and intellectual activities. While recreation also includes culture, the word culture is added in many instances due to its importance.

### **Recreation and Tourism**

Areas around lakes, waterways or other natural features that are used for a variety of recreational purposes or have the potential to be formally developed for recreational and associated tourism use.

### **Redevelopment**

New construction or creation of new units, uses or lots on previously developed land in existing communities, including brownfield sites.

# GLOSSARY of terms

## **Region**

The geographic area of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo.

## **Riparian Area or Zone**

Areas around lakes, estuaries and streams that function as transition areas between land and water, and host a wide array of plant and animal life. These areas are likely to have an influence on the total ecological character and functional process of a watercourse or water body.

## **Rural Community**

The rural communities of Anzac, Conklin, Draper, Fort Chipewyan, Fort Fitzgerald, Fort MacKay, Gregoire Lake Estates, Janvier, and Saprae Creek, all of which are located within the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo.

## **Rural Service Area**

Portion of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo located outside of the Urban Service Area. These areas are recognized as equivalent to a municipal district by the Government of Alberta for the purposes of program delivery and grant eligibility.

## **Sanitary Landfill**

A waste disposal site used for the disposal of waste by deposit, under controlled conditions, on land or on land covered by water, including compaction of the waste into a cell and covering the waste with cover materials at regular intervals.

## **Small Business**

A business with fewer than 50 employees if service based, or fewer than 100 employees if goods producing based.

## **Socio-economic**

The relationships between economic and social conditions relevant to well-being.

## **Speaker Series**

Events that took place during the creation of the Plan in which a number of individuals with expertise in a specific field were invited to speak in a public forum to discuss a specific issue related to the Plan.

## **Stakeholder**

Any individual, organization or agency that has a specific interest or concern with the Plan that may be impacted once the Plan is adopted.

## **Statutory Plan**

A Municipal Development Plan, Area Structure Plan, Area Redevelopment Plan or Inter-Municipal Development Plan adopted by a municipal Council pursuant to the Municipal Government Act.

## **Steam Assisted Gravity Drainage (SAGD)**

A type of *in situ* technology that uses innovation in horizontal drilling to produce bitumen. Using drilling technology, steam is injected into the deposit to heat the oil sands and lower the viscosity of the bitumen. The hot bitumen migrates towards wells, bringing it to the surface, while the sand is left in place. *In situ* is Latin for "in place."

## **Strategy**

Statements that describe a pathway for achieving a Direction (i.e. "How do we get there?"). Strategies in the Plan are long-term (15 to 20 years in duration).

## **Sustainability**

The World Commission on the Environment and Development (1987) defines sustainability as "Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

## **Sustainable Development**

A pattern of resource use that aims to meet human needs while preserving the environment so that these needs can be met not only in the present, but also for generations to come.

## **Transit-oriented Development (TOD)**

High density and mixed-use residential and commercial areas at transit nodes and along transit corridors designed to maximize access to public transportation. TOD will often incorporate features to encourage transit ridership.

## **Universal Design**

Place design that promotes equal opportunity for all individuals regardless of age, stature, or ability to use the space. These spaces are designed to accommodate a wide variety of abilities, and minimize barriers to access or use.



**Urban Design**

Application of architectural and planning principles to the design of buildings and spaces with the interest of the public and the community in mind. Concern is given to building form, style and materials, views and vistas, open space and streetscapes to create a setting that is functional, aesthetically pleasing and respects and contributes to the urban setting and context in which the design is being placed.

**Urban Reserve**

A designated area around Fort McMurray identified for long-term future urban expansion.

**Urban Service Area**

Fort McMurray, located within the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo. Fort McMurray is recognized as equivalent to a city by the Government of Alberta for the purposes of program delivery and grant eligibility.

**Vision**

A broad statement capturing the desired image of the Municipality's future of the region for the next 20 years.

**Waste Heat**

Heat produced by machines, electrical equipment and industrial processes that are released into the atmosphere as waste. Also called secondary heat or low-grade heat.

**Wastewater**

Wastewater is any water that has been adversely affected in quality by human influence.

**Water Bodies**

Any location where water flows or is present, whether or not the flow or the presence of water is continuous, intermittent or occurs only during a flood.

**Water Conservation**

Reducing the usage of water and recycling of wastewater for different purposes such as cleaning, manufacturing, and agricultural irrigation.

**Watershed Management**

The process of creating and implementing plans, programs, and projects to sustain and enhance watershed functions that affect the plant, animal, and human communities within a watershed boundary.

**Wetland**

Those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface water or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include muskeg, swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas.

**Winter City**

Winter city is a concept for communities in northern latitudes that encourages transportation systems, buildings, and recreation projects to be designed and developed for all four seasons, with particular attention to how they perform during winter.

**Work Camp**

Temporary project accommodations that house construction and operational staff in proximity to a project site (often oil sands). These workers form a component of the non-permanent population.

## Wood Buffalo Heard...

Residents of Wood Buffalo played a key role in shaping the Municipal Development Plan. Through the What's the BIG IDEA Wood Buffalo? public engagement campaign launched on March 16th, 2011, residents and stakeholder groups were able to voice their opinions about the past, present, and future of Wood Buffalo. Over 15,000 interactions took place with the public and stakeholders to form the foundation of the Plan.

The public were engaged online through various forms of social media and the Plan's website ([www.bigideaswoodbuffalo.ca](http://www.bigideaswoodbuffalo.ca)). The website contained project information and hosted public discussions through the Question of the Day, where residents discussed issues related to the region. Videos highlighting Wood Buffalo activities were also posted. These generated discussion on how best we should live, work, play, move, and grow in the future.

Residents were also engaged through public meetings and open houses. Meetings took place in Fort McMurray

and the region's rural communities. In addition, the Big Idea Crew took to the streets of Fort McMurray daily for two and a half months to survey residents at popular locations and at festivals and events.

Focused workshops, presentations, and meetings also reached key partners and stakeholder groups. These contributors included First Nations and Métis groups, the private sector, the Government of Alberta, local non-profit organizations, youth groups, senior groups, service providers, and faith-based groups. A Speaker Series on the topics of sustainability, City Centre revitalization, and transportation got stakeholders and the public talking about key topics addressed in the Plan.

The draft Plan was also posted online and presented at community open houses for widespread public review and comment. Through this process, residents saw how their input was incorporated. The net result was the largest, most successful public engagement process ever completed in our region.

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