

NOTICE OF PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

DRAFT MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF WILLOW CREEK AND TOWN OF CLARESHOLM INTERMUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN



June 12, 2019
6:00 - 8:00 p.m.



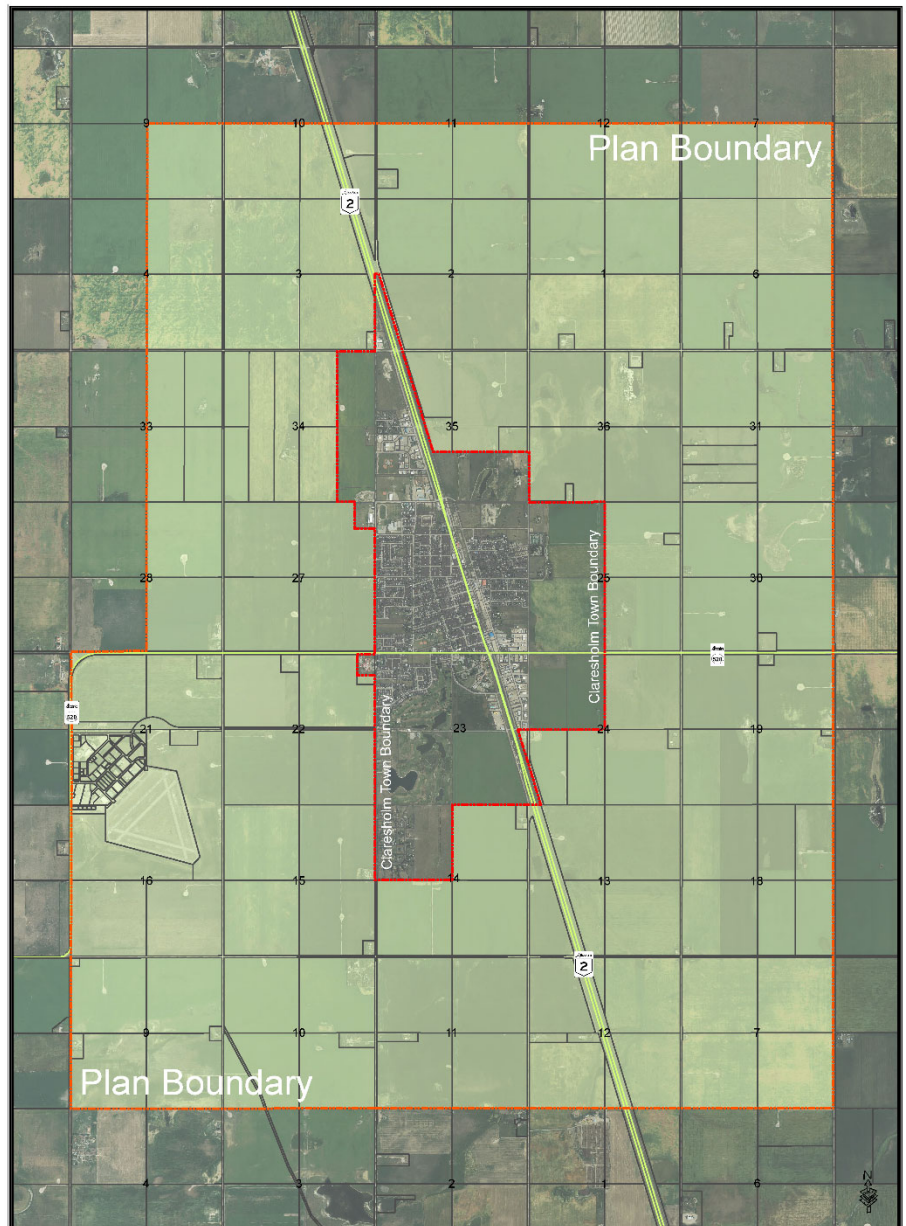
MD of Willow Creek Council Chambers

#273129 Secondary Highway 520 West, Claresholm, AB

The MD of Willow Creek and the Town of Claresholm are holding an Open House to obtain input on the draft joint Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP), applicable within the defined planning area illustrated below. An Intermunicipal Development Plan is a joint municipal planning document which is intended to foster on-going cooperation and coordination between the two municipalities within a defined planning area regarding land use, transportation, servicing and other matters of joint interest.

The Open House is a drop-in format with displays highlighting key concepts and policies of the Draft Plan. The MD of Willow Creek and the Town of Claresholm councillors, municipal staff and planning advisors will be in attendance to gather public feedback on the draft plan.

A copy of the Draft IDP is available for review at the MD of Willow Creek and the Town of Claresholm offices during normal business hours and on-line at www.mdwillowcreek.com/intermunicipal-development-plans or www.orrsc.com. For additional information, please contact the planning advisors for the MD of Willow Creek (Mike Burla) and the Town of Claresholm (Gavin Scott) at the Oldman River Regional Services Commission at gavinscott@orrsc.com or mikeburla@orrsc.com or by phone at 403-329-1344.





Draft Intermunicipal Development Plan

Municipal District of Willow Creek No. 26

Town of Claresholm

June 2019

Prepared for:



and



By:



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Cover Art Courtesy of Claresholm Economic Development

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Municipal District of Willow Creek No. 26 and Town of Claresholm

INTERMUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

PART A: INTRODUCTION

1. BACKGROUND

An Intermunicipal Development Plan (IMDP) is a statutory document prepared for and adopted by two or more municipalities, which deals with land use planning matters of mutual interest.

The adoptions of this plan are the result of a collaborative effort by the Town of Claresholm and the Municipal District of Willow Creek (MD) in addressing sensitive land use issues in close proximity to the Town. Dialogue between the Town and the Municipal District through a committee of Oldman River Regional Services Commission (ORRSC) planning staff and administration has reviewed the existing Municipal Development Plans (MDPs) and addressed land use issues within the plan boundary.

Both municipalities can be commended in their intermunicipal and municipal planning efforts as defined by their respective MDPs and Land Use Bylaws. But with the adoption of the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan and mandated Intermunicipal planning by the province, clearly defined plans with respect to growth directions and land management adjacent to urban areas need to be agreed upon for both urban and rural municipalities. The complexity of IMDPs requires unique problem solving, negotiation and cooperation to reach mutual agreement. This document sets out the framework for the municipalities' efforts in planning in the fringe.

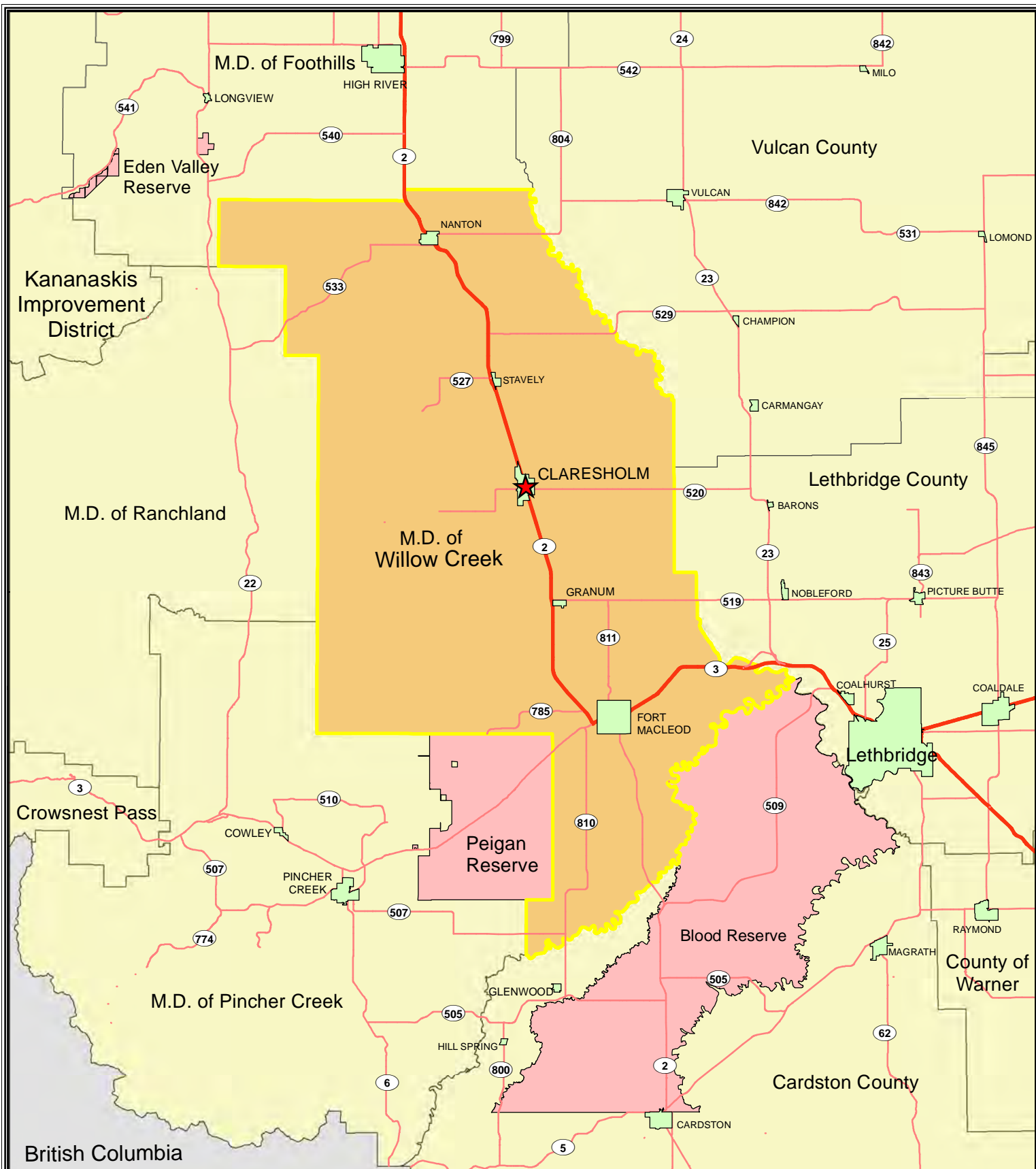
2. PLAN PREPARATION PROCESS

The Oldman River Regional Services Commission undertook a review of the present planning documents and many common areas of agreement were realized and discussed with Staff from both municipalities. The results were compiled into a document entitled "Background Report to the Intermunicipal Development Plan: Municipal District of Willow Creek – Town of Claresholm".

The background report sets the stage for the creation of the Intermunicipal Development Plan. This plan reflects the collaboration of both municipalities and the landowners. An open house was scheduled in advance of a mandatory public hearing required by the *Municipal Government Act*. At the discretion of both councils, the document was then adopted by individual bylaws.

3. INTENT AND APPLICATION

The purpose of this Intermunicipal Development Plan, in accordance with the MGA, is to prescribe policy for future land use and development, and any other matters relating to the physical, social or economic development of an area that the councils of the Town and Municipal District consider necessary. As well, it plans for orderly and properly controlled development surrounding the urban area which allows for timely expansion with minimal land use conflicts.







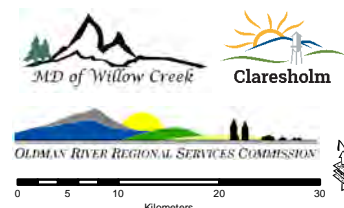
TOWN OF CLARESHOLM
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M.D. OF WILLOW CREEK No. 26
BYLAW # _____

INTERMUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
REGIONAL LOCATION MAP

MAP 1

-  Town of Claresholm
-  Municipal District of Willow Creek
-  Primary Highway
-  Secondary Highway



This Intermunicipal Development Plan applies to the lands as shown on the IMDP Boundaries Map, Map 2.

4. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOALS

It is the intent of the councils of the Town of Claresholm and Municipal District of Willow Creek that the objectives and policies of this plan be governed by the goals stated below:

- To facilitate orderly and efficient development in the designated fringe area while identifying each municipality's opportunities and concerns.
- To identify the land uses each municipality envisages for the fringe area.
- When practical, to harmonize both municipalities' development and subdivision standards and requirements.
- To identify possible joint ventures, such as the provision of municipal services.
- To provide for a continuous and transparent planning process that facilitates ongoing consultation and cooperation among the two municipalities and affected ratepayers.
- To provide methods to implement and amend the various policies of the plan which are mutually agreed to by both municipalities.

OBJECTIVES

The following objectives shall be used as a framework for the policies of this plan and its implementation:

- To identify the growth strategies of the Town of Claresholm and ensure that these growth strategies are compatible with the development and land use policies of the Municipal District of Willow Creek.
- To discourage the fragmentation of agricultural land and to prevent the premature conversion of agricultural lands in the fringe area or area adjacent to it to non-agricultural uses.
- To recognize the continued viability of both communities by providing development in the urban fringe that:
 - (a) fosters a healthy environment, and
 - (b) seeks to minimize conflict when expansion becomes necessary.
- To direct country residential and other non-agricultural development to locations which are least disruptive to the agricultural community and to orderly urban expansion.
- To assist appropriate approval authorities to exercise control over confined feeding operations, industrial or other development which may have a potentially adverse impact on existing and/or future land use.

- To discourage development on flood-prone areas, potentially unstable slopes, undermined areas and other hazard lands and to ensure that public health and safety issues are given adequate consideration when land use and related decisions are being made.
- To maintain and promote a safe and efficient roadway network.
- To ensure development is serviced to standards appropriate to the location and type of development.

5. PLAN AREA

Both municipalities agree that the area affected by this plan includes all lands required to ensure the cooperation and coordination of land uses around the Town of Claresholm. This plan contains two levels of planning coordination around the town. Firstly, the Claresholm Urban Fringe boundary identified in this plan (Map 2) realistically and closely reflects the current and future needs of both the MD and Town. Secondly, a 1.5-mile referral area for discretionary land uses that may affect the Town's growth shall continue to be utilized.

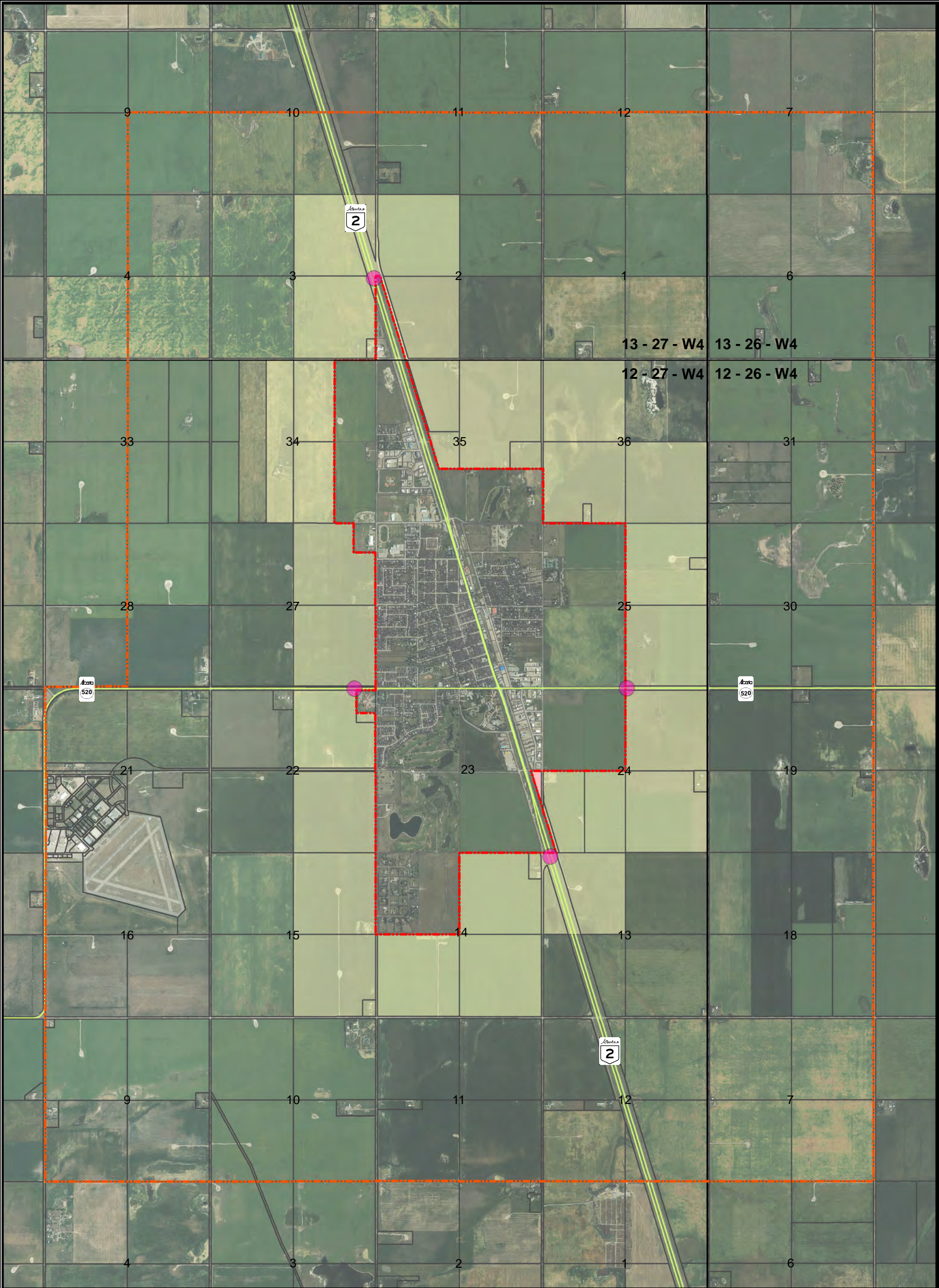
The Claresholm urban fringe boundary encompasses approximately 4080.57 acres of land adjacent to the Town of Claresholm as illustrated in Map 2 and contains the following:

- NW ¼ Sec 13, Twp 12 Rge 27 W4
- NE ¼ & S ½ Sec 14, Twp 12 Rge 27 W4
- E ½ Sec 15, Twp 12 Rge 27 W4
- E ½ Sec 22, Twp 12 Rge 27 W4
- Small Portion of SE ¼ Sec 23, Twp 12 Rge 27 W4
- S ½ & NE ¼ Sec 24, Twp 12 Rge 27 W4
- E ½ Sec 25, Twp 12 Rge 27 W4
- E ½ Sec 27, Twp 12 Rge 27 W4
- Portions of Sec 34, Twp 12 Rge 27 W4
- Portions of Sec 35, Twp 12 Rge 27 W4
- S ½ & NW ¼ Sec 36, Twp 12 Rge 27 W4
- Portions of W ½ Sec 2, Twp 13 Rge 27 W4
- E ½ Sec 3, Twp 13 Rge 27 W4.

From the perspective of both municipalities, maintaining the integrity of the Intermunicipal Development Plan is critical to the preservation of their long-term interests. This plan is based upon a shared vision of a future growth framework and reflects a mutual agreement on areas of growth for each municipality.

The main purpose of the two boundaries is to act as a referral mechanism to ensure dialogue between the two municipalities regarding development within the fringe. It should be noted that some of the lands contained within the plan boundary are already zoned, subdivided or developed for non-agricultural uses. It is understood that existing uses within either boundary are permitted and will continue operations.

However, the expansion or intensification of existing uses shall be required to meet the policies of this IMDP and the applicable land use bylaw. Those lands that have been previously redesignated or subdivided or both need to be reviewed in the context of this plan and amendments may be



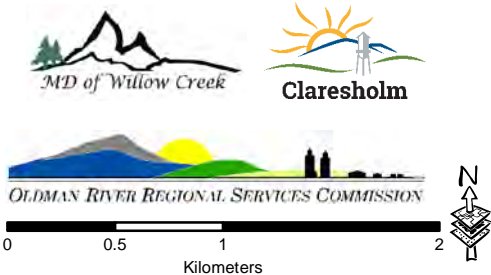
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M.D. OF WILLOW CREEK No. 26
BYLAW # _____

INTERMUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
IMDP BOUNDARY

MAP 2

- Claresholm Municipal Boundary
- IMDP Referral Boundary
- Highways
- Urban Fringe Boundary
- MD of Willow Creek Rural Commercial (RC)
- Entranceways



required to ensure that future development will comply with the mutually agreed upon growth pattern.

PART B: POLICIES

This document outlines policies that apply to lands in both the Claresholm Urban Fringe and referral area boundaries and are to be used as a framework for decision making in each municipality with input and cooperation of the other jurisdiction. Each municipality is responsible for decisions within their boundaries using the plan policies and the procedures provided in the plan.

This section of policy is intended to provide guidance to decision makers when considering land use approvals within the two boundaries. Approvals shall only be given to uses that are complementary to uses located in the adjacent jurisdiction. Other sections of this plan may also apply.

1. GENERAL FRINGE AREA LAND USE

- 1.1 This plan acknowledges land use designations for isolated commercial, industrial and residential that existed prior to the adoption of this plan. Following adoption and for the purpose of managing land use around the Town of Claresholm, the area will typically designated to either of the following land use districts:
 - (a) Rural General, or
 - (b) Claresholm Urban Fringe
- 1.2 The Claresholm Urban Fringe district is established and shown on Map 2. This area is established to allow the Town of Claresholm to maintain for its residents both a high quality of life and a quality environment.
- 1.3 Parcels within the urban fringe boundary (Map 2) that are currently zoned Rural General - RG shall be redesignated as Claresholm Urban Fringe in the Municipal District of Willow Creek Land Use Bylaw. Extensive agriculture will be the primary land use of the lands, until these lands are redesignated in a land use bylaw in accordance with this plan.
- 1.4 The list of permitted and discretionary uses within the Claresholm Urban Fringe District contained within the Municipal District of Willow Creek Land Use Bylaw will be agreed upon between the two municipalities prior to adoption. Any amendments thereto after adoption must be addressed via separate discussion.
- 1.5 Prior to developing lands for urban residential or urban industrial/commercial uses, the first step may be to commence an annexation, IMDP amendment, area structure plan and redesignation process. These requirements are outlined in the following sections.

2. CONFINED FEEDING OPERATIONS

Confined Feeding Operations (CFOs) are a land use that may have an adverse effect on the urban area, however the approval authority for these operations is the Natural Resources Conservation Board (NRCB). Policies regarding CFOs are intended to state the position of the two participating municipalities for the lands that are subject to this plan.

These policies recognize that it is important for both jurisdictions to maintain a good quality of life and high quality environment and support all types of agriculture, as both are fundamental to growth and development within each of their municipality's.

- 2.1 New confined feeding operations (CFOs) are not permitted to be established within the Intermunicipal Development Plan Confined Feeding Exclusion Area as illustrated on Map 3, CFO Exclusion Area.
- 2.2 In regard to manure application on lands in the CFO Exclusion Area, the standards and procedures as outlined in the Agricultural Operation Practices Act, Standards and Administration Regulation shall be applied.
- 2.3 Both municipalities request the NRCB to circulate all applications for confined feeding operations' registrations or approvals within the Intermunicipal Development Plan Referral Boundary to each respective municipality.
- 2.4 Both Councils recognize and acknowledge that existing confined feeding operations located within the exclusion area will be allowed to continue to operate under acceptable operating practices and within the requirements of the Agricultural Operation Practices Act and Regulations.
- 2.5 The Town agrees that it will notify and consult with the MD prior to engaging the NRCB or other provincial authorities, should a problem or complaints arise regarding a CFO operator's practices.
- 2.6 For statutory plan consistency, as required under the Municipal Government Act, the MD Municipal Development Plan CFO policies and associated map shall be reviewed and should be updated to reflect the CFO Exclusion Area as defined by Map 3 within the first year of this Plan being adopted.
- 2.7 Consistent with the MD of Willow Creek's LUB and MDP, all applications regarding intensive livestock operation (ILO) and CFOs within the 1.5 mile referral area shall be forwarded to the Town for review and comment by Town staff.

3. GROUPED COUNTRY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

The Municipal District of Willow Creek has had a strong policy of protecting agricultural land by being very restrictive with respect to the approval of grouped country residential development, except for very specific areas of the municipality.

- 3.1 Lands considered high quality agricultural land shall not be subdivided for grouped country residential use.
- 3.2 The MD of Willow Creek shall encourage uses to locate in or in close proximity to the hamlet areas established in the municipality and not within the referral area of this plan.
- 3.3 Any proposal for grouped country residential within the designated Urban Fringe shall be required make application to amend this plan and if adopted identify the area on Map 2 as potential group country residential.

- 3.4 A parcel or a lot that is used or intended to be used for grouped country residential development shall be designated grouped country residential in the Municipal District of Willow Creek Land Use Bylaw. This shall be a prohibited use in the Claresholm Urban Fringe district.
- 3.5 Prior to giving consideration to a redesignation request to grouped country residential in the Municipal District of Willow Creek Land Use Bylaw, the Municipal District shall require the applicant to submit and have approved an area structure plan.
- 3.5 Town servicing to proposed grouped country residential development in the fringe will not be encouraged without serious consideration being given to annexation of the proposed lands.
- 3.6 The Municipal District of Willow Creek shall, as a condition of approval, require that private septic systems, as identified by Alberta Environment or by the Safety Codes Council Private Sewage Systems Standard of Practice, meet all provincial requirements.

4. COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Commercial and industrial development applications can be expected and the following policies will ensure coordination with existing and future developments in the Town. The Municipal District may also benefit from development in specific locations.

- 4.1 Any proposal for commercial or industrial use within the designated Urban Fringe shall be required make application to amend this plan and if adopted identify the area on Map 2 as a potential commercial or industrial area.
- 4.2 Home occupation - major shall be a discretionary use within the Claresholm Urban Fringe district of the Municipal District of Willow Creek Land Use Bylaw.
- 4.3 Noxious industries shall be prohibited within the Claresholm Urban Fringe district.

5. INTERMUNICIPAL AGREEMENTS AND SERVICES

A high degree of cooperation currently exists between the two jurisdictions and further opportunities for joint activities on a wide variety of issues may become available in the future.

- 5.1 Both municipalities shall ensure that land development and servicing is coordinated, recognizing that:
 - (a) statutory plan compliance or amendment, land use redesignation, and subdivision to facilitate development are the first steps in land development,
 - (b) development shall be provided with suitable levels of service depending on its requirements and location, and
 - (c) the actions of regulatory authorities shall be coordinated with those of both municipalities, whenever possible.
- 5.2 To ensure that sewage disposal is given full consideration well in advance of development approval, the Town and the Municipal District agree that this shall be addressed as early as possible whenever land use decisions are being made. All appropriate standards are to be met.

- 5.3 It is recognized by the two municipalities that benefits can occur through cooperation and both may explore the option of sharing future services and/or revenues through an Intermunicipal Collaborative Framework or a special agreement.

6. SUBDIVISION CRITERIA

Although the subdivision process for the fringe area may utilize the same policies as the rest of the MD, it is recognized that more evaluation may be necessary to minimize the potential for conflicts with existing or proposed uses and as outlined in this plan.

7. URBAN EXPANSION NEEDS

Identification of possible expansion areas provides an indication of lands that need to have special considerations. Policies are in place to ensure the opinion of all stakeholders into the expansion process.

- 7.1 In order to allow for the planning and installing of infrastructure, the Town has identified in the Intermunicipal Development Plan and Municipal Development Plan processes general and long-term directions of growth. Lands shown in Map 2 as Claresholm Urban Fringe have been identified as areas which may be needed to accommodate future urban development. Annexation of these lands will occur in the framework of this and other long-range planning documents and will be based upon orderly development.
- 7.2 The process of including the above noted lands into the Town shall be commenced by the Town over a period time after the adoption of this plan and continue as required in accordance with the *Municipal Government Act* including the public and council negotiations.
- 7.3 Annexation involves a number of stakeholders that need to be involved in the process including:
- land owners directly affected by the application must be part of the negotiation process;
 - Town of Claresholm, who must make the detailed case for annexation and be a major participant in any negotiations;
 - MD of Willow Creek, who must evaluate the annexation application and supporting documentation for the impact on its financial status and land base as well as ratepayer issues. The MD will, as part of the negotiation with ratepayers, wish to see arrangements regarding, but not limited to:
 - property taxes,
 - use of land continuing as agriculture until needed for development, and
 - ability to keep certain animals on site;
 - local authorities such as the Alberta Health Services and Alberta Environment;
 - Municipal Government Board, who will evaluate the application and responses from the stakeholders.
- 7.4 Annexation boundaries shall follow legal boundaries and natural features to avoid creating fragmented patterns of municipal jurisdiction.
- 7.5 The Town and MD shall negotiate a formula for the determination of compensation on annexation. Negotiation may occur on any or all of the following:

- revenue or tax-sharing,
- off-site levies and levy transfers, and
- municipal reserve transfers.

7.6 Upon a Municipal Board Order approving an annexation, the Claresholm Urban Fringe District boundary should be updated to reflect the municipal boundary change by moving outward one quarter section or as identified in a Town of Claresholm MDP growth strategy.

8. CREEKS AND HAZARD LANDS

Frog Creek is the main water feature in the fringe and referral area and provides opportunity for cooperation as well as some challenges.

- 8.1 Recognizing that development near Frog Creek can impact downstream lands (and in some cases upstream lands), both municipalities agree that they will consider potential effects and discuss proposals before either undertakes development near the creek within the Town or the lands subject to this plan.
- 8.2 Both municipalities endorse the dedication of Environmental Reserve or an Environmental Reserve Easement within the Town or the lands subject to this plan along the creek and any other major natural drainage course, recognizing that the MGA authorizes:
- (a) the dedication of a minimum 6-metre strip; and
 - (b) the dedication of any lands that are unstable or subject to flooding; and
 - (c) the dedication of lands which consist of a swamp, gully, ravine, coulee or a natural drainage course.
- 8.3 Where either municipality identifies that a development, subdivision or redesignation application may occur on or in potentially hazardous land, the developer shall provide an analysis prepared by a qualified Alberta professional showing the approval is appropriate and safe at that location.

9. WIND ENERGY CONVERSION SYSTEMS (WECS)

Wind Energy Conversion Systems (WECS) are a growing industry in southern Alberta and provides economic benefits to both urban and rural municipalities. As a land use, WECS structures can be imposing due to their size. Through municipal cooperation, it is hoped that the industry can expand and grow as a compatible land use.

- 9.1 The protection of agricultural lands and associated land uses shall be considered when decisions regarding wind power generation are made.
- 9.2 No development approvals or redesignation shall be given to WECS (Category 3) within the Claresholm Urban Fringe district.
- 9.3 Both municipalities agree to endorse green energy development and further agree to have open dialogue on proposed developments.

10. SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS

Solar Energy Systems are a growing industry in southern Alberta and provides economic benefits to both urban and rural municipalities. As a land use, solar energy system, commercial/industrial can be imposing due to their land coverage. Through municipal cooperation, it is hoped that the industry can expand and grow as a compatible land use.

- 10.1 The protection of agricultural lands and associated land uses shall be considered when decisions regarding solar power generation are made.
- 10.2 No development approvals or redesignation shall be given to Solar energy system, commercial/industrial within the Claresholm Urban Fringe district.
- 10.3 Both municipalities agree to endorse green energy development and further agree to have open dialogue on proposed developments.

11. TRANSPORTATION CORRIDORS and COMMUNITY ENTRANCEWAYS

Transportation corridors and entranceways are key components to any land use planning document. Land use and transportation cannot be planned separately nor can two municipalities plan these components in isolation.

- 11.1 The Town and MD will cooperate on the development and approvals of all future Transportation Master Plans.
- 11.2 All subdivision proposals within the plan area shall secure all right-of-way requirements for future road expansion. Particular attention should be given to major intersections requirements.
- 11.3 Standards for a hierarchy of roadways should be identified and established between the two jurisdictions. Access control regulations should also be established to ensure major collectors and arterials are protected.
- 11.4 If required by Alberta Transportation or the municipality, at the time of subdivision or development, the developer shall conduct traffic studies with respect to impact and access onto Highways 2 and 520. Any upgrading identified by such studies shall be implemented by the developer at its sole cost and to the satisfaction of the municipality and Alberta Transportation.
- 11.5 Common standards of development adjacent the entranceways identified on Map 2 should be developed in each municipality's LUB and MDP. Standards should include but are not limited to landscaping, signage, screening and fencing. Architectural elements should enhance the visual appeal of intermunicipal entranceways.
- 11.6 Billboards, third party and off-premise signs along entranceways (Map 2) are prohibited.
- 11.7 Both municipalities agree to inform and invite the other municipality for all discussions with Alberta Transportation.

PART C: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

The plan's implementation will be the ongoing responsibility of both councils whose actions must reflect the plan. The support and cooperation of each municipal staff, planning advisors, public and private organizations, and the general public will also be needed for implementation. The following guiding principles shall govern the plan's implementation:

1. The Town and Municipal District agree that they shall ensure that the policies of this plan are properly, fairly and reasonably implemented.
2. The Town and Municipal District shall monitor and review the policies of this plan on a regular basis or as circumstances warrant.
3. The Town and the Municipal District's Land Use Bylaws and Municipal Development Plans shall be amended to reflect the policies of this plan.

1. REFERRALS

This plan is designed with a two tiered referral system. Referrals for both the Claresholm Urban Fringe and referral area boundaries are outlined below.

Urban Fringe Intent

For the Claresholm Urban Fringe land use issues are addressed at five main points in the approval system including:

- municipal development plans and amendments,
- all other statutory plans and amendments,
- land use bylaws and amendments,
- subdivision of a parcel and any appeal,
- development approval and any appeal.

Each referral shall contain all available information for review and a municipality may request further information to be provided. In the case of all referrals, a written response is expected within 30 days.

Urban Fringe Referral Policies

- 1.1 As the first step in the urban fringe referral process, all applications within the plan boundary or proposed documents affecting the plan boundary shall be submitted to the Town or MD for comment. The full referral process is outlined in Figure 1 – Referral Flow Chart.

- 1.2 **Municipal Development Plan Amendments**

- (a) A newly proposed MD of Willow Creek Municipal Development Plan or amendment that will have an impact on this plan shall be referred to the Town for comment.

- (b) A newly proposed Town of Claresholm Municipal Development Plan or amendment affecting the municipal expansion policies shall be referred to the MD for comment.
- (c) The above referrals shall be made and considered prior to a public hearing.

1.3 All Other Statutory Plans and Amendments

- (a) A newly proposed MD of Willow Creek statutory plan or amendment that will have an impact on this plan shall be referred to the Town for comment.
- (b) A newly proposed Town of Claresholm statutory plan or amendment affecting the municipal expansion policies shall be referred to the MD for comment.
- (c) The above referrals shall be made and considered prior to a public hearing.

1.4 Land Use Bylaws and Amendments (redesignation and text amendments)

- (a) All land use bylaw amendments in the MD of Willow Creek which change a land use district or a part of the Land Use Bylaw which would affect the policies of this plan shall be referred to the Town.
- (b) The Town shall refer all redesignation applications that are located adjacent to the Town boundary.
- (c) Any proposed new Land Use Bylaw in the MD or Town shall be referred to the other for comment.
- (d) The above referrals shall be made and considered prior to a public hearing.

1.5 Subdivision Applications

- (a) The MD shall refer all subdivision applications within the Claresholm urban fringe boundaries to the Town for comment.
- (b) The Town shall refer all subdivision applications located on lands adjacent to the town boundary to the MD for comment. The above referrals shall be made and considered prior to a decision being made.

1.6 Development applications

- (a) The MD shall refer all discretionary use applications located in the Claresholm urban fringe boundary to the Town for comment and may refer permitted use applications if there are some conditions that may alleviate a perceived conflict with a Town property.
- (b) The Town shall refer to the MD all discretionary use applications, if the application is adjacent to lands in the MD and any application involving a use of land or buildings which may have a noxious, hazardous or otherwise detrimental impact on land within the MD
- (c) The above referrals shall be made and considered prior to a decision being made.

- 1.7 Municipalities are encouraged to refer any requests for approval to each other in areas not contained in this plan if some impact may occur in the other jurisdiction.

IMDP Referral Area Intent

For the IMDP Referral Area land use issues are addressed for specific uses in the approval system and reflect many policies already established in the MD of Willow Creek's Municipal Development Plan and Land Use Bylaw.

Each referral shall contain all available information for review and a municipality may request further information to be provided. In the case of all referrals, a timely written response is expected.

IMDP Referral Area Policies

- 1.8 In accordance with the MD of Willow Creek MDP, all land use bylaw amendments, subdivision and non-residential discretionary use development applications within 1.5 miles shall be referred to the Town of Claresholm. The 1.5-mile referral in this plan is known as the IMDP referral boundary as depicted on Map 2.

As the first step in the IMDP referral boundary process, all applications within the boundary or proposed documents affecting the plan boundary shall be submitted to the Town for comment. The full referral process is outlined in Figure 1 – Referral Flow Chart.

1.9 CFO / ILO Development applications

- (a) The MD shall refer all CFO / ILO use applications located in the IMDP referral boundary to the Town for comment.
- (b) The above referrals shall be made and considered prior to a decision being made.

1.10 Grouped Country Residential Area Structure Plan or Redesignation applications

- (a) The MD shall refer all Grouped Country Residential Area Structure Plan or Redesignation applications located in the IMDP referral boundary to the Town for comment.
- (b) The above referrals shall be made and considered prior to a decision being made.

1.11 Coordination of Transportation Planning

- (a) The MD shall refer all transportation improvements located in the IMDP referral boundary to the Town for comment.
- (b) The above referrals shall be made and considered prior to a decision being made.

2. DISPUTE SETTLEMENT

By its nature, the policies of this plan are general and make each municipality responsible for decisions made in their own jurisdiction. This suggests that disputes may arise from time to time. Using the following system, it is hoped the dispute can firstly be avoided, and secondly, settled locally. Only after a series of steps would the dispute go beyond the local level.

In the case of a dispute, the following process will be followed to arrive at a solution:

- Step 1** It is important to avoid any dispute by ensuring the plan is adhered to as adopted, including full circulation of any permit or application that may affect a municipality

or as required in this plan and prompt enforcement of the policies of the plan and Land Use Bylaw.

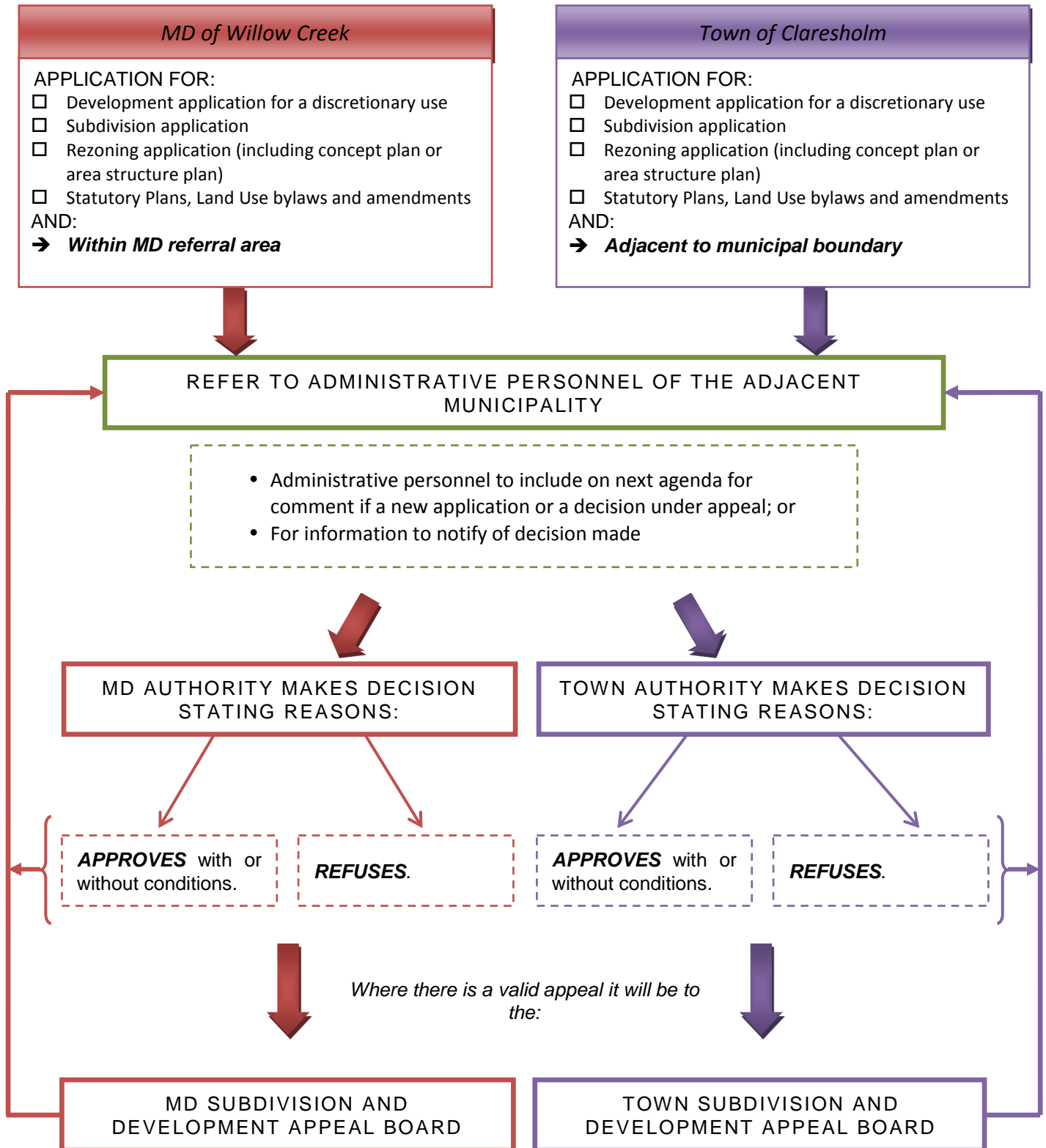
- Step 2** Should either municipality identify an issue related to this plan that may result in a more serious dispute, that municipality should call a joint meeting of the two councils to discuss the issue.
- Step 3** Should the councils be unable to reach a solution, either municipality may contact Alberta Municipal Affairs to commence a mediation process under the department's guidance.
- Step 4** In a case where further action under the MGA is unavailable, the results of the mediation report will be binding on each municipality.
- Step 5** In the case of a dispute regarding:
- a statutory plan or amendment, or
 - a land use bylaw or amendment,
- a dispute under section 690(1) of the *Municipal Government Act* may be initiated.

3. PLAN VALIDITY AND AMENDMENT

This plan will not contain a “sunset” clause, but rather, a method of continuous updating as required.

- 3.1 This plan comes into effect on the date it is adopted by both the Town of Claresholm and Municipal District of Willow Creek. It remains in effect until either:
- (a) council rescinds the plan by bylaw after giving six months notice, or
 - (b) by mutual agreement.
- 3.2 Recognizing that this plan may require an amendment from time to time to accommodate an unforeseen situation, such an amendment must be adopted by both councils using the procedures established in the *Municipal Government Act*.
- 3.3 Third party applications for an amendment to this plan shall be made to either municipality and be accompanied by the appropriate fees to each municipality.
- 3.4 That the staff of both municipalities reviews the plan every three years from the date of adoption and report to the respective councils. Each council shall respond within 60 days with a recommended course of action.

Figure 1: Intermunicipal Development Plan Referral Flowchart



APPENDIX A – Definitions

Adjacent means land which is contiguous or would be contiguous if not for a river, stream, railway, road or utility right-of-way or reserve land.

Area structure plan means a statutory plan prepared in accordance with Section 634 of the *Municipal Government Act* and the Municipal Development Plan for the purpose of providing a framework for subdivision and development of land in the municipality.

Commercial means the use of land and/or building for the purpose of display, storage and wholesale or retail sale of goods and/or services to the general public. On-site manufacturing, processing or refining of goods shall be incidental to the sales operation.

Confined feeding operation (CFO) has the same meaning as in the regulations of the *Agricultural Operations Practices Act*.

Country residence means a use of land, the primary purpose of which is for a dwelling or the establishment of a dwelling in a rural area.

Development means development as defined in the MGA.

Development authority means the development authority of the Municipal District of Willow Creek No. 26 or the development authority of the Town of Claresholm, whichever development authority applies.

Extensive agriculture means the production of crops or livestock or both by the expansive cultivation or open grazing of normally more than one parcel or lot containing 160 acres (64.8 ha) more or less.

Grouped country residential means two or more contiguous country residential lots.

Industrial means development used for manufacturing, fabricating, processing, assembly, production or packaging of goods or products, as well as administrative offices, warehousing and wholesale distribution uses which are accessory to the above provided that the use does not generate any detrimental impact, potential health or safety hazard or any nuisance beyond the boundaries of the site upon which it is situated. “Noxious or hazardous industries” and Specialty manufacturing / Cottage industry” are separate uses.

Intensive livestock operation (ILO) means any land enclosed by buildings, shelters, fences, corrals or other structures which, in the opinion of the MD Municipal Planning Commission, is capable of confining, rearing, feeding, dairying or auctioning livestock, but excepting out wintering of a basic breeding herd of livestock but is less than the thresholds established by the NRCB.

Land use bylaw has the same meaning as in the *Municipal Government Act*.

May means, within the context of a policy, that the action described in the policy is discretionary.

MGA means the *Municipal Government Act, Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000, Chapter M-26*, with amendments there to.

Noxious industry means an industry which is hazardous, noxious, unsightly or offensive and cannot, therefore, be compatibly located in an urban environment. Examples include, but are not necessarily limited to: abattoirs, oil and gas plants, asphalt plants, sanitary landfill sites, sewage treatment plants or lagoons, auto wreckers or other such uses determined by the Municipal Planning Commission to be similar in nature.

Redesignation "redesignate", "redistrict", or "rezone" means changing the existing land use district on the official Land Use District Map in the land use bylaw.

Residential means the use of land or buildings for the purpose of domestic habitation on a continual, periodic or seasonal basis.

Shall means, within the context of a policy, that the action described in the policy is mandatory.

Solar energy system, commercial/industrial means a system using solar technology to collect energy from the sun and convert it to energy to be used for off-site consumption, distribution to the marketplace, or a solar energy system not meeting the definition of solar energy systems, household.

Urban fringe means a specified rural district immediately adjacent to the corporate limits of a city, town, or village where certain land uses are either allowed or prohibited to protect the land use interests agreed to by both jurisdictions.

Wind Energy Conversion System (WECS) means a system consisting of subcomponents which converts wind energy to electrical energy using rotors, tower and a storage system.



Town of Claresholm
&
Municipal District of
Willow Creek No. 26

Background Report to the
Intermunicipal Development Plan

June 2019



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District of Willow Creek and the Town of Claresholm



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Town of Claresholm is located 80 km northwest of Lethbridge and 133 km south of Calgary. Claresholm is situated in the centre of the Municipal District of Willow Creek surrounded largely by agriculture and oil and gas activity (see Map 1). The Town is conveniently located at the intersection of Highway 520 and Highway 2, which is a major north-south transportation route in southern Alberta.

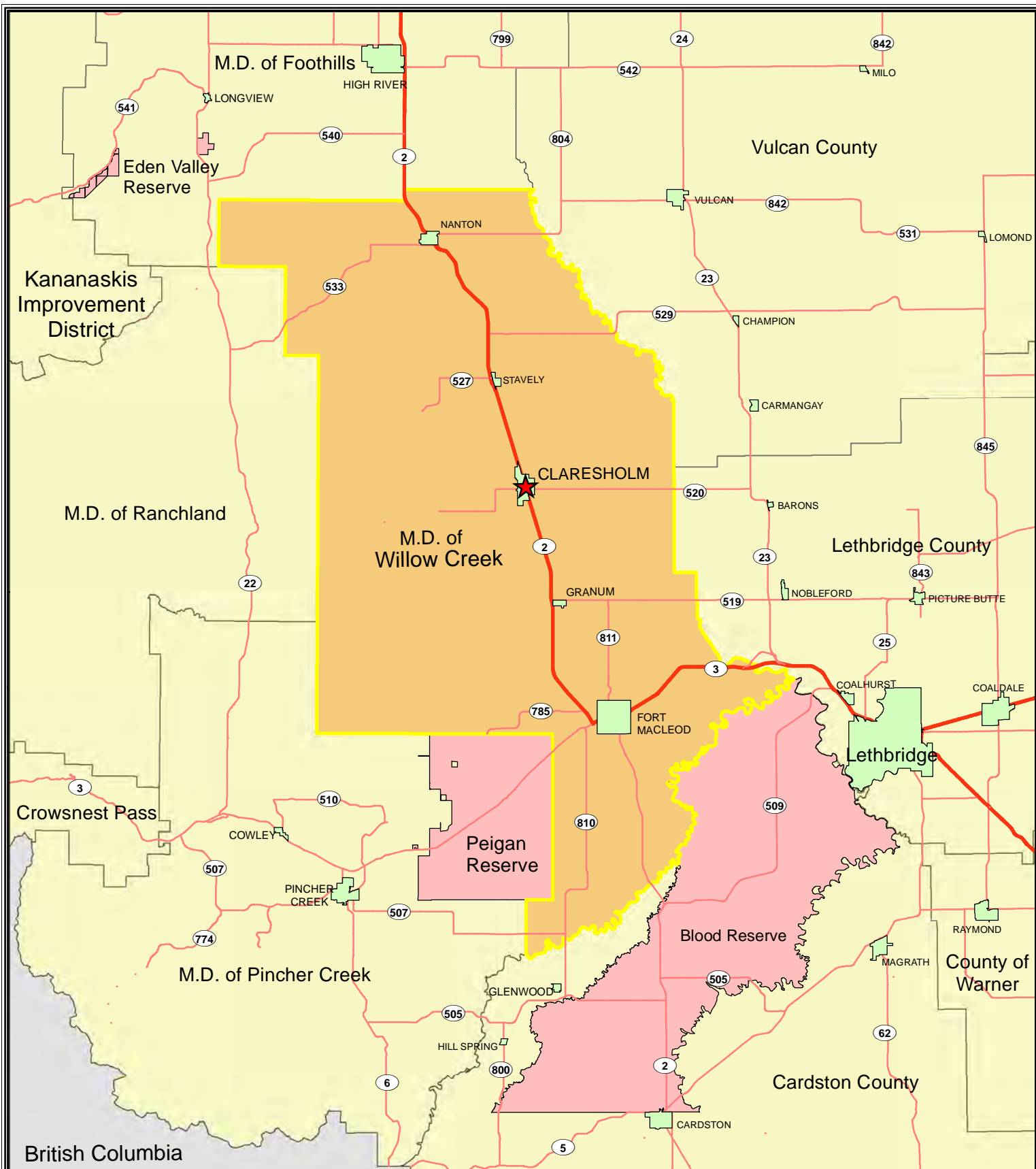
The Municipal District of Willow Creek No. 26 covers an area of approximately 450,000 hectares (1.1 million acres) with a 2016 population of 5,179 (Alberta Municipal Affairs, 2016). The M.D. surrounds five urban municipalities, contains four hamlets, and is bordered by six rural municipalities and two First Nations. Agricultural farming and ranching operations are plentiful with quality agricultural land found within the Municipal District. The economy of the M.D. is agricultural, with ranching towards the eastern slopes. Natural resource and alternative energy developments have become growing industries within the M.D. The M.D. contains a number of large reservoirs including Twin Valley, Clear Lake, and Pine Coulee.

Intermunicipal planning recognizes that land surrounding an urban municipality, known as the fringe area, is subject to challenges and opportunities and both urban and rural municipalities benefit from proper intermunicipal planning. Urban municipalities gain by having input into the types of uses, development standards and subdivision that can occur within the fringe area. Since land in the fringe is outside their jurisdiction, the urban municipality has an interest in influencing certain lands from development that may negatively affect future growth. Conversely, rural municipalities benefit by gaining some insight into the potential expansion strategies of the urban municipality. The coordination and collaboration between municipalities is essential to managing planning matters in an efficient manner.

The first step in the IMDP process is to outline in this background report the goals, objectives, existing land uses, and the implementation of intermunicipal planning, while working in conjunction with existing statutory plans in the affected area. Following the completion of the background report, meetings, discussions and the creation of the IMDP will take place.

1.1 PURPOSE





The purpose of this background report is to examine the characteristics in the fringe area outside of the Town of Claresholm's boundary in the MD of Willow Creek. This report will provide a population analysis, identify land use types, subdivision activity, and opportunities for growth within the Study Area in which both the Town and MD have agreed upon to address areas of mutual interest. The purpose of this report is as follows:

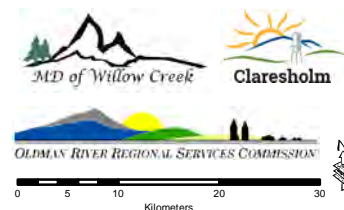


TOWN OF CLARESHOLM
M.D. OF WILLOW CREEK No. 26
BACKGROUND REPORT 2019

REGIONAL LOCATION MAP
MARCH 27, 2019

MAP 1

-  Town of Claresholm
-  Municipal District of Willow Creek
-  Primary Highway
-  Secondary Highway



- provide an analysis of the existing circumstances,
- attempt to identify issues and opportunities that have emerged from the analysis of the preliminary information, and
- act as an agenda for future discussions by the Intermunicipal Plan Committee.

Data has been collected and summarized for a Study Area (see Map 2), encompassing those lands within and adjacent to the Town boundary. Although the final intermunicipal plan boundary may be different, the impacts of certain land uses have more far-reaching influences and it is important to understand the landscape at a greater scale. This information will be utilized, in part, in the preparation of an Intermunicipal Development Plan (IMDP).

1.2 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

Due to changes to the MGA, an IMDP is a compulsory requirement as of April 1, 2018 and must be in place by April 1, 2020. In order to foster cooperation and mitigate conflict between municipalities, the Municipal Government Act, Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000 (as amended), requires municipalities to:

631(1) Two or more councils of municipalities that have common boundaries that are not members of a growth region as defined in Section 708.01 must, by each passing a bylaw in accordance with this Part or in accordance with Sections 12 and 692, adopt an intermunicipal development plan to include those areas of land lying within the boundaries of the municipalities as they consider necessary.

631(2) An intermunicipal development plan

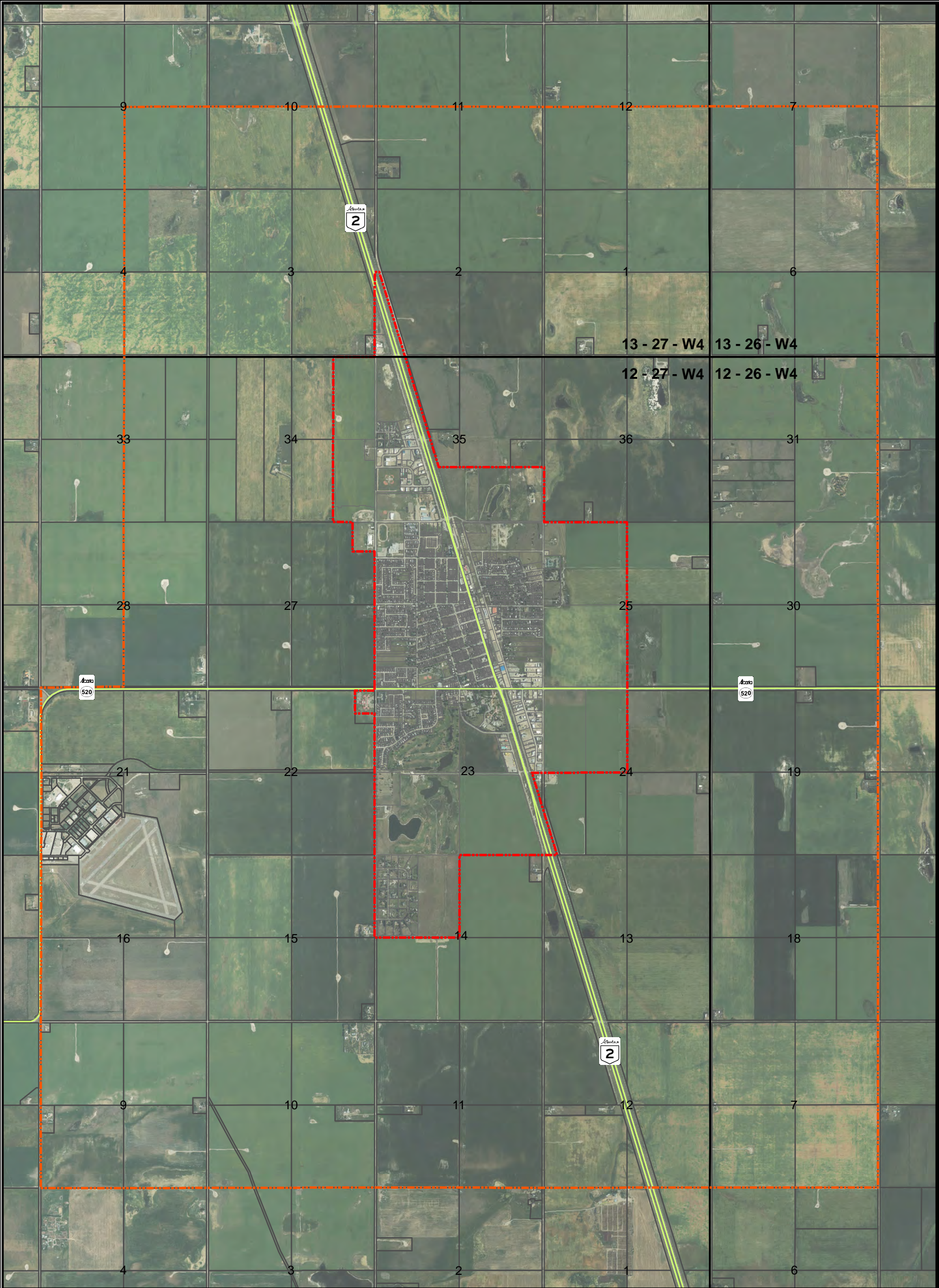
a) must address

- i. the future land use within the area,*
- ii. the manner of and the proposals for future development in the area,*
- iii. the provision of transportation systems for the area, either generally or specifically,*
- iv. the co-ordination of intermunicipal programs relating to the physical, social and economic development of the area,*
- v. environmental matters within the area, either generally or specifically, and*
- vi. any other matter related to the physical, social or economic development of the area that the councils consider necessary.*

and

b) must include

- i. a procedure to be used to resolve or attempt to resolve any conflict between the municipalities that have adopted the plan,*



**TOWN OF CLARESHOLM
M.D. OF WILLOW CREEK No. 26
BACKGROUND REPORT 2019**

**IMDP BOUNDARY
MARCH 27, 2019**

MAP 2

- Claresholm Municipal Boundary
- Study Area Boundary
- Highways



- ii. *a procedure to be used, by one or more municipalities, to amend or repeal the plan, and*
- iii. *provisions relating to the administration of the plan.*

The South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (SSRP) came into effect on September 1, 2014. The Regional Plan is guided by the vision, outcomes and intended directions set by the Strategic Plan portion of the SSRP while the Implementation Plan establishes the objectives and the strategies that will be implemented to achieve the regional vision. As part of the Implementation Plan, *Section 8: Community Development*, includes guidance regarding Planning Cooperation and Integration between municipalities with the intention to foster cooperation and coordination between neighbouring municipalities and between municipalities and provincial departments, boards and agencies. Section 8 contains the following broad objectives and strategies.

Objectives

- *Cooperation and coordination are fostered among all land use planners and decision-makers involved in preparing and implementing land plans and strategies.*
- *Knowledge sharing among communities is encouraged to promote the use of planning tools and the principles of efficient use of land to address community development in the region.*

Strategies

- 8.1** *Work together to achieve the shared environmental, economic, and social outcomes in the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan and minimize negative environmental cumulative effects.*
- 8.2** *Address common planning issues, especially where valued natural features and historic resources are of interest to more than one stakeholder and where the possible effect of development transcends jurisdictional boundaries.*
- 8.3** *Coordinate and work with each other in their respective planning activities (such as in the development of plan and policies) and development approval process to address issues of mutual interest.*
- 8.4** *Work together to anticipate, plan and set aside adequate land with the physical infrastructure and services required to accommodate future population growth and accompanying community development needs.*
- 8.5** *Build awareness regarding the application of land-use planning tools that reduce the impact of residential, commercial and industrial developments on the land, including approaches and best practices for promoting the efficient use of private and public lands.*
- 8.6** *Pursue joint use agreements, regional services commissions and any other joint cooperative arrangements that contribute specifically to intermunicipal land use planning.*

- 8.7 Consider the value of intermunicipal development planning to address land use on fringe areas, airport vicinity protection plan or other areas of mutual interest.*
- 8.8 Coordinate land use planning activities with First Nations, irrigation districts, school boards, health authorities and other agencies on areas of mutual interest.*

1.3 INTERMUNICIPAL PLANNING POLICIES FROM THE MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS

M.D. of Willow Creek MDP: Intermunicipal / Fringe Area Planning

The Municipal Development Plan (MDP) for the M.D. of Willow Creek identifies the following goals, objectives and policies for intermunicipal planning:

Intermunicipal Coordination

A MDP must address the coordination of land use issues with neighbouring municipalities. The new Modernized MGA now requires all adjacent municipalities to adopt IDPs and Intermunicipal Collaborative Frameworks (ICFs). Recognizing that it is important for adjacent municipalities to work together to promote efficiency and effectiveness, a positive dialogue must occur for this process to be successful.

OBJECTIVES

- To encourage cooperation and dialogue between municipalities on matters of mutual interest or concern; and*
- To allow municipalities to take advantage of mutual opportunities to maximize the efficient use of transportation systems, infrastructure and joint use agreements.*

POLICIES

- 8.1 The MD shall provide land use referrals to adjacent urban or rural municipalities when preparing and adopting an IDP in accordance with the provisions established in the new Modernized MGA.*
- 8.2 Adjacent rural municipalities shall be consulted with respect to any major road improvement projects or programs that may affect them.*
- 8.3 The MD in cooperation with adjacent municipalities, shall continue the coordination of disaster assistance, fire protection programs, and any other joint initiatives addressed in the ICF.*
- 8.4 All proposed statutory plans, Land Use Bylaws and/or amendments that may have an impact on an adjacent municipality shall be forwarded for their input.*
- 8.5 The MD will encourage cost sharing of intermunicipal planning-related studies.*

8.6 The MD will seek partnerships with municipalities and public and private organizations to provide services to ratepayers in the most cost-effective and efficient manner possible.

8.7 Where an IDP has been adopted by an urban or a rural municipality, the Land Use Bylaw shall be amended to establish and incorporate an Urban Fringe district which regulates future subdivision and development within the identified areas.

Town of Claresholm MDP: Intermunicipal / Fringe Area Planning

The Town of Claresholm MDP identifies the following goals, objectives and policies for intermunicipal planning:

1.3.3 Intermunicipal and Regional Development

- a) To collaborate with the Municipal District of Willow Creek No. 26 on the planning and development of the region on a basis of cooperation, consultation and communication.
- b) To realize the economic development opportunities of Highway 2 that will be generated through the implementation of the CANAMEX Trade Corridor.
- c) To plan for the physical, social and economic development potential that will result from the Town's strategic location in relation to the CANAMEX Trade Corridor and the economic activity that is planned for southwestern Alberta.

To promote Claresholm as a community whose regional tourism assets include the Porcupine Hills, Pine Coulee, and Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump World Heritage Site, where locals and visitors to Claresholm can enjoy unique recreation experiences.

11.0 GROWTH STRATEGY

11.1 Introduction

Municipal leaders from both the Town of Claresholm and Municipal District of Willow Creek agree that single parcel annexations were time consuming and not in the best interest of either the Town or the Municipal District. Historically, annexation procedures came unexpectedly and with a sense of urgency with timelines influenced by private interests. As such, it was agreed that given the lack of an intermunicipal plan between the Municipal District of Willow Creek and the Town of Claresholm, the Town would indicate their annexation interests through the Municipal Development Plan until such time as an Intermunicipal Development Plan was created.

Further, the Town of Claresholm Council and Administration have a vision for their growth that is based on the premise that the Town will grow and prosper in the years ahead. An "open for business" strategy will guide growth. Council will address land use through this Municipal Development Plan, the Land Use Bylaw and Area Structure or Area Redevelopment Plans. Council

will also ensure the identification of a 25-year land supply and then rely on private interests to develop the land in accordance with municipal policies.

The identification of a 25-year land supply will be the responsibility of Claresholm Council and be communicated to the Municipal District of Willow Creek for the purpose of annexation or for the purpose of ensuing good relations between the Municipal District and the Town. As the Town of Claresholm is dependent on private interests and external government agencies to be the primary drivers of growth and development, the identification of all parcels around the community was undertaken to be proactive regarding future growth. Future annexation proposals are expected to conform to the growth patterns and form contiguous land uses as the community grows.

11.3 Objectives

- 11.3.1 To acknowledge the importance of regional and intermunicipal growth planning.*
- 11.3.2 To identify lands for annexation and corresponding land uses. Ensure annexation processes are directed by the Town at the municipal level, in cooperation with rural neighbours.*
- 11.3.3 To monitor future subdivision and development in the Growth Strategy Areas identified in Map 5 in order to minimize incompatible rural and urban land uses.*
- 11.3.4 To work cooperatively with the Municipal District of Willow Creek on a comprehensive Intermunicipal Development Plan.*
- 11.3.5 To encourage an agreement with the Province of Alberta to endorse a future alignment of Highway 2 in order to facilitate intermunicipal planning processes.*
- 11.3.6 To further integrate intermunicipal planning with the Municipal District of Willow Creek and to ensure both municipalities are able to assure the other an efficient and compatible pattern of growth as defined by, and supported by Council.*

1.4 IMDP QUESTIONNAIRE SUMMARY

In order to gain input from affected landowners, a questionnaire was designed by the planning advisors for the M.D. and the Town and refined with input from the Intermunicipal Development Plan Committee. The questionnaire itself was four pages in length and included a map of the Study Area. The questionnaire was mailed directly to 91 landowners within the Study Area and a questionnaire link was made available for online submittal.

SUMMARY OF QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

A total of 12 questionnaires were returned which represents a 13.2% response rate. The low response rate makes the analysis statistically difficult to draw any meaningful conclusions. Of the total respondents, 75.0% were male, 8.3% were female, and 16.7% did not indicate their sex. As well, 25.0% were 40-49 years old, 25.0% were 60-69 years old, 16.7% were 70-79 years old, 16.7% were 80-89 years old and 8.3% were 30-39 years old. The average length of property ownership was approximately 20.4 years, and 66.6% of the respondents indicated the main use of their property was for agricultural use.

Respondents were asked to specify what most important to the IMDP and responded as follows:

- Future growth
- Infrastructure and facilities planning
- Highway relocation and adjacent land uses
- Water supply and quality
- Preservation of agriculture

Respondents were asked to specify where Claresholm should grow and responded as follows:

- Firstly within Town boundary or to the west
- Secondly south of the Town
- Thirdly to the north, and
- Lastly to the east.

Respondents were asked to specify ideally how large Claresholm should grow and responded as follows:

- The Town population should be 4,500-5,500.

For a complete set of the results and a copy of the questionnaire, see Appendix A.

2.0 STUDY AREA ANALYSIS

For the purpose of analysis, a Study Area was established approximately 1.5 miles from the Town of Claresholm's municipal boundary. As identified in Map 2, the Study Area encompasses approximately 27 sections of land. Highway 2, which runs north to south through the centre of the community, connects to other larger communities in the MD of Willow Creek such as Fort MacLeod and Nanton. Highway 520 intersects with Highway 2 in the center of Claresholm and runs east to west.

For the purpose of this analysis, it was considered reasonable to survey land use patterns and activities on a larger scale to catch any geographic characteristics and soil capabilities that may have the potential to influence land use activities in either the urban and rural areas.

2.1 PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Centrally located in the MD of Willow Creek, the Study Area surrounding Claresholm consists largely of highly productive agricultural land. Due to the Town's proximity to the Rocky Mountains, warm chinook winds often blow through the community as it flows off of the eastern slopes and warms as it compresses downward. As a result, mild winters and hot summers are often experienced in Claresholm, however, the Town can also experience extreme weather events such as thunderstorms and blizzards as warm winds mix with cooler, northern air.

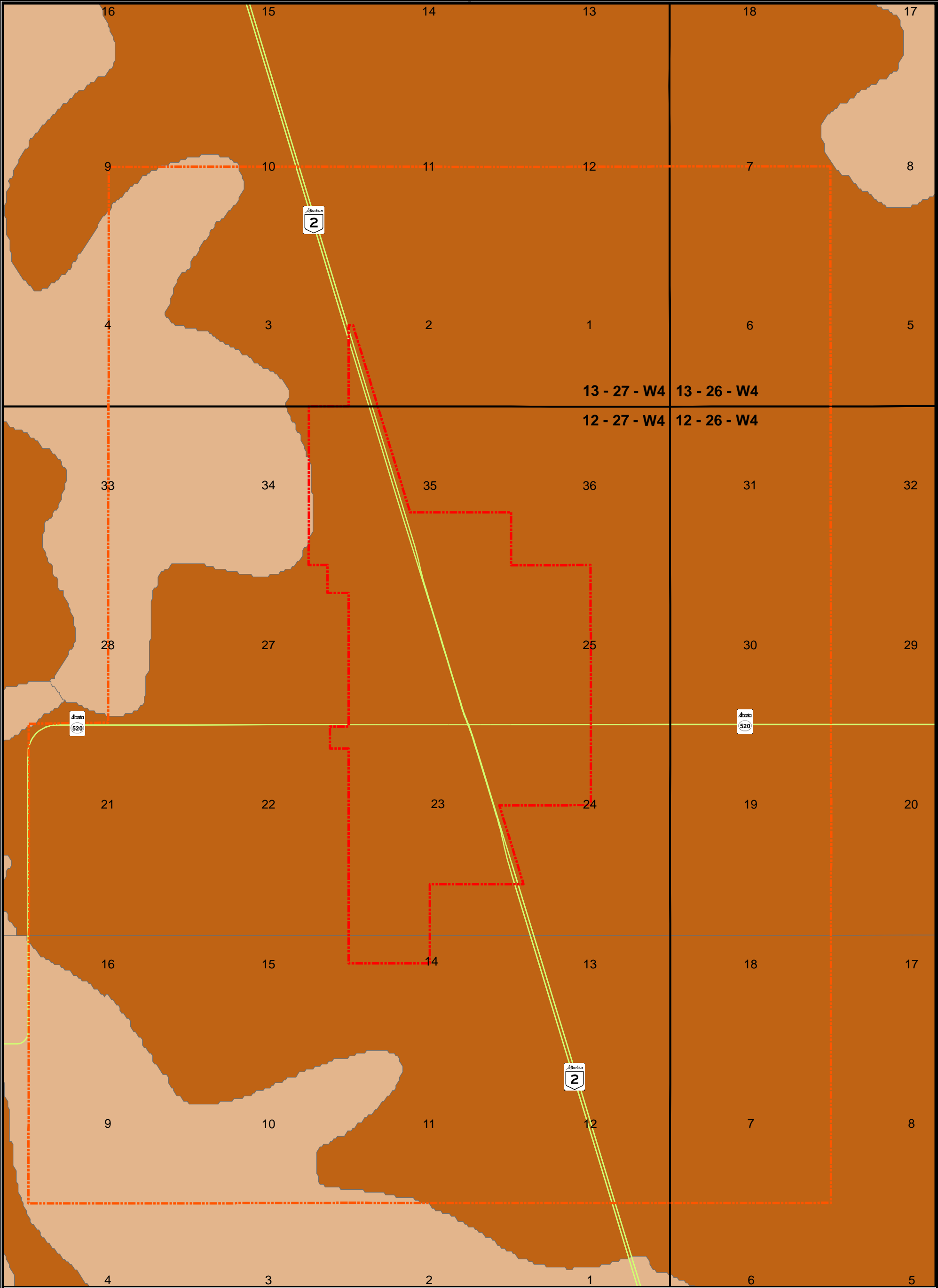
2.2 SOIL PRODUCTIVITY

The Canada Land Inventory (CLI) classes the varying potential of a specific area according to the Soil Capability Classification for Agriculture, which is based on the characteristics of the soil as determined by soil surveys. Soils are grouped into seven classes according to the potential of each soil for the production of field crops, Class 1 rating the highest and Class 7 rating the lowest.

The Study Area contains Class 2 and Class 3 soils (Map 3). The majority of the Study Area contains Class 2, which have moderately high to high productivity and moderate crop limitations. Class 3 soils are located in the northwest and southwest corner of the Study Area. Class 3 soils have moderately high productivity with moderately severe crop limitations. Overall, the Study Area contains highly productive agricultural land ideal for a variety of crop production.

2.3 LAND USE

The land within the Study Area is primarily used for agricultural activities and depending upon the topography, the land is either cultivated or used for grazing purposes. Other significant land uses in the fringe area include oil and gas activities, airport, commercial uses, and country residences.



TOWN OF CLARESHOLM
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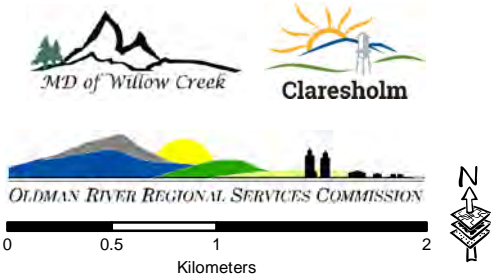
SOIL CAPABILITY FOR AGRICULTURE
INDEXED BY CANADA LAND INVENTORY
MARCH 27, 2019

MAP 3

- Claresholm Municipal Boundary
- IMDP Study Area
- Highways

Soil Classification

- 2 - Moderately High to High Productivity, Moderate Crop Limitations
- 3 - Moderately High Productivity, Moderately Severe Crop Limitations



As displayed in Map 4, the Study Area largely consists of a Rural General land use district which primarily includes various agricultural activities. Claresholm's airport and industrial development and a Rural Small Holdings district are also found within the Study Area. A survey of existing land use was completed in 2019 (see Map 5) and the results found in Table 1.

Table 1
Fringe Area Land Use 2019

Type of Land Use		Number of Uses
		Study Area
		2019
Residential:	Country Residence	21
	Farmstead	26
	Abandoned Farmstead	0
	Farm Building	5
Total:		52
Commercial:		0
Industrial:		7
Institutional	Public	2
	Airport	1
	Recreational	0
Utilities:	Utilities	1
Gas and Oil:	Active Wells	36
	Abandoned Wells	9
TOTAL:		108

Source: ORRSC

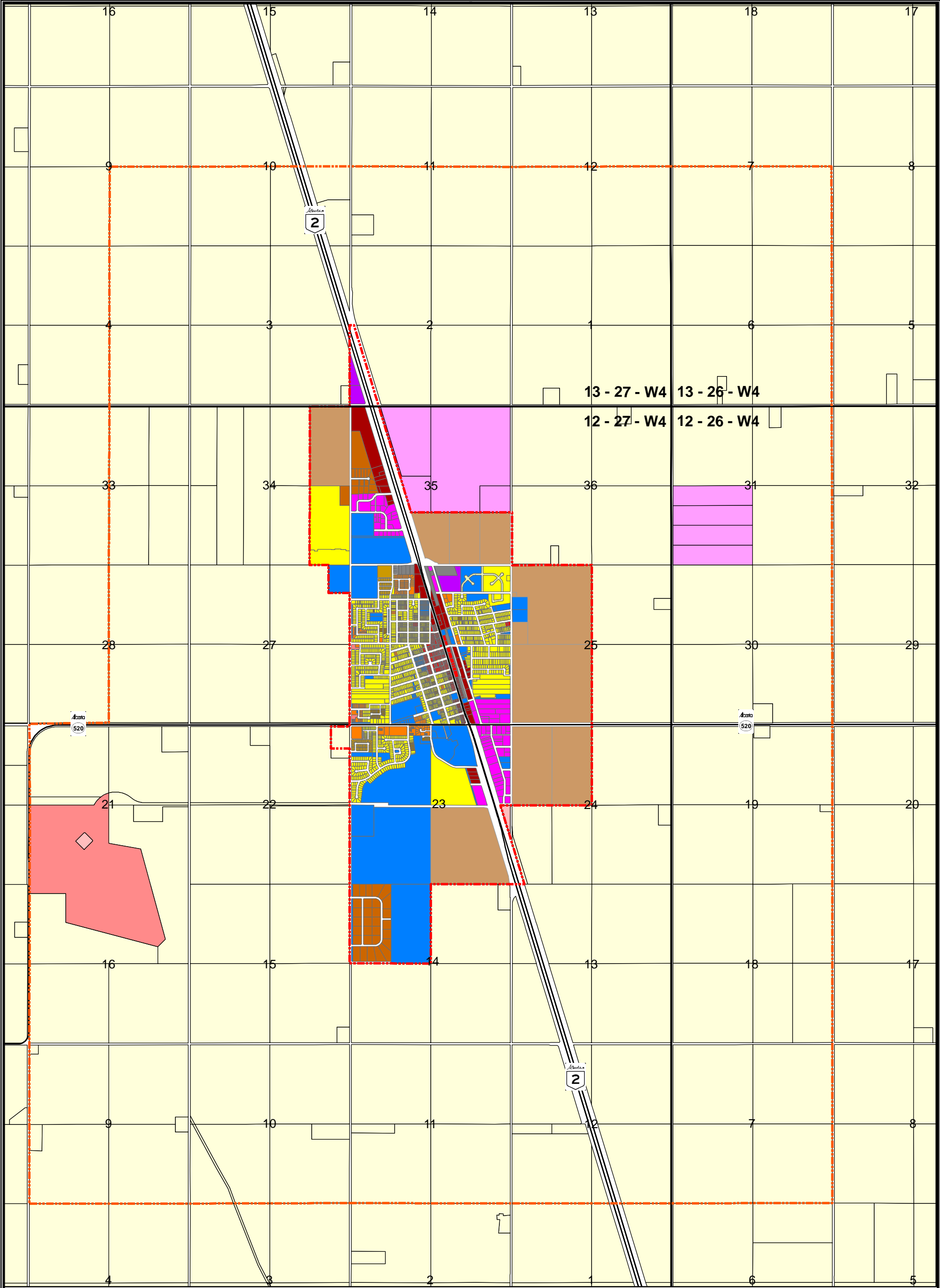
2.4 RESULTS OF THE LAND USE SURVEY

RESIDENTIAL

A mix of farmsteads and country residences are present within the Study Area. There are 26 farmsteads and 21 country residences found within the 1.5 mile area. Approximately 5 farm buildings are also scattered throughout the surrounding area of Claresholm. With first parcel out as a subdivision policy, this limited development trend will continue.

COMMERCIAL, INSTITUTIONAL, GAS, AND OTHER USES

Non-agricultural uses in the Study Area include oil and gas wells, institutional, utility and an airport. As identified on Map 5, the Claresholm Industrial Area land use district is identified along Highway 520 which includes various industrial uses and includes the MD of Willow Creek Administration



**TOWN OF CLARESHOLM
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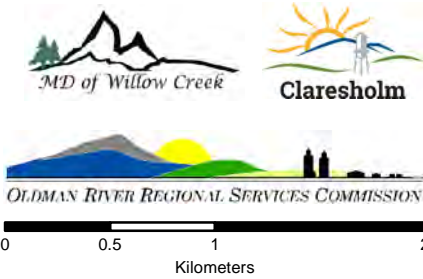
**COMBINED LAND USE
MARCH 27, 2019**

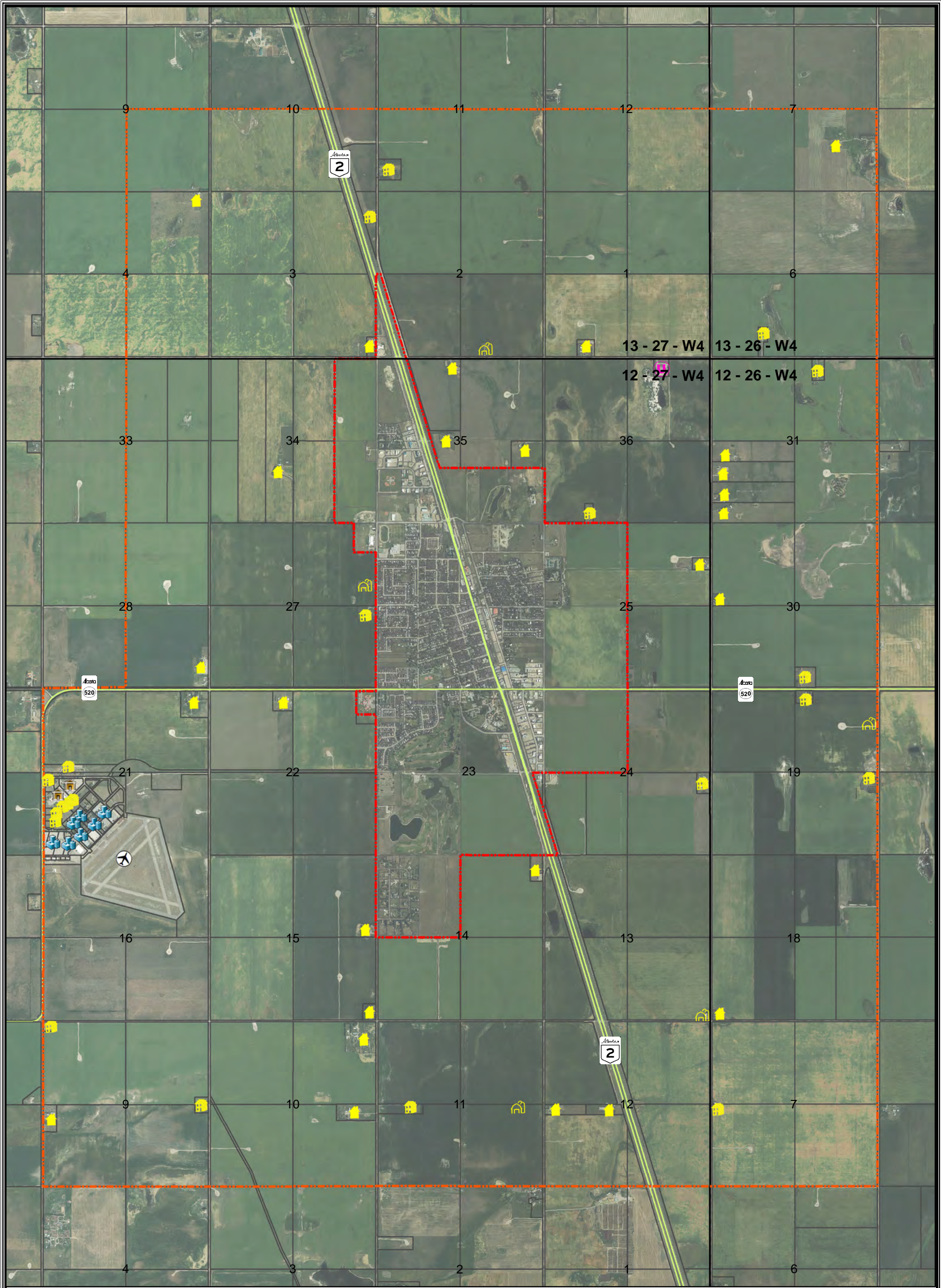
MAP 4

- Claresholm Municipal Boundary
- IMDP Study Area
- Highways
- MD of Willow Creek Land Use Districts**
 - Claresholm Industrial Area (CIA)
 - Rural Commercial (RC)
 - Rural Small Holdings (RSH)
 - Rural General (RG)

- Claresholm Land Use Districts**
- Single Detached Residential R1
 - Duplex Residential R2
 - Country Residential R3
 - Multiple Residential R4
 - Apartments R5
 - Manufactured Homes R6

- Retail Commercial C1
- Highway Commercial C2
- Industrial I1
- Service Industrial I2
- Public P
- Agricultural / Transitional
- Direct Control DC





**TOWN OF CLARESHOLM
M.D. OF WILLOW CREEK No. 26
BACKGROUND REPORT 2019**

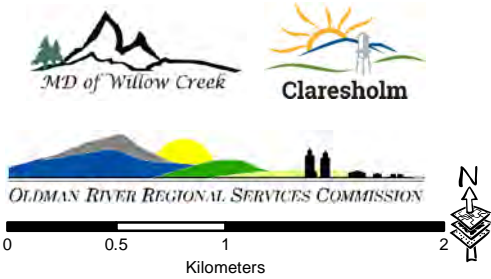
**EXISTING LAND USE
MARCH 27, 2019**

MAP 5

- Claresholm Municipal Boundary
- IMDP Study Area
- Highways

- Airport
- Commercial
- Country Residence
- Farm Building

- Farmstead
- Industrial
- Public
- Utility

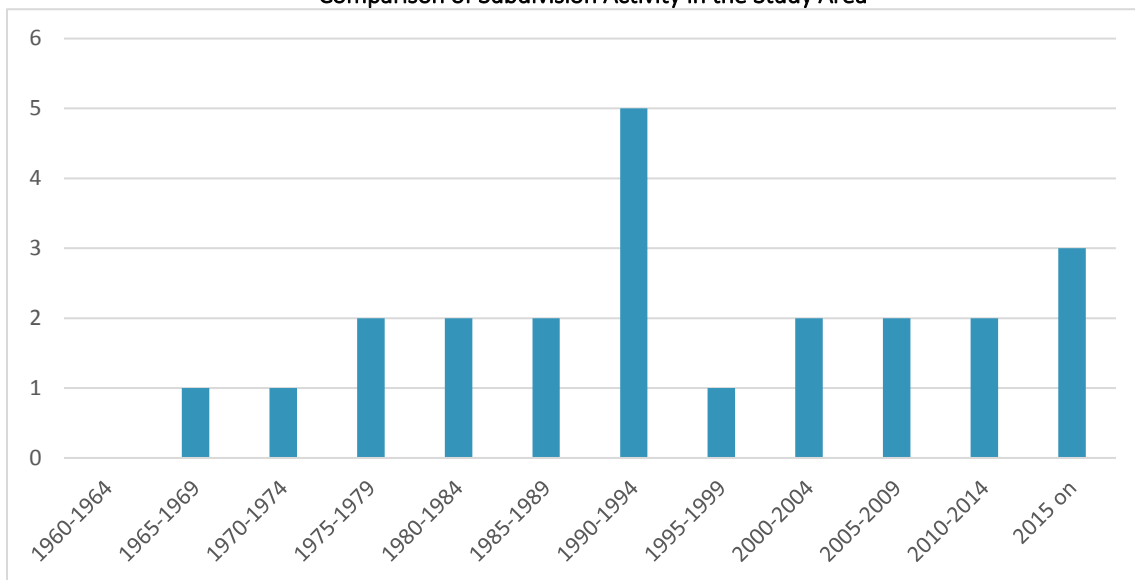


Office. Another industrial use is located northeast of Claresholm which contains a gas processing facility. Other non-residential uses include 36 active and 9 abandoned oil and gas wells which are scattered throughout the Study Area.

SUBDIVISION ACTIVITY

Figure 1 and Table 2 indicates the total number of subdivisions within the Study Area between 1967 and 2018 using five-year periods. Over the last 57 years, subdivision activity in the area has been fairly limited with one subdivision between 1965 and 1969, three between 1970 to 1979, four between 1980 and 1989, six between 1990 and 1999, four between 2000 and 2009 and five since 2010. The majority of subdivision applications have been for country residences, however, two applications for industrial use, a waste transfer station, a hospital and nursing home, and one for an agriculture/residential parcel.

Figure 1
Comparison of Subdivision Activity in the Study Area



Source: ORRSC

Table 2
Comparison of Subdivision Activity in the Study Area

File Number	Subdivision Use	Number of Lots	Legal Description	Parcel size (acres)
	Country Residential	1	NW 1/4 9-12-27 W4M	2.0
	Country Residential	1	SE 1/4 10-12-27 W4M	
	Country Residential	1	SW 1/4 11-13-27 W4M	
	Country Residential	1	SW 1/4 6-13-26 W4M	5.14
1967-D-625	Country Residential	1	NE 1/4 14-12-27 W4M	8.0
1973-O-304/303/174	Agriculture/Residential	4	SW 1/4 31-12-26 W4M	40.0
1977-O-014	Country Residential	2	SW 1/4 12-12-27 W4M	10, 10
1979-O-258	Country Residential	1	W 1/2 35-12-27 W4M	23.81
1981-O-012	Country Residential	1	SE 1/4 30-12-26 W4M	10.0
1981-O-081	Country Residential	1	SE 1/4 24-12-27 W4M	6.5
1986-O-152	Country Residential	1	NE 1/4 31-12-26 W4M	6.4
1989-O-185	Country Residential	1	SE 1/4 19-12-26 W4M	2.19
1990-O-089	Industrial (Gas Processing Facility)	1	NE 1/4 36-12-27 W4M	6.27
1990-O-154	Country Residential	1	SE 1/4 15-12-27 W4M	5.0
1991-O-194	Auxiliary hospital and nursing home	1	NE 1/4 22-12-27 W4M	4.99
1991-O-227	Country Residential	1	SE 1/4 3-13-27 W4M	4.13
1992-O-044	Waste Transfer Station	1	SE 1/4 21-12-27 W4M	13.54
1995-O-053	Country Residential	1	E 1/2 9-12-27 W4M	4.59
2004-O-018	Public Institutional	1	SW 1/4 21-12-27 W4M	11.75
2004-O-110	Country Residential	1	NE 1/4 19-12-26 W4M	5.06
2005-O-225	Country Residential	1	SW 1/4 36-12-27 W4M	4.74
2006-O-290	Country Residential	1	NE 1/4 25-12-27 W4M	5.0
2010-O-285	Country Residential	1	NW 1/4 22-12-27 W4M	9.54
2012-O-078	Industrial	2	SW 1/4 21-12-27 W4M	3.10, 2.80
2015-O-031	Country Residential	1	SW 1/4 11-12-27 W4M	10.38
2017-O-004	Country Residential	1	SW 1/4 1-13-27 W4M	6.89
2017-O-029	Country Residential	1	SW 1/4 9-12-27 W4M	8.56

Source: ORRSC

3.0 MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF WILLOW CREEK NO. 26

3.1 POPULATION ANALYSIS

This section illustrates the historical growth of the population and provides a basis for population projections. The way in which the population has changed reveals some important trends in the Municipal District of Willow Creek's population. Table 3 displays the Municipal District of Willow Creek's historic population change.

Table 3
MD of Willow Creek Growth Rates 1986 - 2016

Year	Population	Willow Creek 5 Year % change	Willow Creek Annual % change	Alberta Annual % change
1986	4,733	--	--	--
1991	4,764	0.7%	0.1%	1.4
1996	5,113	7.3%	1.5%	1.2
2001	5,412	6.1%	1.2%	3.4
2006	5,337	-1.6%	-0.3%	2.1
2011	5,107	-4.3%	-0.9%	2.1
2016	5,179	1.4%	0.3%	2.3
Average	-	1.6%	0.3%	2.1%

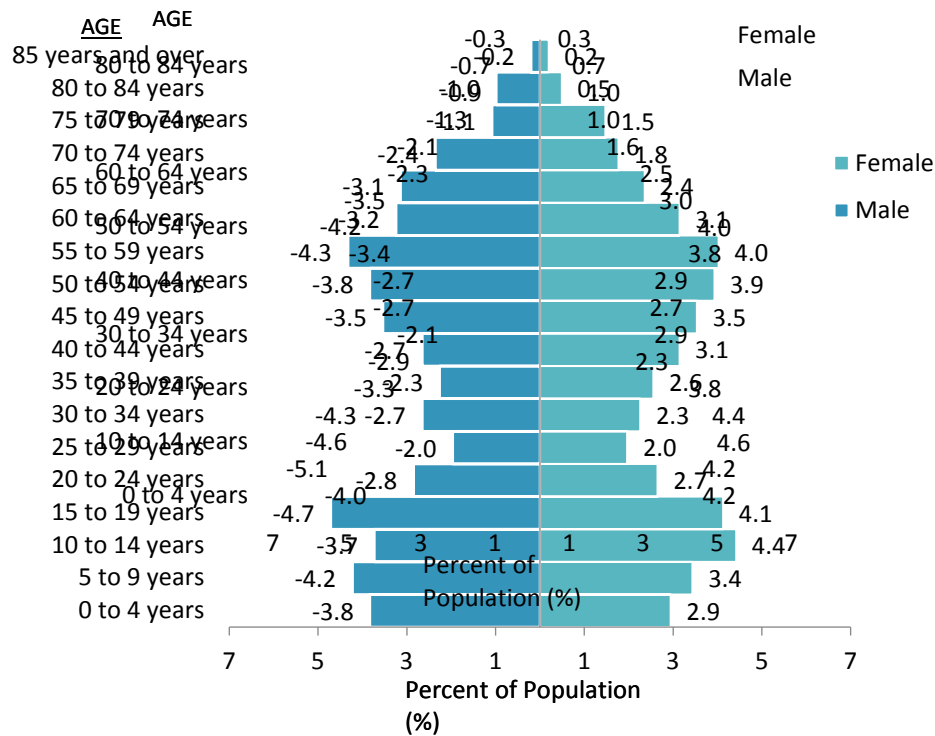
Source: Statistics Canada, 1986-2016 Census

Over the past three decades, the MD of Willow Creek's population has remained fairly stable over the past three decades, with slight decline between 2001 and 2011, however the overall population change has remained positive. The MD has experienced an average 0.3% growth per annum and an average growth over a five year period of 1.6% based on data from 1986 to 2016. The continued stability of the MD of Willow Creek's population over the past thirty years shows promise for future population trends.

3.2 AGE STRUCTURE

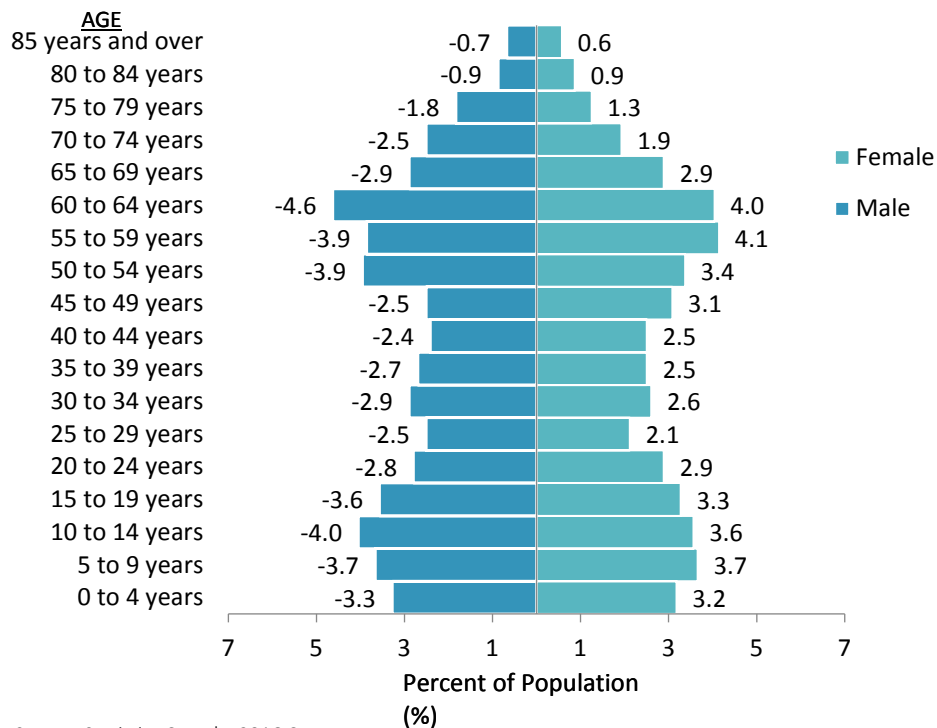
Population pyramids for the Municipal District of Willow Creek show the distribution between various age groups as well as between the male and female segments of the population for years 2011 and 2016 (see Figure 2 and 3). The MD's population structure has two distinct bulges, one in the baby boomer age groups and the other in the youth age groups (5 to 19 years). The young working class population (25 to 40 age group) represents the smallest portion of the population pyramid.

Figure 2: Municipal District of Willow Creek – 2011 Population Structure



Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census

Figure 3: Municipal District of Willow Creek – 2016 Population Structure



Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census

3.3 POPULATION PROJECTIONS

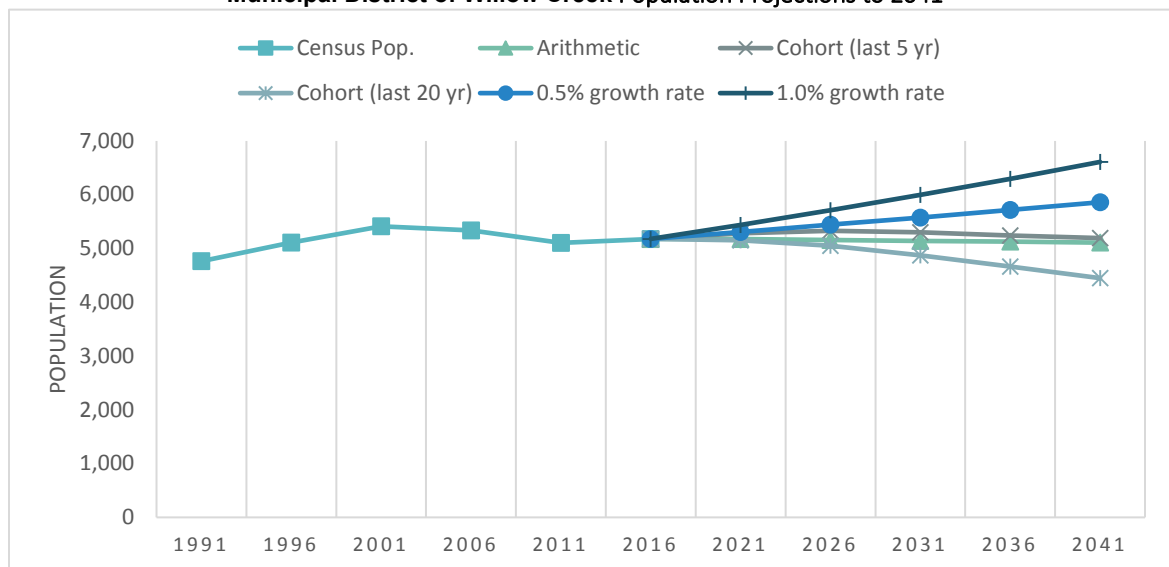
Several different methods of population projections are used in calculating future growth in order to provide the broadest scenario possible. It should be noted that projections are uncertain; they illustrate what a population would be if the assumed trends actually were to occur. The range of results obtained from the various methods of population projections are displayed in Table 4 and Figure 4.

Table 4
Municipal District of Willow Creek Population Projections to 2041

<i>Year</i>	Census Pop.	Arithmetic	Cohort (last 5 years)	Cohort (last 20 years)	0.5% growth rate	1.0% growth rate
1991	4,764					
1996	5,113					
2001	5,412					
2006	5,337					
2011	5,107					
2016	5,179					
2021		5,178	5,286	5,152	5,308	5,438
2026		5,160	5,329	5,052	5,441	5,710
2031		5,143	5,300	4,875	5,577	5,995
2036		5,126	5,240	4,662	5,717	6,295
2041		5,109	5,191	4,449	5,860	6,610

Source: ORRSC; Statistics Canada, 1991-2016 Census

Figure 4
Municipal District of Willow Creek Population Projections to 2041



Source: ORRSC; Statistics Canada, 1991-2016 Census

The population projections indicate that in 2041 the MD of Willow Creek's population could range between 4,449 and 6,610. These methods indicated mostly negative population projections with a decrease the arithmetic, logarithmic, and cohort (last 20 years). These negative projections are most likely due to the recent slight decline the MD experienced between 2000 and 2010, but that is not necessarily indicative of future negative trends. The most recent census period (2011 to 2016) reported a positive population growth which indicates that an increase of 0.5% may be the most accurate for future projections.

3.4 EQUALIZED ASSESSMENT

Equalized assessment is the means of comparing property wealth in a uniform manner for all municipalities. Alberta uses an assessment and tax system where property taxes are based on wealth and wealth is measured by the value of property expressed as an assessment.

The MD's total equalized assessment increased from 2014 to 2017 and then experienced a moderate decline in 2018 (see Table 5). The residential category has increased slightly from 37% in 2014 to 40% in 2018 and the linear category declined from 44% in 2014 to 42% in 2018. Non-residential, farmland, and machinery and equipment have not changed drastically over the five year period, only changing by approximately 1%.

Table 5
Municipal District of Willow Creek Equalized Assessment 2014 - 2018

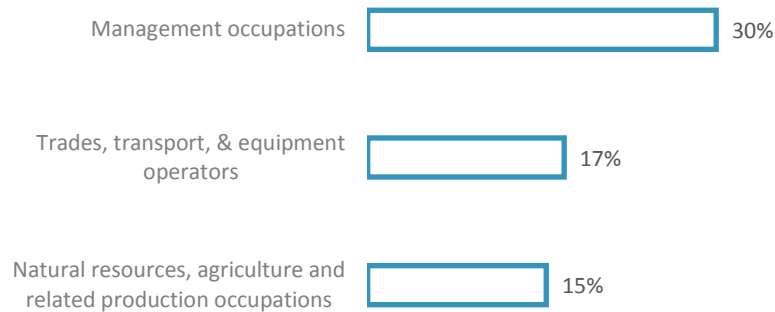
Year	Residential		Non-Residential		Farmland		Machinery & Equipment		Linear		Total	
	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%
2018	598,370,311	40	59,026,668	4	141,472,210	9	70,788,950	5	625,943,100	42	1,497,726,319	100
2017	600,269,617	38	55,934,108	4	141,885,770	9	78,365,660	5	689,068,770	43	1,597,680,725	100
2016	561,791,452	39	49,527,447	3	142,049,110	10	86,227,360	6	617,101,290	42	1,458,726,589	100
2015	545,299,534	38	48,255,660	3	142,077,555	10	79,938,110	6	617,238,880	43	1,434,760,369	100
2014	519,398,355	37	45,272,060	3	142,010,173	10	83,117,640	6	611,539,810	44	1,403,272,808	100

Source: Municipal Affairs, 2014 - 2018

3.5 EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION

According to the 2016 Federal Census, management occupations were the most common in the MD of Willow Creek, comprising 30% of all occupations (see Figure 5). Other common occupations included trade, transport and equipment operators comprising 17% and natural resources, agriculture and related production which consisted of 15% of all occupations.

Figure 5
Municipal District of Willow Creek Top 3 Occupations 2016



Source Statistics Canada, 2016 Census

3.6 HOUSING TYPES AND SUPPLY

A total of 91.3% of housing in the Municipal District of Willow Creek is single-detached houses and is mainly owner-occupied at 82.9% (see Table 6). The age of dwellings is older than the provincial average, as 66.5% of MD dwellings were constructed before 1991, contrasted to 53% provincially. However, the percent of dwellings constructed before 1991 is fairly typical among rural municipalities.

Table 6
Municipal District of Willow Creek Dwelling Characteristics 2016

	Count	Percent
Number of owned dwellings	1385	82.9%
Number of rented dwellings	290	17.4%
Number of dwellings constructed before 1991	1110	66.5%
Number of dwellings constructed between 1991 and 2016	560	33.5%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census

4.0 TOWN OF CLARESHOLM

4.1 POPULATION ANALYSIS

Table 7 displays the Town of Claresholm's historic population situation and provides a basis for population projections.

Table 7
Town of Claresholm Growth Rates 1986 - 2016

Year	Population	5 Year % change	Annual % change	Alberta Annual % change
1986	3,382	-	-	-
1991	3,297	-2.5	-0.5	1.4
1996	3,427	3.9	0.8	1.2
2001	3,622	5.7	1.1	3.4
2006	3,700	2.2	0.4	2.1
2011	3,758	1.6	0.3	2.1
2016	3,780	0.6	0.1	2.3
Average	-	2.3%	0.5%	2.1%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census

The analysis of historical population trends is important to consider when forecasting future growth. The Town of Claresholm has experienced a slow but steady annual growth rate of 0.5% over a thirty year period. The Town has had a general decrease in annual positive growth over the past twenty years from a 1.1% annual growth in 2001 to an annual growth of 0.1% in 2016. Although the overall growth rate has declined, the community continues to slowly grow.

4.2 AGE STRUCTURE

Population pyramids for the Town of Claresholm illustrate the distribution between the various age groups as well as between the male and female segments of the population for the years 2011 and 2016 (see Figure 6 and 7). The Town of Claresholm's population structure is different from a classic population pyramid shape in that it has a significant bulge around the baby boomer age group and a substantially smaller proportion of residents under 40 years old. Those aged 65 and older comprise of 32.6% of the total population in 2016 compared to the provincial average of 12.3%. Similarly, those between 50 and 64 years old comprise of 22.1% of the total population which accounts for a large proportion of the total population.

Figure 6: Town of Claresholm 2011 Population Structure

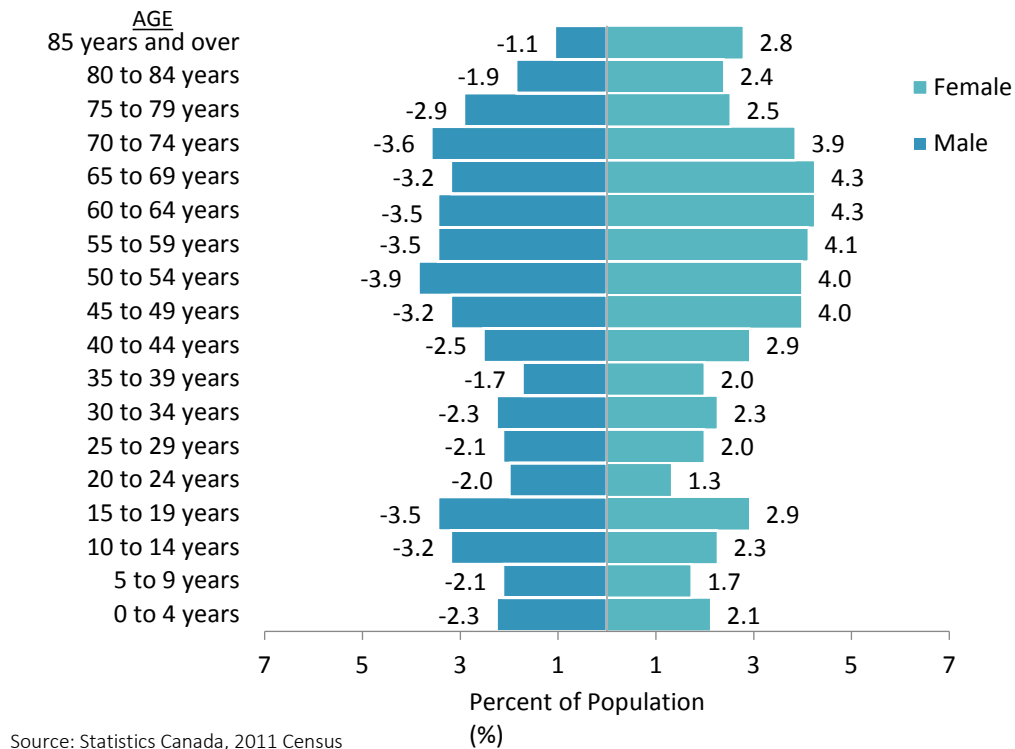
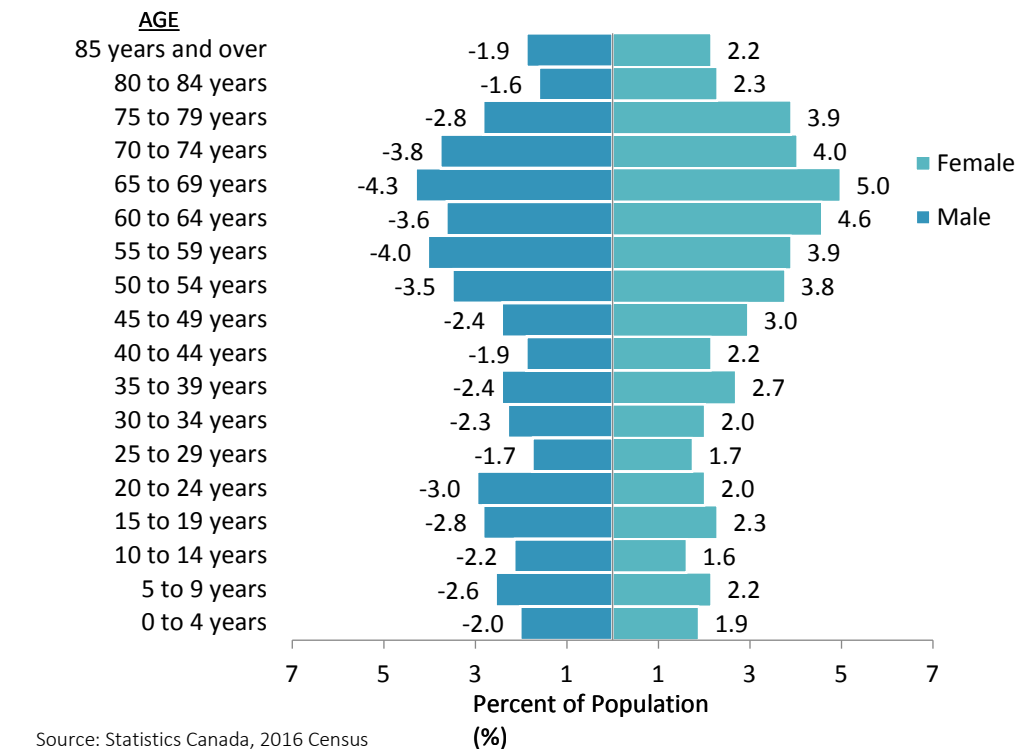


Figure 7: Town of Claresholm 2016 Population Structure



4.3 POPULATION PROJECTIONS

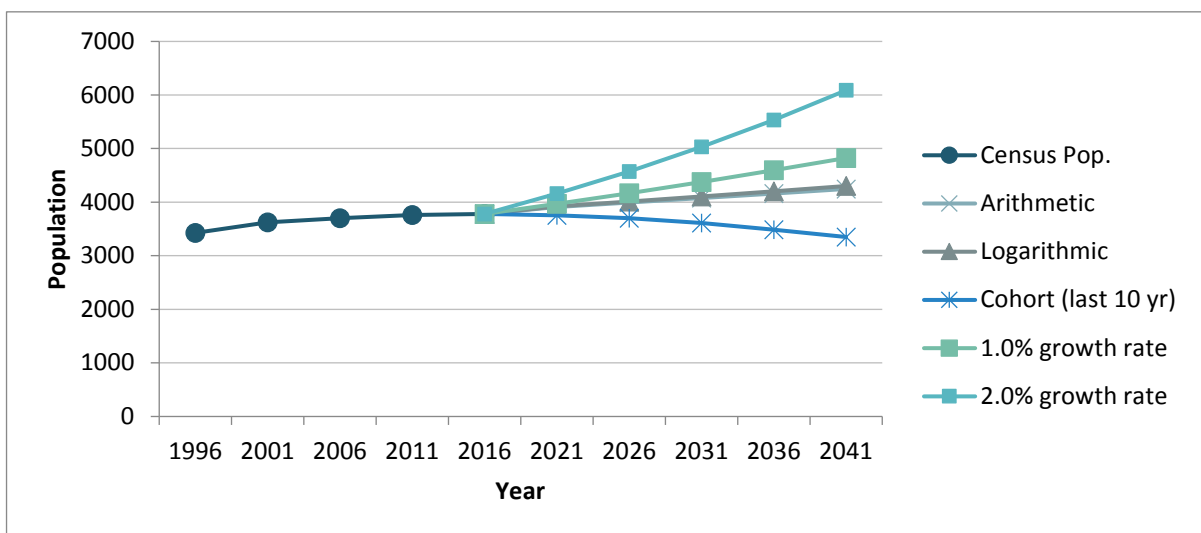
Population projections for the Town are displayed in Table 8 and Figure 8 below. Several statistical methods to calculate population projections were used such as the arithmetic, logarithmic, cohort survival, and the straight linear method. The results displayed below indicate that a moderate increase is expected for all categories with the exception of the cohort method. The arithmetic and logarithmic methods predict a similar growth rate of 4,247 and 4,302 in 2041, respectively. The 1% and 2% growth rates estimate a population of 4,824 and 6,087 people in 2041, respectively, which is unlikely based on previous historic data records showing slow growth within the Town. Further, the cohort method predicts a slow decline with 3,350 people in 2041 based on a slight decline in the annual growth rate of Claresholm over a ten year period.

Table 8
Town of Claresholm Population Projections to 2041

<i>Year</i>	Census Pop.	Arithmetic	Logarithmic	Cohort (last 10 yr)	1.0% growth rate	2.0% growth rate
1996	3,427					
2001	3,622					
2006	3,700					
2011	3,758					
2016	3,780					
2021		3,910	3,920	3,754	3,969	4,158
2026		3,994	4,012	3,702	4,167	4,574
2031		4,078	4,107	3,609	4,376	5,031
2036		4,163	4,203	3,486	4,595	5,534
2041		4,247	4,302	3,350	4,824	6,087

Source: ORRSC; Statistics Canada, 1991-2016

Figure 8
Town of Claresholm Population Projections to 2041



Source: ORRSC; Statistics Canada, 1991-2016

4.4 EQUALIZED ASSESSMENT

Table 9
Town of Claresholm Equalized Assessment 2014 - 2018

Year	Residential		Non-Residential		Farmland		Machinery & Equipment		Linear		Total	
	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%
2018	334,455,569	83	58,933,788	15	152,470	0	1,072,500	0	6,543,330	2	401,157,657	100
2017	336,013,650	83	63,033,620	16	64,570	0	672,510	0	6,820,770	2	406,605,120	100
2016	345,971,422	83	62,125,561	15	46,660	0	687,700	0	7,132,080	2	415,963,443	100
2015	332,835,511	83	62,314,592	15	79,140	0	691,540	0	7,065,400	2	402,986,183	100
2014	344,607,863	83	62,037,150	15	102,710	0	691,230	0	6,857,420	2	414,296,373	100

Source: Alberta Municipal Affairs, 2014-2018

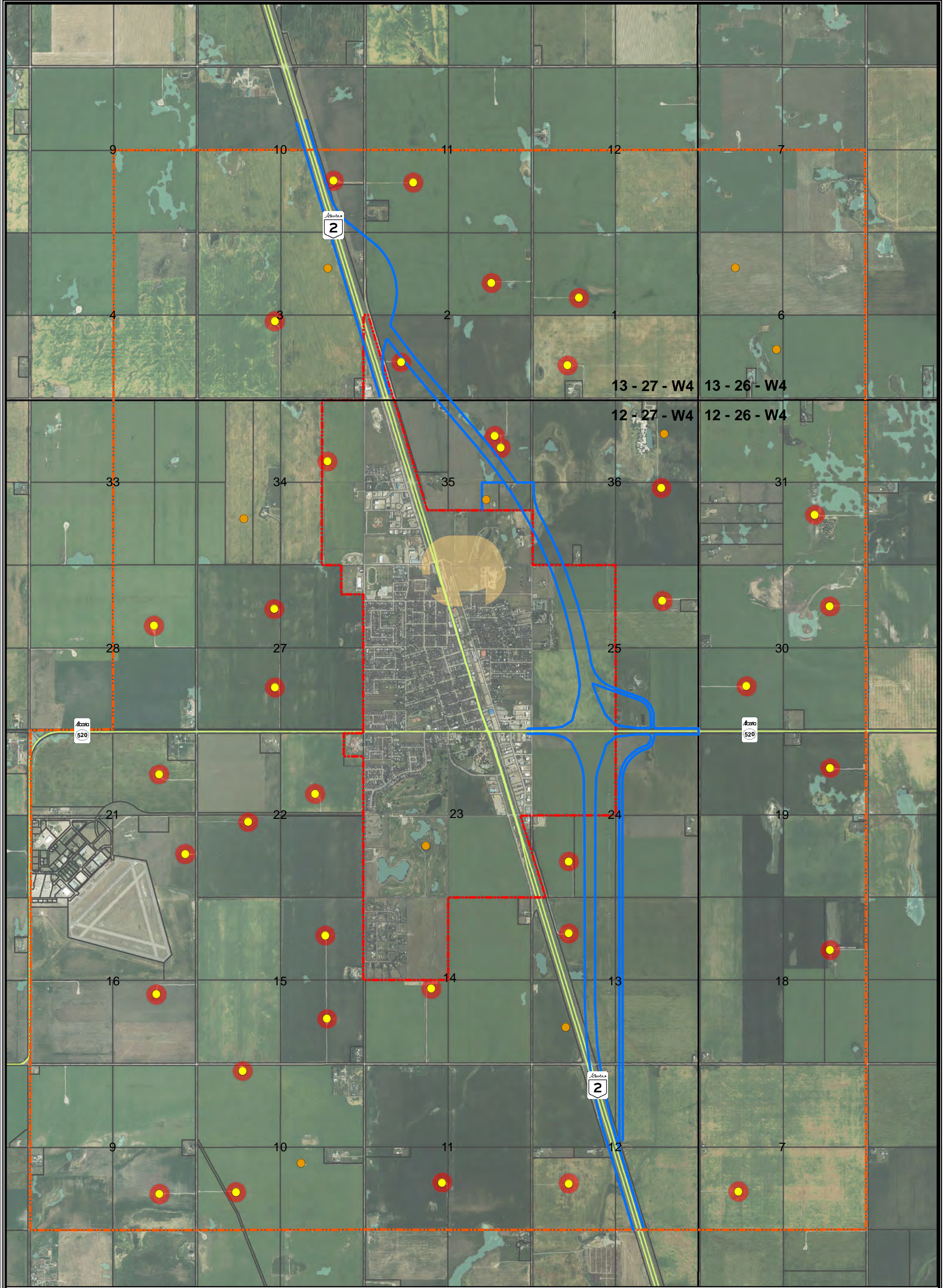
Equalized assessment for Claresholm is displayed above in Table 9 for the years 2014 to 2018. The residential proportion of the tax assessment comprises 83%, while the non-residential consists of 15%, and linear includes approximately 2%. Overall, the total of the Town's assessment has decreased in all sectors with the exception of farmland and machinery and equipment which comprise less than 1% of the assessment.

4.6 GROWTH CONSTRAINTS

Urban expansion is most cost-effective and beneficial when it occurs in a contiguous fashion. Connecting neighbourhoods to one another minimizes servicing costs, reduces conversion of agricultural land and provides more efficient transportation networks. Thus, when an urban municipality considers expansion it needs to study existing constraints that would prevent it from developing in a logical manner.

Map 6 displays growth constraints and corresponding buffers that may prevent logical urban expansion. A major constraint in the Study Area is the proposed re-routing of Highway 2 for the CANAMEX trade corridor which is proposed to loop around the Town's municipal boundary east of the community and connect south of the municipal boundary. The re-routing of Highway 2 will impact future growth and land use activities within the Town.

Other limitations include 35 active oil and gas wells each with a 100 meter buffer and 9 abandoned gas wells. Both active and abandoned wells are scattered throughout the Study Area. A 300 meter buffer surrounds a non-operational landfill which is situated in the northern portion of Claresholm which limits growth within the Town including residential, schools, hospitals, and food establishments within the 300 meter buffer. A few wetlands are present within the Study Area which can be found primarily to the east of the municipal boundary.





**TOWN OF CLARESHOLM
M.D. OF WILLOW CREEK No. 26
BACKGROUND REPORT 2019**



**GROWTH CONSTRAINTS
MARCH 27, 2019**

MAP 6

- Claresholm Municipal Boundary
- IMDP Study Area
- Highways
- Proposed Highway Right-of-Way
- Oil/Gas Well - Active¹
- Gas Well - Abandoned
- Active Oil/Gas Well Buffer - 100m
- Non-Operating Landfill Buffer - 300m
- Wetlands²



Source:
¹ Alberta Energy Regulator, 2016
² Alberta Government, 2016



0 0.5 1 2
Kilometers

4.7 URBAN EXPANSION STRATEGY

As displayed in Map 7, growth areas outside of the Claresholm municipal boundary have been identified in the Town's Municipal Development Plan. The majority of areas identified include low density residential north, south, and west of the existing boundary. Commercial and industrial growth will occur to the east of the boundary along the proposed highway right-of-way. The table below identifies the acreage and percentage of existing land uses within the Town.

Future Residential Development

Claresholm currently has residential lots available in the Tamarack subdivision located east of Highway 2 in the northern portion of the Town. Similarly, there are available lots west of Highway 2 in the north and south of Highway 520 in the western portion of the community.

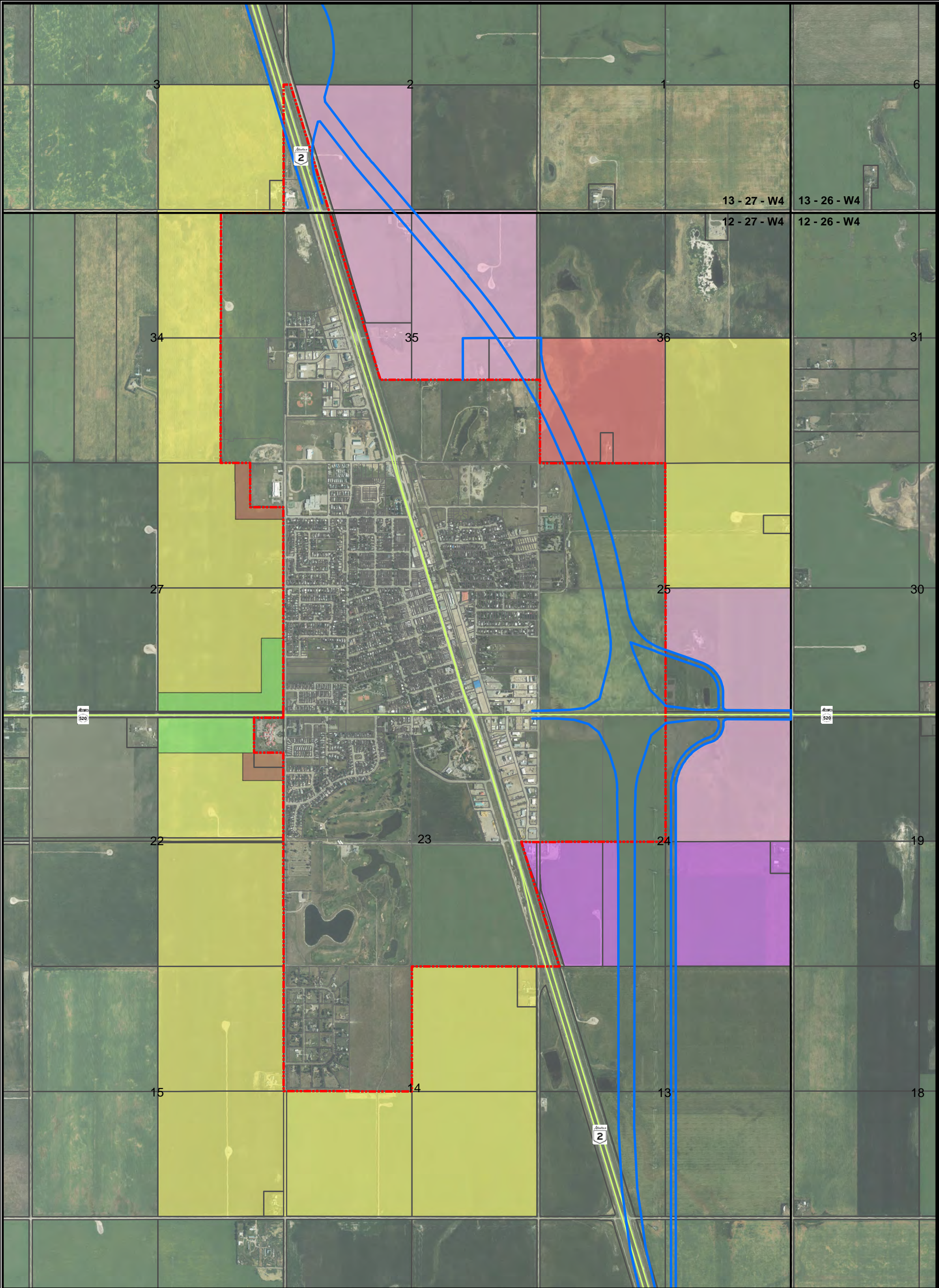
Based on a straight linear population projection, Claresholm could grow to a population high 6,087 or low of 4,172 by the year 2041. Land consumption analysis is based on the following criteria:



Based on the results of the land consumption analysis, the following land requirements will likely be needed in the future. The analysis below indicates that Claresholm could develop approximately 97 to 311 acres of residential land to accommodate a population of 4,172 or 6,087 people by the year 2041 based on a 1 or 2% growth rate. However, it is important to note that this land acreage refers only to bare, undeveloped land, and does not take into consideration existing vacant land or lots that could be developed.

Table 12
Residential Land Consumption Analysis

Year	Population Levels		Assumed Person per Household	Total Required D.U.S		Existing D.U.S	New Dwelling Units Required		Land Acreage Requirement (4.7 units/acre)	
	Low	High		Low	High		Low	High	Low	High
2016	3,780									
2021	3,969	4,158	2.3	1726	1808	1742	-16	66	-3	14
	3,969	4,158	2.1	1890	1980	1742	148	238	31	51
	3,969	4,158	1.9	2089	2188	1742	347	446	74	95
2026	3,875	4,574	2.3	1685	1989	1742	-57	247	-12	52



**TOWN OF CLARESHOLM
M.D. OF WILLOW CREEK No. 26
BACKGROUND REPORT 2019**

**GROWTH STRATEGY
MARCH 27, 2019**

MAP 7

- Claresholm Municipal Boundary
- IMDP Study Area
- Highways
- Proposed Highway Right-of-Way

- Future Growth**
- Low Density Residential
 - Medium Density Residential
 - Commercial
 - Industrial
 - Industrial/Commercial
 - Medium Density/Institutional/Park



	3,875	4,574	2.1	1845	2178	1742	103	436	22	93
	3,875	4,574	1.9	2039	2407	1742	297	665	63	142
2031	3,971	5,031	2.3	1727	2187	1742	-15	445	-3	95
	3,971	5,031	2.1	1891	2396	1742	149	654	32	139
	3,971	5,031	1.9	2090	2648	1742	348	906	74	193
2036	4,071	5,534	2.3	1770	2406	1742	28	664	6	141
	4,071	5,534	2.1	1939	2635	1742	197	893	42	190
	4,071	5,534	1.9	2143	2913	1742	401	1171	85	249
2041	4,172	6,087	2.3	1814	2647	1742	72	905	15	192
	4,172	6,087	2.1	1987	2899	1742	245	1157	52	246
	4,172	6,087	1.9	2196	3204	1742	454	1462	97	311

Source: ORRSC

As displayed on Map 7, future residential development would primarily expand west and south of the existing municipal boundary. Most of the development would consist of low density residential development with a small portion of land along Highway 520 and near the West Meadow Elementary School dedicated to medium density residential. The southeast quarter of section 36, township 12, range 27, west of the fourth meridian and the northeast quarter of section 25, township 12, range 27, west of the fourth meridian have also been designated as future low density residential development.

Future Commercial Development

Claresholm currently has a commercial area located west of Highway 2 between 51st and 48th Avenue, and extending one block to the west of the highway on 2nd Street West. The commercial district is largely oriented towards the agricultural and highway commercial sectors. Due to the Town's location along Highway 2, a considerable portion of the commercial district caters towards highway traffic and substantially contributes to Claresholm's economy.

According to the Town's MDP, policy related to revitalizing the downtown core will take place upon the realignment of Highway 2. The focus within the commercial section of the MDP is to create a mixed use downtown and establishing pedestrian friendly corridors with the abandoned railway line. In addition, the growth strategy within Claresholm's MDP includes land dedicated to commercial development along the proposed Highway 2 right of way in the northeast portion of the community within the municipal boundary and an adjacent quarter section outside of the municipal boundary. Commercial businesses along the existing Highway 2 will be impacted to an extent, but with revitalization strategies in place, businesses should not be greatly impacted.

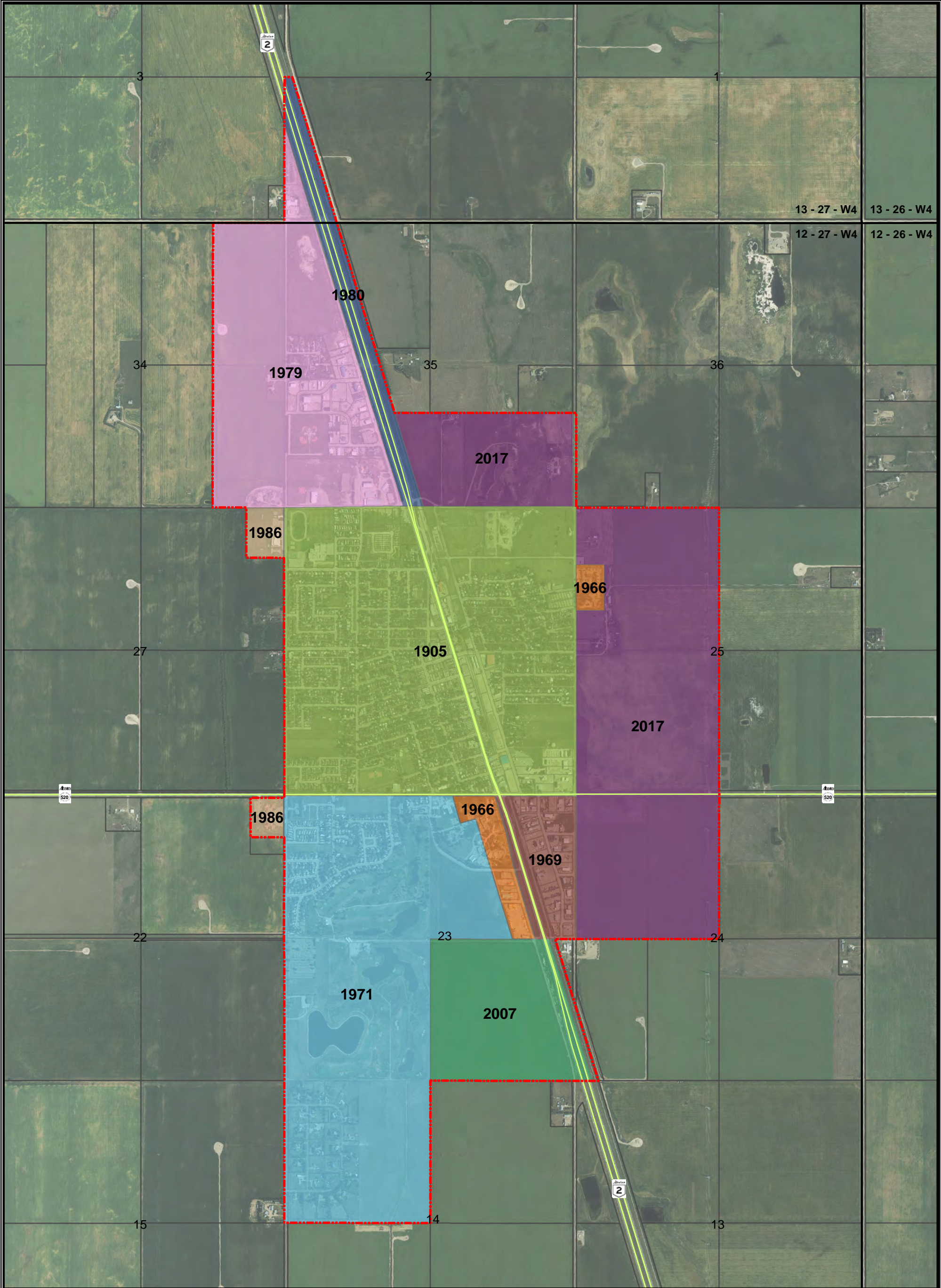
Future Industrial Development

Industrial development is situated in the southern portion of Claresholm east of Highway 2, and in the northern portion, west of Highway 2. Future industrial growth will expand further in the southeast portion of Claresholm due to prevailing winds from the west, distance from residential areas, and the buffer of the existing Highway 2 to the west and Highway 520 to the north. Land in the southeast corner inside and outside the municipal boundary have been designated as future industrial growth areas in the Town's MDP (see Map 7).

Historical Annexation

Incorporated in 1905, the Town of Claresholm has experienced eight annexations as shown on Map 8. The eight annexations for the Town are summarized as follows:

- The 1966 annexation contained approximately 40.2 acres east and south of the original municipal boundary which includes highway commercial and public uses as well as a senior facility to the east of the original Town site.
- The 1969 annexation contained approximately 69.2 acres east of Highway 2 in the southern portion of the community which is currently part of the industrial district.
- The 1971 annexation contained approximately 557.3 acres in the southwestern portion of Claresholm which includes residences and parks and recreation.
- The 1979 annexation contained approximately 338.9 acres in the northwestern portion of the community which includes highway commercial, industrial, and residential lots with some vacant land in the western portion.
- The 1980 annexation contained approximately 68.9 acres along Highway 2 adjacent to the 1979 annexation.
- The 1986 annexation contained approximately 25.3 acres which includes two parcels. One is situated south of Highway 520 which is currently the Claresholm Health Services facility and one is north of Highway 520 along 59th Ave W which contains the West Meadow Elementary School.
- The 2007 annexation contained approximately 157.6 acres located in the southwestern portion of the community which is currently used for agricultural activities but will be used for future development within the Town.
- The 2017 annexation contained approximately 596.1 acres in the northeastern portion of the community along Highway 2 and east of the original Town site on the northwest quarter of Section 24 and the northwest and southwest quarter of Section 25.

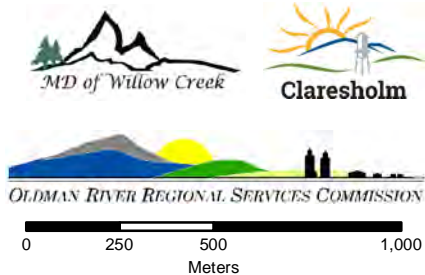


**TOWN OF CLARESHOLM
M.D. OF WILLOW CREEK No. 26
BACKGROUND REPORT 2019**

**ANNEXATION HISTORY
MARCH 27, 2019**

MAP 8

----- Claresholm Municipal Boundary	1905 (667.7±Acres)	1980 (68.9±Acres)
----- IMDP Study Area	1966 (40.2±Acres)	1986 (25.3±Acres)
----- Highways	1969 (69.2±Acres)	2007 (157.6±Acres)
	1971 (557.3±Acres)	2017 (596.1±Acres)
	1979 (338.9±Acres)	



5.0 IDENTIFICATION OF ISSUES

A review of the background information identifies the following issues. The Intermunicipal Plan Committee will need to address these issues in their discussions with each other and their respective councils.

1. Urban Expansion

The Town of Claresholm is a thriving community and will need areas in which to promote future growth. Although there is vacant land available for development, there have been some constraints imposed on a portion of the land identified for future development (See Map 7).

2. Rural Growth and Development

The Municipal District of Willow Creek is also experiencing growth and development. This may have future impacts on the fringe in terms of land use development. The most notable development occurring within the Study Area is the airport development in the southwest portion. There are opportunities for future industrial growth as there are few constraints to expansion in the area. With future growth, a haul route may be designated along Township Road 122 to minimize truck traffic on Highway 520 within Claresholm.

3. Joint Economic Development

Both municipalities have voiced their support for the development of regional tourism by capitalizing on local attributes (the highways and the natural wilderness).

4. Agricultural Land Use Issues

Agriculture has been identified as a major contributor to economic growth within the region. Soil classification map (Map 3) in combination with existing land use (Map 5) indicates that Claresholm was developed on good quality agricultural land.

Although the existing land use mapping did not reveal the existence of a Confined Feed Operation (CFO) or an Intensive Livestock Operation (ILO) (as defined by the M.D. of Willow Creek) within the Study Area, the use is a concern for urban living and in any urban fringe district. Future ILO approvals should be considered carefully to understand the impact they may have on neighbouring land uses. Consideration of Confined Feeding Operation exclusion area should be discussed.

5. Compatible Land Use and Subdivision

The Study Area contains a diversity of landscape and consequently a number of areas of special concern have been identified including the recent oil and gas wells, wetlands, and the existing and rerouting of Highway 2 (Map 6). These should be examined to determine the impact they may have in terms of compatibility and suitability on future land use, including both subdivision and development.

6. Administration of the Plan

A review of the current administration processes should be conducted and recommendations made to integrate the Intermunicipal Development Plan into the administration system of each municipality.

7. Proposed Highway 2 Right-of-Way

The proposed bypass affects planning in the fringe and future growth within the Town. Some assurance is required by both municipalities that intermunicipal planning initiatives are not rendered irrelevant by changes in provincial transportation plans.

Concerns regarding the loss of downtown business with the upcoming realignment of Highway 2 have arisen as highway travelers will be redirected away from the downtown core. A 1998 report from Wisconsin DOT entitled “The Economic Impacts of Highway Bypasses on Communities” showed that communities over 2000 persons showed little impact on their economies once the bypass was completed. This is simply because the majority of business was generated from their local service area. And as a regional center for the travelling public, Claresholm will continue to have a segment of the economy that benefits from tourism.

8. Frog Creek and Hazard Lands

The MD of Willow Creek and Claresholm have over the past few years worked on storm water drainage from Frog Creek and Claresholm is enacting a storm water management plan to alleviate past concerns. It is generally acknowledged by all citizens, interest groups and government bodies that water is the key to our collective futures. Efforts by the Oldman Watershed Council, Cows and Fish, Water for Life, and a variety of conservation groups have created a wealth of knowledge to draw on for best management practises of riparian area management. The IMDP should have a section on this topic and it should be developed to address changes in legislation.

9. Alberta Land Use Framework and the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan

The adoption of the Alberta Land Use Framework, the Alberta Land Stewardship Act, and the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan are redefining how communities will grow into the future. All the details that will affect the Claresholm area are not known at the time of this report, but it is certain that agricultural land preservation, rural land fragmentation, urban growth potential based on water allocation, industry development, and urban density are topics of concern for the province and the two municipalities. In light of this renewed reality, the IMDP will continue to push sound planning policy.

6.0 IDENTIFICATION OF PLANNING SCOPE

The MD of Willow Creek and the Town of Claresholm will continue to grow and diversify. Looking forward, both municipalities have recognized the need for the creation of an IMDP, which will contain many fundamental planning components, including:

- clear goals and objectives of both municipalities as guiding parameters for policy,
- balanced and collective strategic visioning, and
- policy for implementation and enforcement of objectives.

When adopted, the new plan will serve as a basis for decision-making and guide development toward both communities' desired future. It will provide both municipalities with a long-term regional strategic policy framework for guiding growth and development in the fringe area, while having regard for protecting prime agricultural land and outlining a regional structure that manages future growth within the urban-rural interface in the most effective and efficient manner.

6.1 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goals and objectives provide a framework which guide municipalities in decision making processes and achieve a shared vision for land use and development in areas of mutual interest. General goals and objectives are provided below, which both municipalities will work together in conjunction to achieve.

Goals

1. To provide an intermunicipal policy framework to guide future land use decisions within the Plan boundaries.
2. To address requirements of the Municipal Government Act and SSRP implementation.
3. To establish principles whereby both municipalities may consistently apply planning policies and land use bylaws within their respective jurisdictions.
4. To protect future servicing and transportation corridors and infrastructure facilities.
5. To address any significant issues that may be identified in the public participation process.
6. To protect prime agricultural lands in the fringe area.
7. To address any environmental matters in the Study Area.
8. To coordinate the future development of the plan area between the Municipal District and the Town.
9. To strengthen the working relationship between the Municipal District and the Town.

Objectives

1. The Plan must be strategic in nature, setting broad, high-level, long-term policy directions for the plan area and incorporating the strategic objectives of the Municipal District and the Town.

2. The Plan must add value to the planning and development process in the Municipal District and the Town, whereas the Plan must not duplicate or infringe on area municipal planning efforts and must have a distinct, complementary and productive role.

6.2 URBAN FRINGE

An urban fringe land use district has a unique role in intermunicipal planning efforts. The fringe area is under the jurisdiction of the rural municipality, where all of the control lies with regards to development, while the urban centre and all its amenities attract the development.

The urban fringe district is meant to control growth on the edges of the Town, leaving the land in primary agriculture until such time as the land is converted to an urban use in a logical and systematic approach. An urban fringe district has not been identified in the MD of Willow Creek's Land Use Bylaw at this time.

6.3 STRATEGIC VISIONING

The Municipal District and Town are undeniably linked economically and attracting more business to the region is not a mutually exclusive exercise. The decision of one jurisdiction will immediately affect the other in terms of housing, social impact, infrastructure usage, natural resource consumption and the ever-changing sense of place and community.

Map 4 combines the land use districts of both jurisdictions to illustrate the combined vision of each individual municipality. A distinct line between urban development and rural agriculture development is easy to discern. Both municipalities should define a compatible growth strategy to achieve mutual goals of the municipalities.

Finally, major transportation corridors should be a primary strategic visioning concern. Attention should be paid to the approach and entrances into the Town of Claresholm. The first impression of these entrances can be influential in the potential draw of economic investment in the region.

6.4 IMPLEMENTATION

An IMDP, including the formation of the implementation and enforcement tools will strengthen the municipal partnership between the Municipal District and the Town, and further direct future development in the Study Area. The following should be considered:

- A hierarchy of planning documents exist between provincial and municipal land use plans. All municipal planning documents must be in compliance with the MGA and SSRP. Each jurisdiction must embed policies from the IMDP in their other planning documents including their respective MDPs, ASPs, ARPs, and LUBs. Each plan in support of the other will lower the potential for planning decisions in the referral areas that are contrary to the agreed upon common goals of each municipality.

- The IMDP plan boundary should be reduced from the Study Area boundary with the exception of the corridor to the airport industrial development. A reduction would make the new plan more manageable and focused.
- As part of the policy development of the IMDP, the proposed growth areas indicated on Map 7 will need to be reviewed to ensure they still reflect the intentions of the Town and the needs of the Municipal District.
- Review the need for CFO exclusion areas around urban centres within the region in the Municipal District's MDP.
- Revisit the current referral system in order to strengthen the IMDP. It is true that each municipality strives to maintain its local autonomy, but in the context of regional and provincial planning this autonomy must be set aside for the plan to have the highest and best results. Each municipality must recognize this and refer all plans, developments, subdivisions, and redesignations within the urban or rural referral areas to the other municipality as the first step of review.