

REQUEST FOR DECISION

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| TITLE: | MDP Amending Bylaw #26.25 (1 st Reading) |
| DATE: | July 7, 2025 |
| PRESENTED BY: | Antonia Strilisky, Development Officer |
| ATTACHMENTS: | Bylaw #26.25 - MDP Amending Bylaw (1 st Reading) 2023 Consolidated Municipal Development Plan Bylaw #17.20 |

SUMMARY:

The Town of Drumheller in partnership with Palliser Regional Municipal Services (PRMS) is in the process of preparing an amending bylaw for the Town's Municipal Development Plan (MDP) as established by Bylaw #17.20. The purpose of the amending bylaw, as presented at the June 16, 2025 Regular Council Meeting, is to undertake a targeted review and update of the MDP, specifically focused on updates to flood mitigation, parks, and trails. Pursuant to section 692 of the *Municipal Government Act*, a Public Hearing for the proposed Amending Bylaw must also be held prior to second reading. The proposed MDP Amending Bylaw #26.25 is being presented to Council today for first (1st) reading.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council gives first reading to Bylaw #26.25, being a bylaw to amend Municipal Development Plan Bylaw #17.20, as presented, and furthermore, sets a Public Hearing for August 11, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. at the Town of Drumheller Council Chambers.

DISCUSSION:

Pursuant to section 641 of the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA), all municipalities are required to develop and maintain a Municipal Development Plan (MDP). The Public Hearing must be properly advertised in accordance with section 606 of the MGA or in accordance with the Town's adopted Advertising Bylaw #24.24.

The current Drumheller MDP was prepared in 2020 and was designed with a central focus around flooding and flood mitigation initiatives. Recognizing the successes of implementing the flood program in Drumheller has led to a greater understanding and management of flooding hazards and risks, including land purchases, expropriations, and the construction of berms. In addition to these successes, there are also several contextual changes and implementation challenges that have emerged, such as updated provincial flood hazard mapping, berm-integrated trail networks and adaptive mitigation strategies. The Town also has since adopted a new Parks and Recreation Master Plan in 2023.

This review and update of the MDP is intended to help the Town continue to provide a relevant and effective tool that guides land use decisions while supporting long-term community goals and coordinating future development with existing and planned municipal infrastructure. While flooding remains an important consideration to growth and development in Drumheller, it is no longer the primary or central focus. The proposed amendments minimize the language around flooding in the MDP to enable it to be a more balanced and well-rounded document that achieves its goal of being more "encouraging and inviting". The amount of information related to

trails, parks and recreation is also being reduced and refocused to align with the Town's recently adopted 2023 Recreation Master Plan.

Specifically, this review focuses on:

- reviewing and revising the vision, goals, and objectives of the MDP in *Part 1 Vision and Context* as it relates to flooding, parks, and trails;
- updating flood terminology to make it consistent with provincial terminology;
- removing statements suggesting additional land expropriation for flood mitigation;
- removing engineering-specific details and outdated terminology;
- removing requirements related to pavilions and plazas within parks and trails;
- determining appropriate land use policy for each flood area, and providing guidance on how changes to the land use regulation will be implemented; and
- aligning the provisions related to flooding, parks, and trails in *Part II Policies* with the vision and goals outlined in *Part I Vision and Context*.

PRMS and Administration also recognize that the MDP includes vision and goal-oriented statements for future land use and development. Although road engineering and design standards are not suitable for this broadly focused type of statutory document, wording has also been proposed to the MDP policy statements to more readily enable the adoption of such engineering standards for future developments.

A future, more comprehensive review and update of the MDP in its entirety will be undertaken no later than 2027.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

This project has no additional financial cost to the 2025 Operational Budget; it is included as part of the Municipal Planning and Development 2025 Professional Services Budget.

STRATEGIC POLICY ALIGNMENT:

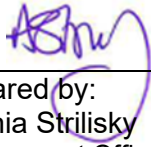
Adherence to the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA), Intermunicipal Development Plans and support effective and informed governance.

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY:

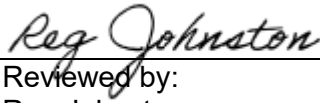
Following the first reading of Bylaw #26.25, the proposed changes will be circulated to neighboring municipal stakeholders in accordance with Intermunicipal Development Plans including Kneehill County, Wheatland County, Starland County, and the Special Areas Board. Additionally, all residents and public stakeholders will be highly encouraged through the Town website, social media and local newspaper advertisements to submit written comments or to attend the scheduled Public Hearing prior to second reading, all in accordance with Advertising Bylaw #24.24.

MOTION:

That Council gives first reading to Municipal Development Plan Amending Bylaw #26.25, as presented, and sets a Public Hearing for August 11, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. at the Town of Drumheller Council Chambers.



Prepared by:
Antonia Strilisky
Development Officer



Reviewed by:
Reg Johnston
Manager of Economic
Development



Approved by:
Esther Quiambao, CLGM
Assistant Chief
Administrative Officer

TOWN OF DRUMHELLER
BYLAW NUMBER 26.25
DEPARTMENT: PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN AMENDING BYLAW #26.25

A BYLAW OF THE TOWN OF DRUMHELLER, IN THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA TO AMEND
THE TOWN OF DRUMHELLER MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN BYLAW 17.20

WHEREAS pursuant to the provision of section 632(1) of the *Municipal Government Act*, RSA 2000, Chapter M-26, the Council of the Town of Drumheller (hereinafter called the Council) has adopted the *Municipal Development Plan Bylaw #17.20*.

AND WHEREAS section 191 of the *Municipal Government Act* empowers the Council of the Town of Drumheller to amend its bylaws;

AND WHEREAS Council deems it desirable to amend the *Municipal Development Plan Bylaw #17.20*;

NOW, THEREFORE the Council of the *Town of Drumheller* in the Province of Alberta, enacts as follows:

1. CITATION

1.1 This Bylaw shall be cited as the "*Municipal Development Plan Amending Bylaw*".

2. BYLAW AMENDMENT

The *Municipal Development Plan Bylaw #17.20* Schedule 'A' is hereby amended as follows:

2.1 The entirety of "Part I Vision and Context", sections 1 through 6 are deleted and replaced by the attached Schedule 'A'.

2.2 Replace the diagram following the "Part II Policies" page with the diagram in the attached Schedule 'B'.

2.3 Delete Part II, section 7 in its entirety.

2.4 Rename Part II, section 8 to: "TRAILS, PARKS AND NATURAL AREAS" and delete the first four paragraphs under the new heading. Add the following paragraph under this heading:

"The Drumheller Badlands Parks Trail System is comprised of key components: trails, parks and natural areas. Access into Drumheller will be balanced with the preservation and restoration of natural areas for the long-term health of the region's ecological network. This will help to ensure future generations can delight in the discovery of Drumheller and experience the wonder of exploring its inscription on the landscape."

2.5 Delete the heading "8.1 Drumheller Badlands parks trail system", and the first paragraph that follows that heading, and policies 8.1 a) through h).

2.6 Delete Figure 18 Drumheller Badlands Parks Trail System.

2.7 Add a new heading “8.1 GENERAL POLICIES” following the paragraph added in section 2.4 above and add the following policies:

- a) Parks, trails and natural areas will be planned and managed by the Town in accordance with the Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2023).
- b) The Town will encourage opportunities to improve the Drumheller Badlands Parks Trail System to:
 - i. protect the integrity of significant badlands landscapes; and
 - ii. increase public access to and enjoyment of open space, trails and amenities.
- c) The design and management of the Drumheller Badlands Parks Trail System will include the following principles:
 - i. to provide sustainable and inclusive design, construction, maintenance and operation of the components for all ages and abilities;
 - ii. to provide an adequate supply, quality, diversity and distribution of parks, open spaces, pathways, trails and associated amenities throughout Drumheller;
 - iii. to preserve significant views, ecological features/corridors, cultural sites, and sensitive landscapes for monitoring and/or restoration;
 - iv. to provide suitable river access points; and
 - v. to respect unique neighbourhood identity and needs.
- d) The Drumheller Badlands Parks Trail System should integrate key entry points that announce visitors’ arrival into Drumheller and protect views of the badlands landscape and the rivers. These key entry points should integrate wayfinding elements to connect people to the open space, park and trail network.

8.1.1 COMMERCIAL USES

- a) Allow commercial activities within the Drumheller Badlands Parks Trail System, prioritizing commercial activities that support recreational services (e.g. equipment outfitters, watercraft and bicycle rental shops, food and beverage kiosks). Commercial uses and facilities should reflect the character and identity of Drumheller and should be sensitive to the landscape context.
- b) Locate new or expanded commercial services in disturbed areas where they will have the least impact to ecological and trail connectivity.

2.8 Delete section 8.2 VALLEY CONNECTIVITY in its entirety.

2.9 Delete the reference to “Figure 19” on the image below 8.2.1.

2.10 Renumber the heading “8.2.2 TRAILS” to “8.3 TRAILS”.

2.11 Delete the first paragraph below the heading 8.2.2 TRAILS and the policies a) through d) thereunder.

2.12 Under the new heading 8.3 TRAILS, add the following:

“Connecting a network of land trails provides multi-modal access throughout the Drumheller Valley. Plazas and pavilions will provide access, amenity, and legibility to the trail network. Plazas will be larger nodes along the trail system, serving as venues for larger events or gatherings. Pavilions will be smaller nodes located at intervals along the trail system, at key trail intersections and in neighbourhood parks.

- a) A system of trails should be established in Drumheller that connect parks, the badlands, neighbourhoods, and the river. The trail system should include:
 - i. A continuous, accessible regional trail that connects the length of Drumheller;
 - ii. A network of local trails which serve as neighbourhood-level paths, designed to be universally accessible; and
 - iii. natural or adventure trails, which facilitate lower-impact access in natural areas with higher sensitivity.
- b) Where a key trail or pathway connection is required through private land, the Town may pursue land acquisition, easements or partnerships to promote pedestrian connectivity throughout Drumheller.
- c) Encourage the placement of plazas and pavilions at key trail connections and points of interest to act as gathering areas, resting points and trailheads, including:
 - i. sites or structures with historical or cultural significance;
 - ii. significant environmental, geological or hydrological features;
 - iii. important archaeological or palaeontological discoveries; and
 - iv. areas of significance to communities and neighbourhoods in Drumheller.
- d) Plazas should be located near major landmarks or in regional parks. Plazas should be supported by amenities and infrastructure to support larger gatherings, such as parking lots, buildings/structures and washrooms.
- e) Pavilions should be provided as rest areas along a trail or at local trailheads. Pavilions may be supported by amenities such as signage, seating, waste receptacles, and bicycle amenities.”

2.13 Delete the heading 8.3 PLAZAS AND PAVILLIONS and policies a) through f).

2.14 Change the heading 8.3.1 PARKS to 8.4 PARKS and replace the first paragraph under that heading with the following:

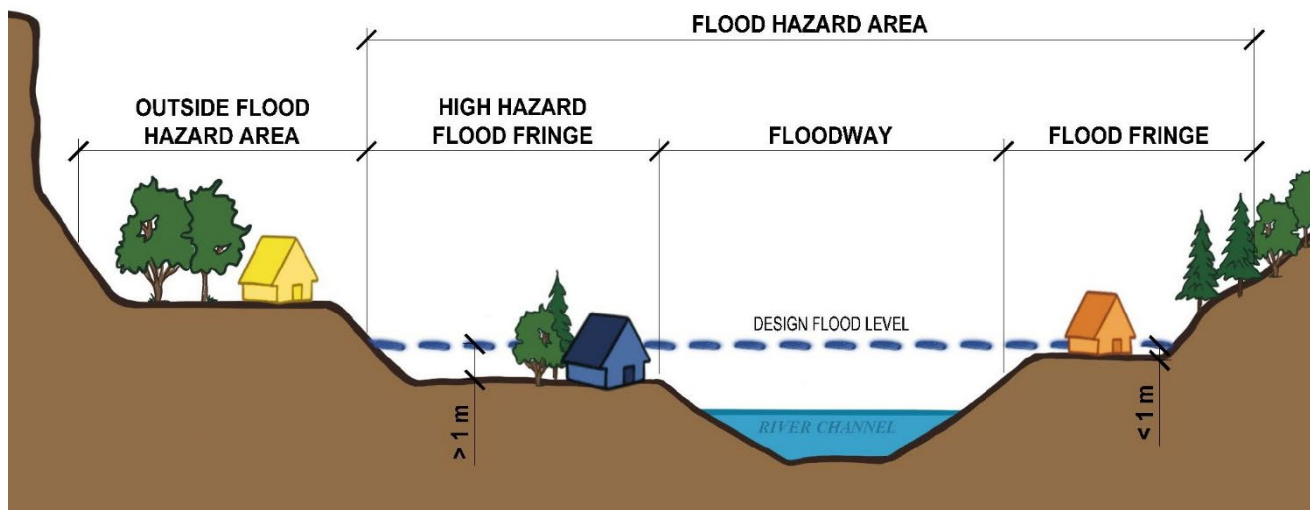
“Parks are open spaces for people – expressions of the Drumheller’s landscape that invite people to play, rest, celebrate and reflect. Drumheller’s existing leisure parks offer many recreational and open space amenities for residents to enjoy, such as splash pads, sports fields, playgrounds and gardens. At a local level, new growth areas will introduce additional neighbourhood parks and local open space connections.

2.15 Delete the heading 8.3.2 EXISTING PARKS and policies a) through c).

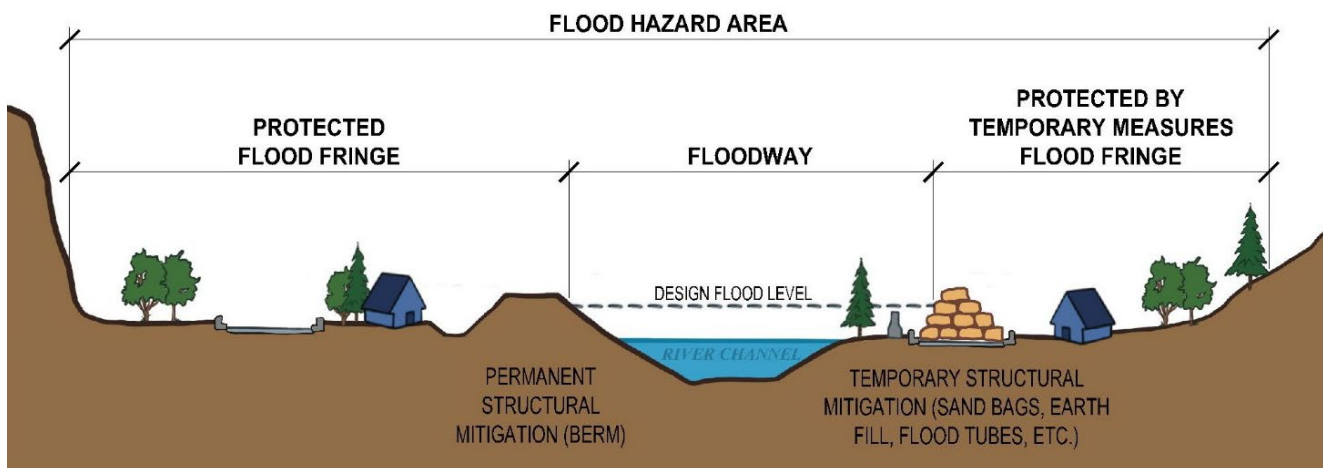
- 2.16 Delete the heading 8.3.3 FUTURE PARK DEVELOPMENT.
- 2.17 Replace policy b) under the heading 8.3.3 FUTURE PARK DEVELOPMENT with the following:
- b) River parks should accommodate activities appropriate to the site context. River parks should be designed to:
 - i. provide space for people to gather and celebrate the river valley;
 - ii. accommodate active and passive uses appropriate to the site with a focus on river activities; and
 - iii. minimize impacts to riparian areas.
- 2.18 Replace policy d) ii) under the heading 8.3.3 FUTURE PARK DEVELOPMENT with the following:
- ii. contribute to a greater understanding and appreciation of the history and natural character of Drumheller; and
- 2.19 Renumber “8.4.3 MUNICIPAL RESERVE” to “8.5.1 MUNICIPAL RESERVE”.
- 2.20 Renumber 8.4 NATURAL AREAS to 8.5 NATURAL AREAS and delete the second paragraph under the heading.
- 2.21 Delete the heading “8.4.1 General” and policy a) thereunder.
- 2.22 Replace 8.4.1 b) iii) with the following:
- “Preserve important natural viewsheds from transportation corridors and;”
- 2.23 Replace “Conveyance Zone” with “floodway” in 8.4.1 c).
- 2.24 Delete “and recreation” from 8.4.1 c) i).
- 2.25 Delete “channel conveyance capacity,” from 8.4.1 c) iii).
- 2.26 Renumber “8.4.2 SENSITIVE LANDS” to “8.5.2 SENSITIVE LANDS”.
- 2.27 Renumber “8.4.3 ENVIRONMENTAL RESERVE” to “8.5.3 ENVIRONMENTAL RESERVE”.
- 2.28 Delete section 8.6 Programming and Interpretive Elements in its entirety.
- 2.29 Delete section 8.7 Climate Adpatation in its entirety and move all headings and text to a new section 9.7.
- 2.30 Delete all five paragraphs under the section 9 GROWTH heading and replace with the following:
- “This MDP provides direction on how and where growth and future land uses should occur in Drumheller. In general, growth will occur in two main forms: through infill within existing neighbourhoods, and through the development of new neighbourhoods”.

- 2.31 Remove Figure 20 LAND USE MAP from section 9 and move to section 14 Figures as a new Figure 9 – LAND USE MAP.
- 2.32 Change the heading of 9.1 from Resilient Development to “DEVELOPMENT HAZARDS AND CONSTRAINTS” and delete the first paragraph under that heading.
- 2.33 Delete the first two paragraphs under the heading 9.1.1 FLOOD RESILIENCE and replace with the following:
- “To minimize social, environmental and economic impacts, the appropriate balance must be found between the preservation of the floodway, the construction of flood mitigation structures and managing risk in the flood fringe areas.”
- 2.34 Delete Figure 21 FLOOD HAZARD OVERLAY.
- 2.35 Replace policies a) through e) under the heading 9.1.1 with the following policies:
- a) The design flood within Drumheller is the 1:100 year return period flood as determined by the Province of Alberta Flood Hazard Study.
 - b) The flood hazard area in Drumheller includes the floodway, flood fringe, high hazard flood fringe, protected flood fringe and protected flood fringe by temporary measures as shown in Figures 2 to 4 - Flood Hazard Map. (Note: the Flood Hazard Map can be viewed in detail online at gis.palliserwebmap.ca/view.aspx)

FLOOD WAY, FLOOD FRINGE AND HIGH HAZARD FLOOD FRINGE



FLOOD WAY, PROTECTED FLOOD FRINGE AND PROTECTED FLOOD FRINGE BY TEMPORARY MEASURES



- c) The flood hazard mapping should be adjusted in the future to reflect changes in Provincial flood hazard mapping, river morphology, and berm construction.
 - d) Where physically and economically feasible, the Town will construct additional structural measures (berms) to protect existing development from the design flood.
 - e) Flood protection structural measures shall be constructed on lands owned by the Town of Drumheller.
 - f) The deployment of temporary measures for flood protection should be outlined in the Town's Flood Emergency Reference Manual.
 - g) In the absence of Provincial regulations, the Town will regulate flood hazards through the Land Use Bylaw and engineering design standards in accordance with the following:
 - i. Development within the floodway will be limited to uses such as natural parks, trails and essential utilities that do not materially impede the natural function of the floodway.
 - ii. Development within the areas identified as flood fringe, high hazard flood fringe, protected flood fringe, and protected flood fringe by temporary measures shall be designed to protect buildings and habitable spaces, such as establishing a minimum flood construction level and raising the level of electrical and mechanical equipment.
- 2.36 Add a new section 9.1.2 EROSION CONTROL AND BANK STABILITY and renumber the heading OTHER HAZARDS AND DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS to 9.1.3.
- 2.37 Add the following under the new heading 9.1.2:
- "Even with the regulating influence of the Dickson Dam, erosion and bank stability is a concern along the waterways in the Town of Drumheller, particularly during high flow and ice jam events. Excessive erosion negatively impacts water quality and can pose a risk to

human life, property, and the environment. Erosion control and bank stabilization are critical components of a resilient flood mitigation strategy.

- a) The Town should identify and monitor potential and existing risk areas for erosion and scour along the waterways and develop a method for prioritizing bank stabilization projects.
- b) Where the potential for localized bank erosion along a waterway exists, the Town may require the submission of a report prepared by a qualified professional that evaluates the hazard of bank stability and erosion and the risk to the development, and propose mitigation to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.”

2.38 In the first paragraph under the heading 9.1.3 OTHER HAZARDS AND DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS to 9.1.3, replace “Figure 22 Development Constraints” with “Figure 7- Development Constraints”.

2.39 Remove Figure 22 DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS from section 9 and move to section 15 Figures as a new Figure 7 – DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS.

2.40 In the first paragraph under the heading 9.2 LANDSCAPE SENSITIVE DEVELOPMENT to 9.1.3, replace “Figure 23 Significant Views” with “Figure 8 - Significant Views”.

2.41 Remove Figure 23 Significant Views from section 9 and move to section 15 Figures as a new Figure 8 – Significant Views.

2.42 Replace “Figure 20 Land Use Map” in 9.3.1 a) with “Figure 9 – Land Use Map”.

2.43 In the first paragraph under the heading 9.3.2 INFILL NEIGHBOURHOODS, delete the following sentence:

“Over time, new development should move above 2100 cms”.

2.44 Delete 9.3.2 a).

2.45 In the second paragraph under the heading 9.3.3 NEW NEIGHBOURHOODS, delete the following sentences:

“All new future growth areas are outside of the conveyance and protection zones of the Flood Overlay, making these areas the most resilient to flood risk and significant opportunities for new and innovative development. The potential growth areas are shown on Figure 24 Potential Growth Areas. The growth areas identified are not exhaustive, and it is anticipated that the Town will identify additional growth areas in the future.”

2.46 Replace 9.3.3 a) with the following:

“Encourage the establishment of new neighbourhoods in the potential growth areas identified in Figure 10 – Growth Areas.

2.47 Delete Figure 24 POTENTIAL GROWTH AREAS (ABOVE 2100 CMS).

2.48 Replace “Figure 20 Land Use Map” in 9.4 a) with “Figure 9 – Land Use Map”.

- 2.49 Replace “Figure 20 Land Use Map” in 9.6.1 a) with “Figure 9 – Land Use Map”.
- 2.50 Replace “Figure 20 Land Use Map” in 9.6.2 a) with “Figure 9 – Land Use Map”.
- 2.51 Replace “Figure 20 Land Use Map” in 9.6.3 a) with “Figure 9 – Land Use Map”.
- 2.52 Delete “Figure 25” text in the image heading.
- 2.53 Delete section 11.1 in its entirety.
- 2.54 Replace “Figure 26 Transportation Network” in the second paragraph in 11.2 with “Figure 11 – Transportation Network”.
- 2.55 Remove the text “, identified in Figure 27 Mode Heirarchy,” in 11.2.1 a) i).
- 2.56 Remove Figure 26 TRANSPORTATION NETWORK from section 11 and move to section 15 FIGURES as a new Figure 11.
- 2.57 Delete policy 11.2.1 h).
- 2.58 Delete the heading “FIGURE 27 MODE HEIRARCHY” and move the image below policy 11.2.1 a) i).
- 2.59 Add “(Figure 11 – Transportation Network)” to the end of the first sentence under 11.2.2 MAJOR CORRIDORS.
- 2.60 Delete “Figure 28” text in the image heading.
- 2.61 Replace “Community Services” with “Parks and Recreation” in 12.3 f).
- 2.62 Replace 13.2 a) with the following policy:

“Construct flood mitigation structural measures to protect existing development in Drumheller”.
- 2.63 Replace 13.2 b) with the following policy:

“Prepare and adopt Drumheller-specific engineering design and construction standards”.
- 2.64 Delete 13.2 j).
- 2.65 Delete 13.2 l).
- 2.66 Delete the definition for Adaptive structural measures in section 14.
- 2.67 Delete the definition for Conveyance capacity in section 14.
- 2.68 Replace the definition for Flood fringe in section 14 with the following:

“means the portion of the flood hazard area outside of the floodway and includes sub-zones such as high hazard flood fringe, protected flood fringe and protected flood fringe by

temporary measures. Water in the flood fringe is generally shallower and flows more slowly than in the floodway.

2.69 Add a new definition for Flood hazard area to section 14:

“means the area of land that will be flooded during the 1:100 year return period design flood. The flood hazard area is typically divided into two main zones, the floodway and the flood fringe, and may include flood fringe sub-zones”.

2.70 Replace the definition for “Floodway” in section 14 with the following:

“means the portion of the flood hazard area where flows are deepest, fastest and most destructive. The floodway typically includes the main channel of a stream and a portion of the adjacent overbank area.”

2.71 Delete the definition for “Flow rate” in section 14.

2.72 Delete the definition for “Freeboard” in section 14.

2.73 Add the following definition for “High hazard flood fringe” to section 14:

“means a specific sub-zone of the flood fringe which experiences deeper or faster moving flows than the rest of the flood fringe. The high hazard flood fringe is the second highest flood risk category after Floodway.”

2.74 Delete the definition for “Open Space” in section 14.

2.75 Add the following definition for “Protected Flood Fringe” to section 14:

“means a sub-zone of the flood fringe area which could be flooded if berms fail or do not work as intended during the 1:100 year return period design flood.”

2.76 Add the following definition for “Protected Flood Fringe by Temporary Measures” to section 14:

“means a sub-zone of the flood fringe area that is intended to be protected by temporary measures. This sub-zone accounts for the residual risk if the temporary measures are not implemented or if the dedicated flood berms fail or do not work as designed during the 1:100 year return period design flood.”

2.77 Add the following definition for “Temporary Measures” to section 14:

“means measures which are temporarily implemented by the Town of Drumheller in advance of a flood to fill gaps in existing structural flood mitigation. Temporary measures are intended to be deployed in areas where permanent infrastructure was not feasible due to blocking access roads, space constraints or other factors and may include sandbags, water filled tubes, earthfill and other modular flood barriers.”

2.78 Add a new heading section 15 FIGURES.

2.79 Add a new Figure 1 – STRUCTURAL MEASURES as shown in the attached Schedule “C” to section 15.

- 2.80 Add a new Figure 2 – FLOOD HAZARD AREA (WEST) as shown in the attached Schedule “D” to section 15.
- 2.81 Add a new Figure 3 – FLOOD HAZARD AREA (CENTRAL) as shown in the attached Schedule “E” to section 15.
- 2.82 Add a new Figure 4 – FLOOD HAZARD AREA (EAST) as shown in the attached Schedule “F” to section 15.
- 2.83 Add a new Figure 5 – EXISTING LANDSCAPE CONDITIONS as shown in the attached Schedule “G” to section 15.
- 2.84 Add a new Figure 6 – SIGNIFICANT PLACES as shown in the attached Schedule “H” to section 15.
- 2.85 Add a new Figure 10 – GROWTH AREAS as shown in the attached Schedule “I” to section 15.

3. SCHEDULES

- 3.1 Schedule ‘A’ to Schedule ‘I’ are attached to and form part of this Bylaw.

4. SEVERABILITY

- 4.1 If any portion of this Bylaw is found to be invalid, that portion shall be severed from the remainder of the Bylaw and shall not invalidate the whole Bylaw.

5. TRANSITIONAL

- 5.1 This Bylaw comes into full force and effect upon third and final reading.

READ A FIRST TIME THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2025.

READ A SECOND TIME THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2025.

READ A THIRD AND FINAL TIME THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2025.

MAYOR

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

1 INTRODUCTION

Drumheller provides an experience unlike any other. Located along the banks of the Red Deer and Rosebud Rivers in southern Alberta, the town captivates with its breathtaking badlands landscape, unique neighbourhoods, and vast layers of natural and human history. Drumheller is home to 8,000 residents and draws nearly 500,000 visitors each year.

The intent of this Municipal Development Plan (MDP) is to protect, enhance, and leverage Drumheller's assets to harness its full potential as a place of resilience, growth, and discovery.

1.1 PURPOSE

The Municipal Development Plan sets the vision and direction for the growth of The Town of Drumheller over the next 30 years. Its policies set out priorities for the future land use, infrastructure, community services, and the physical development of the town.

The Plan weaves together the unique elements that form the Drumheller experience, ensuring protection and support for these elements while also enabling continued growth, adaptation, and change. The MDP supports a land use planning framework that ensures future development is resilient and responsive to a changing climate.

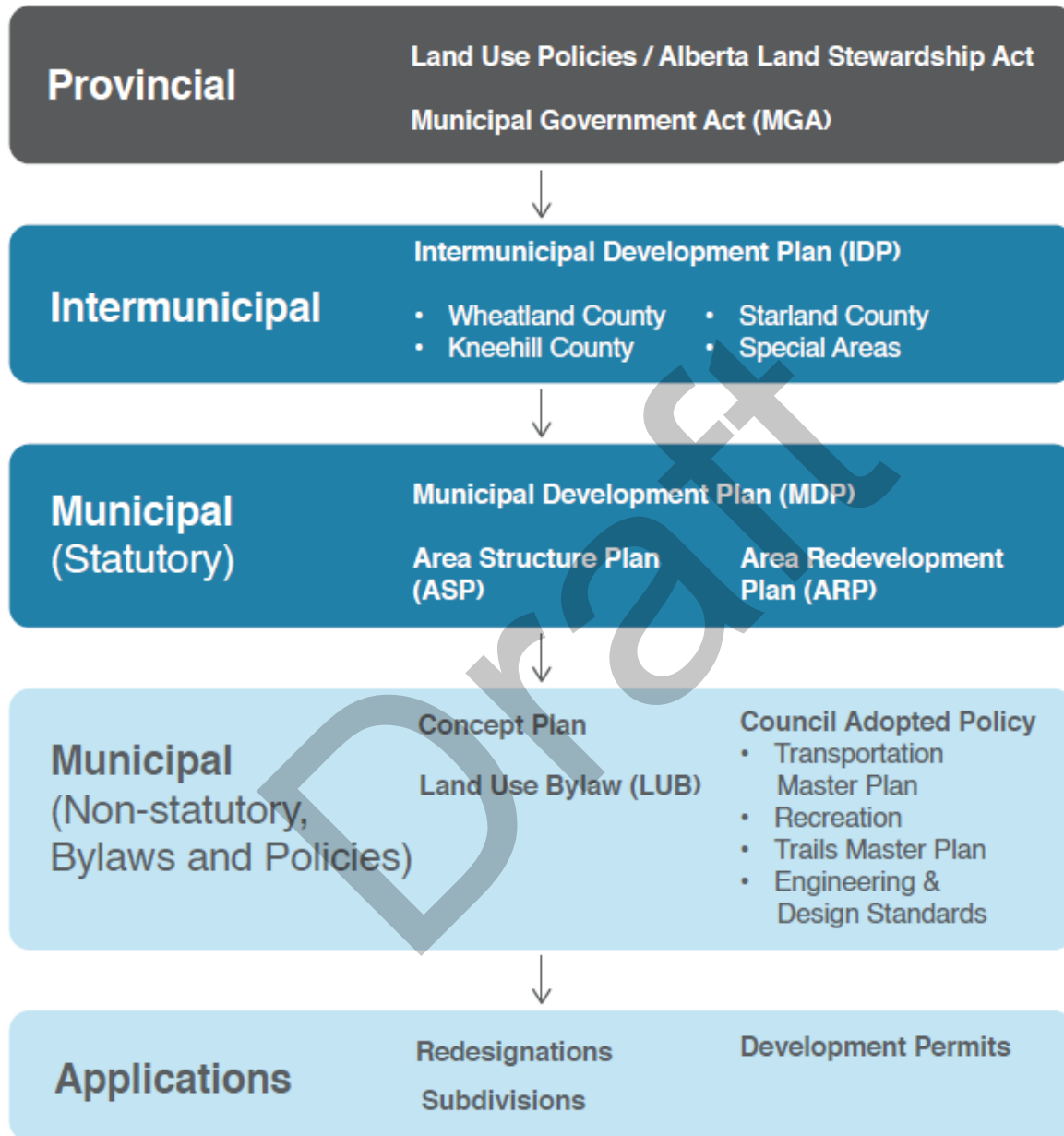
1.2 AUTHORITY

The authority of this MDP is provided by the Municipal Government Act. The following section provides an overview of the legislative context and planning framework for all of Alberta, as well as guidance for interpreting the policies within the MDP.

1.3 PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The Planning Framework, as shown below, outlines the authority and hierarchy of legislation, regulation, and other planning documents that guides land use and planning in Alberta.

PLANNING FRAMEWORK



MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT ACT

The Municipal Government Act (MGA) provides the legislative framework under which all municipalities must operate. The MGA states that the purpose of a municipality is to:

- provide good government;
- foster the well-being of the environment;
- provide services, facilities or other things that, in the opinion of Council, are necessary or desirable for all or a part of the municipality;
- develop and maintain safe and viable communities; and
- work collaboratively with neighbouring municipalities to plan, deliver, and fund intermunicipal services.

Part 17 of the Municipal Government Act regulates planning and development and empowers municipalities to prepare plans:

- To achieve the orderly, economical and beneficial development, use of land and patterns of human settlement; and
- To maintain and improve the quality of the physical environment within which patterns of human settlement are situated in Alberta, without infringing on the rights of individuals for any public interest except to the extent that is necessary for the overall greater public interest.

The MGA requires municipalities to ensure that all statutory plans, land use bylaws and any action undertaken under Part 17 is consistent with the provincial land use policies or regional plan prepared pursuant to the Alberta Land Stewardship Act.

INTERMUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Intermunicipal Development Plans (IDP) provide coordinating policies to guide land use and growth management between the Town and the municipalities it shares a border with. These plans may include how the municipalities will work together, develop joint lands, and/or co-ordinate parks, open space, recreation, transportation, water, utilities, and other municipal services across boundaries. IDPs must be approved by each Council in partnering municipalities.

The Town has IDPs with Wheatland County, Kneehill County, Starland County, and Special Areas.

MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Municipal Development Plan (MDP) directs future growth, priorities, and management of the Town of Drumheller. It must be consistent with all IDPs, and provide policy direction for the following key items:

- Future land use within the town and how it is intended to be developed;

- Coordination of land use, growth, and infrastructure with adjoining municipalities;
- Policies regarding provision of transportation systems and municipal servicing;
- Guidance on land-use compatibility and regulation near sour gas facilities;
- Policies regarding municipal and school reserve; and
- Policies respecting the protection of agricultural operations.

Municipal Development Plans may additionally address environmental matters, development constraints, financing of municipal infrastructure, municipal programs, financial resources, economic development, conservation reserve, and other programs or matters relating to the physical, social, or economic development of the municipality.

AREA STRUCTURE PLANS AND AREA REDEVELOPMENT PLANS

As part of the municipal planning process, the Town may develop or require Area Structure Plans (ASP) and Area Redevelopment Plans (ARP) to provide detailed direction for smaller areas within the town. ASPs and ARPs contain maps, goals, and policies that set out general locations for major land uses, major roadways, utility servicing, recreation areas, and development phasing. These ASPs and ARPs are subsidiary to the MDP and must be consistent with its policies.

LAND USE BYLAW

The Land Use Bylaw (LUB) is a regulatory bylaw of the Town, required by the MGA, that implements the land use direction provided in the Municipal Development Plan. Every parcel of land in the Town has a land use district, which specifies which uses are permitted and discretionary and how buildings and land can be developed in the Town.

CONCEPT PLAN

A Concept Plan, referred to as a Conceptual Scheme in the MGA, may be adopted by bylaw or Council resolution. Concept Plans are a non-statutory planning document that provides a framework for future multi-parcel subdivision and development of land, and how it relates to the future subdivision and development of adjacent lands. Concept Plans may be required to be prepared where an Area Structure Plan is deemed unnecessary, such as smaller areas of land, or between the ASP and subdivision/land use application stage. A Concept Plan provides an overview of the location of proposed parcels, roads, parks, utilities and other amenities.

1.4 PLAN INTERPRETATION

The MDP's vision, goals, and objectives will be achieved by implementation of the policies within this Plan. The policies provide direction for decision making within the Valley and how it will grow and develop over the next 30 years.

The following language is used to determine interpretation of the plan:

Shall/will: Shall/will means that a policy is mandatory and must be complied with, without discretion, by administration, developers, Council, Municipal Planning Commission, and any other authority involved in land use and development approvals.

Should: Should is used when a policy is considered best practice that is only waived if there is a significant rationale for an exception being made.

May: May is discretionary, indicating that the Town could enforce the policy given specific circumstances.

1.5 PREPARING THIS MDP

In August 2020, a Master Engineering Design and Assessment of Planning Impact was prepared as part of the Drumheller Flood Mitigation and Climate Adaptation System (DFMCAS) project. The assessment identified the need for modernization of the Town's two key planning documents: the Municipal Development Plan (MDP) and the Land Use Bylaw (LUB). The assessment determined that the existing plans were out of date, not aligned with the Town's flood resilience priorities, and lacked a clear vision for the future of Drumheller. To address these concerns, Town Council initiated the modernization of the MDP and LUB from summer to winter 2020.

Modernization of the MDP and LUB involved engagement with the public as well as internal and external stakeholders. The project team was guided by a Technical Advisory Committee, made up of community experts, Council representatives, Flood Resiliency and Mitigation Office Representatives, and Town staff. To ensure the new planning documents reflected community aspirations, the project team conducted eight public neighbourhood information sessions, and six targeted stakeholder meetings in fall 2020. Feedback was collected on the first reading draft planning documents and the public hearing was held on October 26, 2020. Additional comments were received by the Town throughout November, and were incorporated into the third reading version of the documents. In total, the project team heard from over 500 people.

In 2025, a significant update to the MDP was undertaken to update the background, vision, goals and policies related to flooding and parks/trails in the MDP recognizing the successes, challenges and changing context since the MDP was adopted in 2020.

1.6 HOW TO USE THE MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Drumheller Municipal Development Plan is made up of two main parts:

Part I – Vision and Context provides the overall introduction, vision, and context for the Valley. It describes the current understanding of our community, where we have come from, and **where we want to be** in 30 years.

Part II- Policies contains the statutory policies of the MDP. It directs municipal priorities relating to land use, transportation, servicing, flood mitigation, open space, and other important Town functions. These policies provide the framework for **achieving the vision for the Valley**.

VIEW SOUTHEAST OF RAYMOND HILL, AUGUST 2020



2 DRUMHELLER'S VISION

The vision sets out the aspirations for future growth and development in Drumheller. The goals, objectives, and policies in this MDP work towards achieving this vision.

2.1 VISION

Drumheller is a place to grow and a place to discover.

A PLACE TO GROW

Drumheller will draw new residents, enterprise, and investment, enriching the region and unearthing its remarkable potential. Drumheller's river, landscape, and unique neighbourhoods will anchor future growth, providing a wide range of choices and ensuring Drumheller retains a dynamic connection to its history.

A PLACE TO DISCOVER

Drumheller will leverage its dramatic river landscape, deep history, and unique neighbourhoods to become an unmissable part of the Albertan Experience. Drumheller's unique amenities will prompt exploration and unlock a world of unscripted adventure. Visitors will be drawn to the immersive badlands landscape to explore, exercise, play, create, shop, and relax.

As further described in Sections 3 through 6 of this MDP, the future of Drumheller's will be shaped by four key influences: rivers, badlands, existing neighbourhoods, and opportunity. By understanding, respecting, and purposefully shaping these influences, Drumheller's next chapter will be more prosperous, connected, and resilient.

2.2 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The MDP goals and objectives provide direction on how Drumheller will achieve the vision of being a place to grow and a place to discover. There are six MDP goals which set out at a high level the priorities for the life of this Plan. The objectives provide further detail on how to achieve each of the Plan goals. The policies in Part II of the Plan are strategies to implement these goals and objectives.

1. Support the growth of complete, sustainable neighbourhoods that enhance the diversity and livability of Drumheller.

There are growing demands for neighbourhoods and homes that are sustainable, affordable, and support a wide range of residents. Drumheller has a strong opportunity to provide innovative responses to these demands that stand out from conventional approaches.

- A. Support a diverse mix of housing forms and compatible commercial and employment uses within all neighbourhoods.
- B. Ensure the fiscally responsible provision and expansion of municipal services and minimize infrastructure life-cycle costs.

- C. Implement clear land use regulation and engineering standards to support growth.

2. Conserve and enhance the uniqueness of neighbourhoods in Drumheller as an integral part of Drumheller experience.

Drumheller Valley's unique neighbourhoods are a tremendous asset. They have the capacity to provide a network of diverse options, experiences, and histories.

- A. Enhance Downtown Drumheller's role as the centre of public life and visitor experience in Drumheller.
- B. Establish tools and mechanisms to support the unique character and sense of place within Drumheller's neighbourhoods.
- C. Establish mechanisms for the conservation and celebration of historic resources.
- D. Showcase the unique character of neighbourhoods through the design and programming of public spaces and the Drumheller Badlands Parks Trail System.

3. Maintain and enhance an effective flood mitigation strategy.

Continuing to build on Drumheller's successful implementation of a comprehensive flood mitigation strategy will help protect people and development in Drumheller to be safer from flood hazards and attractive to future investment.

- A. Prepare and maintain flood emergency response plans to protect critical Town assets and development and to respond to a changing climate.
- B. Implement a flood hazard overlay within the Land Use Bylaw to protect development.
- C. Prepare clear design standards to promote flood-resilient development.

4. Develop a world-class open space and trails system throughout Drumheller that links landscapes, neighbourhoods, amenities, and major destinations, setting the stage for unscripted adventure.

Drumheller is rich in amenity but lacking in connective tissue. A comprehensive, well-connected trail system will unlock a new world of opportunity for both residents and visitors, providing new destinations, enriching growth, and supporting a new sector of enterprise.

- A. Promote pathways in Drumheller.
- B. Identify, protect, and restore the function of the rivers, riparian land, and areas with high ecological and cultural value.

- C. Expand and connect a network of recreational opportunities and valley-wide network of trails that align with key destinations and contribute to environmental protection priorities.

5. Enhance Valley-wide transportation systems to expand the reach and diversity of mobility options, providing a range of robust options for travelling within Drumheller.

Few places can rival Drumheller's dramatic sense of arrival. The descent from the prairie into the badlands provides a memorable experience of anticipation, immersion, and departure. This experience should be protected and celebrated among a broad range of modes, including better regional links.

- A. Enhance and protect the experience of a sense of arrival upon entering Drumheller at key road access points.
- B. Increase the modal share of active and alternative transportation.
- C. Support the development of regional transportation connections to Drumheller.

6. Leverage Drumheller's tourism and recreation industries and local talent to grow and diversify the economy.

Drumheller already hosts an enviable collection of attractions that draw a tremendous number of visitors every year. There is a strong opportunity to better leverage this profile to the benefit of Drumheller's residents and enterprise.

- A. Curate the overall visitor experience of Drumheller through coordinated branding, wayfinding, and storytelling.
- B. Support the continued growth of tourism, recreation, and entertainment industries.
- C. Foster local business retention and expansion by creating incentives and reducing barriers to business development.
- D. Diversify the economy by supporting the expansion of specialized manufacturing, high-tech, and other industries.

3 THE RIVERS

The Red Deer River is the primary architect of the Drumheller Valley. Its waters, and all those flowing toward it, have etched the valley over thousands of years. Each year, water and weather continue to erode and carve the gullies, coulees, and hoodoos that make up the extraordinary landscapes of the Drumheller badlands. This weathering and carving also uncovers many layers of natural and human history present here. From the times when dinosaurs walked the earth, to when the first peoples discovered the lush valley below the plains, the river has provided a place to grow and thrive. Today, it continues to serve this role, feeding the many natural and human systems within the valley and the stories that make Drumheller the incredible place it is today.

As the creator of the valley landscape, the river also has an integral part to play in our way of life today and growth of our community. Because the river is a source of water, food, and transportation, its riverbanks are an attractive place to settle and provide an immense aesthetic and recreational asset. However, throughout the year, the flow rate and level of the Red Deer River changes significantly, often within a very short period of time. In the past, this has caused the river to flood its banks. Flooding has had devastating impacts on our neighbourhoods and infrastructure. With a changing climate and increasingly severe weather events, flooding will continue to be a critical piece of Drumheller's identity, and a critical variable to which all future development must respond and adapt.

3.1 DRUMHELLER'S RIVERS

The Red Deer River is the primary waterway that flows through Drumheller. The river has many tributaries in the Drumheller region, including rivers, creeks and smaller drainage channels. This section provides an overview of the three primary waterways in Drumheller: the Red Deer River, the Rosebud River and Michichi Creek.

RED DEER RIVER

The Red Deer River is a major tributary of the South Saskatchewan River, which is part of the larger Saskatchewan-Nelson system that flows into the Hudson Bay. It originates on the eastern slopes of the Canadian Rockies and flows east, passing through the Foothills, Boreal Forest, Parkland and Grassland Natural Regions. The river supports a variety of natural systems, including vegetation and wildlife in the Northern Fescue Natural subregion in which Drumheller is situated.¹ The total length of the river is 724 km with an effective drainage area of 32,400 km².²

The Red Deer River flow regime can be described as a near natural condition through much of the basin because it is less developed than other rivers in the area.⁴ Given the size and water yield of the catchment area upstream of the Dickson Dam, the river is subject to rapid changes

¹ Alberta Parks (2015). Natural Regions and Subregions of Alberta: A Framework for Alberta's Parks. Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation. Edmonton, Alberta. 72pp.

⁴ Stantec (2014). Red Deer River Basin Flood Mitigation Study.

⁴ Stantec (2014). Red Deer River Basin Flood Mitigation Study.

in flow upstream of the Dickson Dam.⁸ The river flows in communities downstream of the Dam, including Drumheller, are more regulated. The river channel through Drumheller is confined by low terraces, alluvial fans, or valley walls and is relatively shallow. The river is sinuous with occasional islands and side bars and areas of fragmented shrub and forest growth.⁹

The largest floods in the Red Deer River Valley generally occur between May and August.¹² Discharge volumes peak in June and July, which is generally caused by the combination of snowmelt runoff with precipitation from major storms in the foothills region.¹³ Heavy rainfall was a major contributor to both the 2005 and 2013 floods. In addition to snowmelt and precipitation, ice jams and debris have contributed to localized flooding throughout the basin, but to a lesser degree. Creeks carrying snowmelt have also been known to flood when freshet water flows on top of the frozen surface of the Red Deer River, resulting in a back-up of water into communities along the bank.¹⁴

ROSEBUD RIVER

The Rosebud River flows from the west through a valley that is over 100 m deep. The river channel has a riffle and pool sequence with occasional rapids, and the area where the Rosebud meets the Red Deer River is densely vegetated with willows, grasses and shrubs.¹⁶ The largest floods in the Rosebud River generally occur between late-March and early-April. Flooding in the Rosebud is typically a result of high amounts of snowmelt, with ice jams occasionally contributing to high water levels and velocities along the river.¹⁷

MICHICHI CREEK

Michichi Creek flows south through Starland County and discharges into the Red Deer River northwest of Downtown Drumheller. Over one kilometre of the creek was channelized in 1951 near Highway 9, while the lower portion of the creek near its mouth was channelized in 2001 as part of the berm construction. For the most part, the berm slopes in this location are densely vegetated with grass and willows.¹⁸

Similar to the Rosebud, flooding in the Michichi is typically a result of spring snowmelt in late-March and early-April but the Michichi is also susceptible to back-flooding from the Red Deer River due to the flat channel slope.

3.2 A CHANGING CLIMATE

The hydrological network in and around Drumheller is a complex system, and flooding in the Red Deer River Basin is influenced by many factors. Our changing climate is one factor that presents several unknowns in relation to future flooding impacts. Studies and trends point to the

⁸ Stantec (2014) Supra note 2.

⁹ Matrix Solutions Inc (2007). Drumheller Flood Risk Mapping Study.

¹² Matrix Solutions Inc (2007). Drumheller Flood Risk Mapping Study.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Stantec (2014). Red Deer River Basin Flood Mitigation Study.

¹⁶ Matrix Solutions Inc (2007) supra note 12.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

likelihood of more intense rainfall events throughout Canada due to the changing climate.²⁵ While there is potential for an increased frequency of floods along the Red Deer River and its tributaries due to greater storm events, it is also likely that drought frequencies will increase in the prairies. Drumheller may see both increased water scarcity in the coming years as a result of rising temperatures and evapotranspiration and increase in flood frequency and severity.²⁶ The impacts of a changing climate on Drumheller cannot be fully known.

3.3 FLOOD MITIGATION AND REGULATION

Flood mitigation in Alberta is a responsibility primarily shared between provincial and municipal governments, with the Province providing certain powers to municipalities for mitigation. The Emergency Management Act directs overall emergency management priorities and requirements in the Province, including a requirement for all municipalities to maintain a Flood Emergency Reference Manual. These plans primarily focus on emergency response and recovery. Greater preventative flood mitigation powers come from the Municipal Government Act, which enables municipalities to create plans directing future growth and land use in the interest of public safety and wellbeing.

3.3.1 PROVINCIAL FLOOD PROGRAM

The Province undertook the Drumheller Flood Study which was completed in September 2024 and updated in May 2025. Flood hazard maps define floodway and flood fringe areas for the 1:100 design flood and are used by communities for planning and to help make local land use and development decisions. Flood hazard maps also illustrate additional information, including incremental areas at risk for floods larger than the design flood, such as the 1:200 year return period and 1:500 year return period floods. In Drumheller, the flood hazard mapping identifies the flood hazard area, the floodway, the flood fringe, the high hazard flood fringe and protected flood fringe. Each of these areas on the flood hazard map represents a different level of hazard and therefore requires different strategies for addressing future land use and development. The provincial flood hazard maps are available at <https://floods.alberta.ca/>

3.3.2 MUNICIPAL FLOOD PROGRAM

The Town of Drumheller, working together with all levels of government, is a key player in delivering on flood mitigation in the Drumheller Valley. While risks of flood impacts can never be completely eliminated, the recent work by the Town to construct structural mitigation (berms) to protect existing development where feasible and floodway buyouts in areas where berms were not feasible, has significantly improved Drumheller's level of flood resilience for the coming decades. The MDP integrates the following flood mitigation priorities into the goals, objectives, and policies of this Plan:

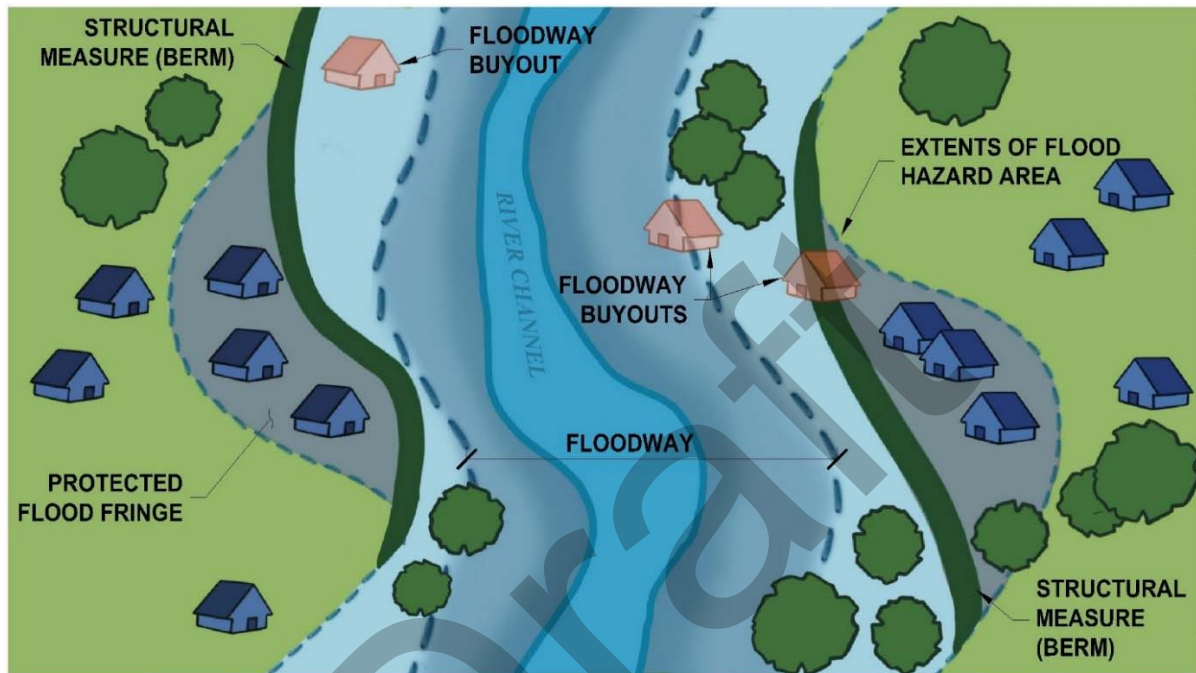
²⁵ Stantec (2014). Red Deer River Basin Flood Mitigation Study.

²⁶ Ibid.

MAKE EXISTING DEVELOPMENT SAFER

Existing development is made safer and more resilient to flooding through structural mitigation.

In places where there is conflict between flood hazard and existing development, the Town can increase resiliency of existing development through the provision of structural measures, including permanent berms and temporary measures, or remove development.

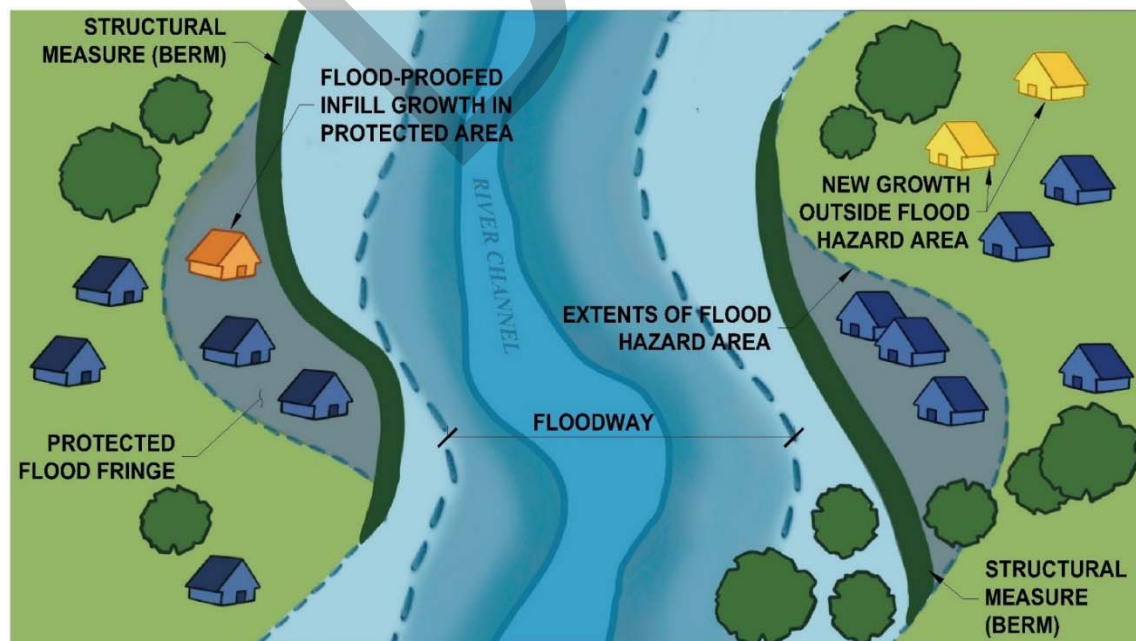
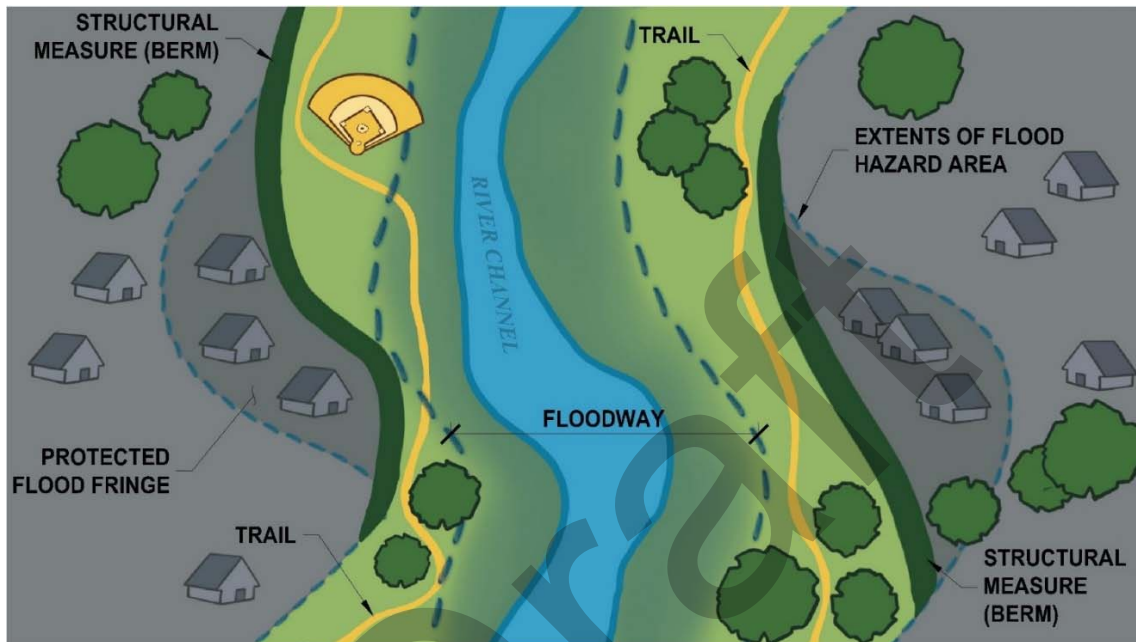


[Figure 1 - Structural Measures](#) shows at a conceptual level where berms have been or will be constructed to protect existing neighbourhoods. Protected flood fringe areas are identified on the flood hazard maps to identify areas of residual flood risk if berms fail or do not function as intended for the design flood. Temporary measures can be also deployed by the Town in advance of a flood where construction of permanent structural measures was determined not feasible for reasons such as space constraints and blocking road access.

SMART GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

New growth will be focused in areas that are safest from flooding hazards.

Growth in Drumheller will be encouraged to occur outside of the flood hazard area ([Figures 2 to 4 - Flood Hazard Area](#)). New development in the floodway will be limited to parks, trails and other similar low-risk uses. Development in the flood fringe, high hazard flood fringe, protected flood fringe and protected flood fringe by temporary measures will be required to meet minimum design and construction standards to protect buildings against damage due to flooding.



4 THE BADLANDS

The badlands are the secret ingredient of the Drumheller Valley. Formed over millions of years and carved over thousands of years, the majesty of the badlands landscapes is sought out by many. It serves as a backdrop to everyday life and recreational pursuits for residents, provides an out of world experience for visitor adventures, and stars in major media and film. The immersive experience of this landscape must be protected and celebrated so that they may be enjoyed now and in the future.

Today, the banks and riparian areas flanking the river have an abundance of vegetation due to the rich floodplain soils, including several riparian forests. These are made up of cottonwood, poplar, willows and various species of shrubs. These areas provide habitat that is crucial to many birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians in what is an otherwise dry area of the province. The dryer areas in the Drumheller Valley include mixed-grass prairie dominated by blue gama grass and June grass. Many slopes are also dominated by silver sagebrush, prickly pear cactus and various grasses and shrubs ([Figure 5 - Existing Landscape Conditions](#)).

4.1 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BADLANDS

The badlands are the essence of the Drumheller Valley. The dynamic landscapes and many archaeological and palaeontological resources have ecological and human significance and are integral to future growth and discovery in Drumheller.

The badlands are a critical element of Drumheller's tourism industry. People are drawn to the sense of isolation and immersion that being within the landscape provides. There is a marked change in the landscape when you descend into the Drumheller Valley, as though you are travelling back in time. This sense of arrival harkens to many adventurers, seeking unscripted exploration and discovery. What draws even more visitors is what can be found within the layers of the badlands. The Royal Tyrrell Museum of Palaeontology attracts nearly 500,000 people annually to Drumheller. Drumheller's association with dinosaurs and palaeontology is recognized world-wide. The expansion of the Drumheller Badlands Parks Trail System will serve to further integrate and increase access to the badlands, tying together points of interest through the landscape and encouraging visitors of the area's most popular destinations stay to enjoy all that Drumheller has to offer.

The natural grasslands, riparian areas, and river itself provide opportunities for adventurous outdoor pursuits, including hiking, biking, kayaking, fishing, and bird watching. Taking part in these types of activities is far from mundane when surrounded by the spectacular Valley walls, with their vibrant colours and layers. Access to this abundance of recreation opportunities, and the innate appreciation for the land this fosters, positions Drumheller well for the expansion of eco-tourism operations, sustainable industries (such as renewable energy), and eco-communities that are embedded in the landscape and cater to those who wish to reduce their

environmental footprint while enhancing their quality of life. The beauty and rugged quality of Drumheller's landscapes also feed the inspiration and creativity of growing arts, film, and manufacturing communities in the region.

The significance of the badlands to the quality of life of residents, experience of visitors, and overall growth and prosperity of Drumheller cannot be overlooked. It is essential that these landscapes and historic resources are protected and enhanced as the Town continues to grow.

WAYNE VALLEY, LOOKING EAST FROM EXCELSIOR HILL



5 UNIQUE PLACES AND NEIGHBOURHOODS

Beyond the stunning river carved badlands, Drumheller is layered with unique places and historic neighbourhoods that tell the story of resilience, discovery, and opportunity. From the natural history of the landscapes and dinosaur fossil beds, to the human histories of Indigenous peoples, European arrival, and the coal industry, these stories make up Drumheller's past and contribute to its future. Understanding the history of Drumheller, its people, and neighbourhoods, helps us to understand it better today, and imagine what it can be tomorrow.

5.1 SIGNIFICANT PLACES

Drumheller is home to unique places, each with their own character and history. The town has grown over time to encompass several independent settlements, and today these settlements form Drumheller's distinctive neighbourhoods. In addition to these neighbourhoods, Drumheller's diverse attractions represent a wealth of history in the region, and draw people from all walks of life. These unique places and neighbourhoods are reflected in [Figure 6 - Significant Places](#).

The following section provides a brief history of some of these significant places, and their current value as part of the overall Drumheller experience. The stories of these places should be shared so that future growth and development respects and enhances neighbourhood identity and character.

NACMINE

The neighbourhood of Nacmine is located along South Dinosaur Trail west of Downtown Drumheller. Once a booming coal mining town, the neighbourhood was named after its mine developers, North American Collieries ('NAC' and 'mine'). In addition to its significance as a mining community, the neighbourhood is significant as one of the first ranching locations in the valley, and a key river crossing.

Since the beginning of European arrival in Drumheller, ranching has been an important part of the local economy. In 1896 James Russell entered the Red Deer River Valley in search of ranch lands. At the present location of Nacmine he discovered unbroken grassland extending from the flat land above Drumheller all the way down to the river. Russell decided to make the area the location of his Lyon Cross Ranch, which he operated on 10,000 acres until 1907. The land was then surveyed and subdivided for homesteads.

The Red Deer River has played an integral part for the way of life and growth within Drumheller. Its riverbanks have historically been an attractive place to settle because of access to water and a means of transportation. Nacmine was no exception; however, in the early days of Nacmine the river was also a barrier to movement. No bridges existed and people had to rely on hazardous fords to cross the river. The fords were located where the river was slower and the banks were solid and not too steep, but these would become treacherous in the spring. To make the dangerous task of crossing the river easier, early settlers began to make homemade rafts and ferries and operate them privately.

Today, Nacmine is primarily a residential community, with some houses dating back to the early 1900s, and some small scale commercial uses. The neighbourhood has local parks and playground areas, an outdoor hockey rink, and an active community centre. The popular Badlands Campground is located next to the neighbourhood along the Red Deer River.

NEWCASTLE

Named after Newcastle Mine Company, the neighbourhood of Newcastle is situated on the southern shore of the Red Deer River, separated from the western tip of Downtown Drumheller by a bend in the river. Similar to Nacmine, Newcastle owes its existence to the presence of coal. Drumheller Valley coal is sub-bituminous and was a popular energy product prior to the 1960's for heating houses, cooking, and powering locomotives. It also was used to create power for the settlements and coal mines.

The Newcastle Mine was the first registered coal mine in the Drumheller Valley. It was registered as the Newcastle Coal Company Limited in 1911, but was simply called the Newcastle Mine. The mine began operations in 1912 and the first carloads of coal were sent out of Drumheller by rail that year. One of the mine's founders, Jesse Gouge, had learned of the whereabouts of the sizeable coalfield from a chance meeting with a local resident. He was crossing the river at the Greentree Ferry and met a man with a load of coal dug out from a riverbank in the Newcastle area. Gouge was so impressed with the quality of coal, he hurried to the land office in Calgary and secured a lease in Drumheller.

With the decline in the importance of coal, recreation became a key component of Newcastle's history. Newcastle Beach was developed as a recreational hotspot in the 1960's. It included a sandy beach, campgrounds, mini golf and refreshment booths, and for a time a small train called the Oopland Express. The train had been a small diesel engine that hauled coal from one of the mines. When the mines closed the engine and 10 coal cars were purchased by some residents of Newcastle and was put into service to transport visitors and residents around the beach area. Three baseball diamonds were later built in the park, and it is still a popular recreational and tourist area with a beach, boat launch, picnic area and fenced off-leash dog park.

The Badlands Amphitheatre, an outdoor theatre and music venue, is located near the former site of the Newcastle Mine. Boasting spectacular scenery and excellent acoustics, the Badlands Amphitheatre has been home of the award-winning Canadian Badlands Passion Play for 25 years. Every August the Amphitheatre hosts the "Canadian Icons" concert series which showcases the very best in Canadian talent. Previous guests have included legends like Tom Cochrane, Blue Rodeo, Paul Brandt, Corb Lund, and Randy Bachman.

DOWNTOWN DRUMHELLER

The area now known as Downtown Drumheller was the site of the original Drumheller settlement named after Sam Drumheller. The downtown area borders a bend in Red Deer River north of the former rail line. Downtown Drumheller is the historical, cultural and civic heart of Drumheller, and the historic structures within the downtown are important community assets that contribute to the community's identity.

The 1920's were Drumheller's booming years and most of the now historic downtown buildings were constructed during this time. Buildings for rent were in high demand because of the numerous coal mines that were being opened up throughout Drumheller and the influx of miners to operate them. Along with the miners came clothing shops, hardware stores, and drug stores to supply them. The buildings were primarily constructed of brick, and often featured a boomtown façade (when the front wall of the building extends higher up than the rest of the building so that the building looked larger than it actually was). Roland Langford, a local mason, was the builder of many of the brick buildings in the town. He developed a particular simple but attractive cornice design below the roof line that can be seen on several historic downtown buildings.

Flooding of the Red Deer River has been an ongoing problem for neighbourhoods throughout Drumheller. Following a large flood in 1915 downtown residents living near the river built a stone flood wall to protect their properties. The wall ran from the west side of what is now Highway 9 near the Gordon Taylor Bridge, east along Riverside Drive west and through the residential area south of Riverside Drive. It continued on the edge of the higher land to at least the area near the park on Riverside. The intention of the wall was that residential areas and important industrial infrastructure would not be developed in the lowlands along the river below the wall. Although much of the wall has been removed, sloped for landscaping or replaced with concrete walls, remnants of the original wall can still be seen along Riverside Drive west and in alleyways between 1st St. and 5th St. East.

A prominent feature of the downtown is its riverfront parks, community recreation facilities (Badlands Community Facility, public library, Memorial Arena, Aquaplex), and the World's Largest Dinosaur and Visitor Information Centre. In the past however, the area was home to Drumheller's first power plant. Proximity to coal from the Drumheller mines and water from the river made this a prime location. The power plant expanded over the years and was still in operation in the mid 1970's, but after the coal mines closed the power plant ceased operations and the infrastructure was removed. In 1928 the Drumheller Rotary Club was instrumental in building and operating the first swimming pool in Drumheller near the power plant in what is now Centennial Park. Excess heat from the plant was used to heat the pool. This pool was eventually replaced with the current outdoor pool by the City of Drumheller in the 1950s. Then in the early 1970s the Kinsmen led a number of service clubs got together to raise money and in 1975 the indoor pool at the Aquaplex opened to the public. The area is still a hub for community events, recreation, and visitor information.

The Centennial Park Plaza has the potential to become the beating heart of the Drumheller experience, a place where locals, tourists, badlands and the river meet. This base-camp for Drumheller will host events and become a launching point for valley-wide adventures. Creation of a new plaza and supporting flood mitigation infrastructure will open up opportunities to connect and animate this amazing gathering place within Downtown Drumheller.

WAYNE

Approximately 10 km southeast of Downtown Drumheller, the neighbourhood of Wayne is located within the Rosebud River valley. Accessed via Highway 10X from Rosedale to the north

through a 150 m deep canyon in the badlands, visitors travel along a winding road across 11 bridges that span the Rosebud River.

A hundred years ago, Wayne was a coal mining boomtown of more than 2,500 people working the six mines and the valley's first hospital. In the mid-1950s however, its population began to plummet and its business count dropped to three: a hotel, a garage and a grocery store. By 1970, the town's school had closed and today it has a population of about 25 people. Today Wayne is famous for the Last Chance Saloon and is a popular tourist attraction for motorcyclists and tourists.

Over the years, highways and bridges were built in Drumheller to improve mobility and provide greater access to communities. It is estimated that as many as 67 bridges (road and rail) were built between Rosedale and Wayne across the Rosebud River but many were removed as the road was straightened out over time. Wooden timbers floated down the river from Red Deer were used to build many of these bridges. The famous 11 bridges road to Wayne remains an important tourist attraction in Drumheller.

ROSEDALE / CAMBRIA

The neighbourhoods of Rosedale and Cambria are located 5 to 10 kms east of Downtown Drumheller at the convergence of the Rosebud and Red Deer Rivers. As with many other Drumheller neighbourhoods, the areas were first settled because of coal.

The Rosedale Mine began operations in 1912 and in 1913 the mine was considered one of the most valuable and reliable properties in the domestic coal field in Alberta. A number of miner's families moved into the community, and a school was built. Concerts and other events were held at the mine's big cookhouse and hall. The first masquerade ball was a memorable event with costumes hired from Beaumonts in Calgary.

Coal mining was a difficult process, so areas that were most likely to produce the greatest amount of quality product with the least amount of expense and effort were sought. Access to transportation was also important so most of the mines were built near the river and later, the railway. A suspension bridge serviced the Star Mine which operated from 1913-1929 across the river from Rosedale. Coal was mined underground and carried across the river in small coal cars suspended from an aerial cable system. It was sorted and loaded into rail box cars. The cable was also used to shuttle miners in Rosedale back and forth across the river to the mine. In 1930 a railroad bridge was laid across the river to the mine, however, the miners still needed to move across the river to work so the cable system was replaced with a suspension bridge. The current 117 metre long bridge is an upgraded and improved version of the original bridge, and along with remnants of the mine are a popular Valley attraction.

Today, Rosedale and Cambria are residential neighbourhoods with a small commercial centre. The neighbourhoods act as a crossroads, providing access to the Star mine Suspension Bridge, the neighbourhood of Wayne, and is situated approximately halfway between Downtown Drumheller and East Coulee. The neighbourhood is home to the Rosedale Community Hall, playground and baseball field, three campgrounds, and a number of businesses.

Rosedale and Cambria has the potential to become a major node in the center of Drumheller, connecting Nacmine, Wayne and East Coulee where the Rosebud meets the Red Deer River. It can act as a starting point for valley-wide recreation, including floating, fishing, cycling, hiking, or relaxing by the river and as a gathering place in Drumheller.

HOODOOS

Located between Rosedale and East Coulee near Willow Creek on the north side of the Red Deer River, the hoodoos are stunning natural features of the badlands landscape. For Canada's 125th year celebration, the Alberta coin was the hoodoos.

Composed of sand and clay from the Horseshoe Canyon Formation (deposited between 67-73 million years ago), the hoodoos were created from glacial meltwater and subsequent erosion. They are formed when rocks more resistant to erosion are situated above sediments that more easily erode from wind and rain. The Drumheller hoodoos formed because they have erosion-resistant cap rocks that contain calcium carbonate and iron cements. These cap rocks protect the underlying columns of softer rocks. Erosion of the hoodoos continues today and eventually the existing ones will disappear and will be replaced by new ones as the surrounding outcrop continues to erode.

The protected Hoodoos site has a 0.5 km looped trail for visitors to explore the 5 to 7 metre tall hoodoo formations. Smaller hoodoos can also be found at other sites throughout Drumheller. The Hoodoos are a must-see stop in Drumheller experience. There is opportunity to expand and improve existing facilities, increasing viewing opportunities and trail connections from this node of activity. This would invite visitors to pause and admire the backdrop of the extraordinary badlands landscape, or continue their adventure, learning about Drumheller's natural, cultural and geological heritage along a series of interpretive trails.

EAST COULEE

Located 21 km east of Downtown Drumheller, the neighbourhood of East Coulee is on the north bank of the Red Deer River. Originally a mining community, it is now predominantly a commuter community with a small commercial centre.

From 1911 to 1950 more than 130 mines operated in the Drumheller Valley and a number of boomtowns popped up. East Coulee, one of the boomtowns, developed in the 1930s and 1940s as a local service centre and home for miners and their families. A railyard and stockyard served the area mines on the northeast side of the community. Local services in the settlement included the Whitlock Lumber Company, a bank, the East Coulee Hotel, a drug store, City Café, Sam Dragon's Pool Hall, a barber shop, Thomas Shoe Repair, Miller's Bakery and Café, and a grocery and confectionary. The Star Theatre, built in 1930 in East Coulee, was the favourite entertainment spot in town, showing movies twice a week. In the early years of the community the theatre held popular 'Hard Times Dances' with the (locally) famous Si Hopkins and His Old Timers. Tragically, fire destroyed the building in the 1950s and it was never rebuilt.

The Atlas Coal Mine was the most successful coal mining operation in Drumheller and consisted of several different mines over the years. The Atlas Mine #3, across the river from East Coulee, was active for almost 50 years between 1936-1979. Coal was mined from an underground network that covered more than 2,500 acres and extended back from the valley

edge for more than 10 km. Today the Atlas Coal Mine is a nationally recognized historic site that describes coal mining history of the valley. Many of the original buildings, and other infrastructure have been preserved.

Today, the neighbourhood has approximately 200 residents living in a tranquil setting along the Red Deer River. The East Coulee Community Hall hosts events and dances, including the annual SpringFest, and holds a pancake breakfast every month. East Coulee's 1930s schoolhouse operates today as the East Coulee School Museum. The museum features a restored 1930's classroom, miners' artifacts, and hundreds of photos of the East Coulee miners, their families and cultural lives.

LEHIGH

Located 18 km east of downtown Drumheller, the community of Lehigh was home to a number of residential properties. Due to the porous sandy subsoils and risk of flooding via percolation, engineering studies demonstrated that it was infeasible to protect Lehigh from flooding via earth berms or temporary measures. As a result, The Town of Drumheller received funding from the Government of Alberta to purchase property within the former community of Lehigh.

As of fall 2024, the Town is in the process of restoring the land to its natural state and transforming it into an Environmental Reserve. This includes removing old roadways, utilities, and planting additional trees. The conversion of this area to Environmental Reserve will ensure that no future development in the area will be authorized, however it allows the land to be utilized for public enjoyment for non-intrusive recreational activities such as hiking and birdwatching.

THE ROYAL TYRRELL MUSEUM OF PALAEOLOGY

The Royal Tyrrell Museum of Palaeontology is located on North Dinosaur Trail at Midland Provincial Park northwest of Downtown Drumheller. The Museum is located in the middle of the fossil rich layers of rock of the Late Cretaceous Horseshoe Canyon Formation. The Badlands Interpretive Trail, a popular 1.4-kilometre hiking trail, is located northeast to the Museum building.

After the collapse of the coal industry, Drumheller's community leaders began talks with provincial government officials in the 1970's looking for ways to bolster the local economy. The government of the time supported the building of a research facility that was then called the Provincial Museum Research Institute somewhere in southern Alberta but there was no plan at that time for a public museum. In 1979 Drumheller was chosen as the site for this facility which was announced the following year. The original plan was soon changed to include a large public museum. Construction began in 1982 and on September 25, 1985 then premier Peter Lougheed officially opened the Tyrrell Museum of Palaeontology. The Royal appellation was added in 1992.

The Royal Tyrrell Museum of Palaeontology is one of the world's leading research and educational facilities in the field of palaeontology. It has welcomed over 10 million visitors since opening in 1985 and is a major economic driver in Drumheller. As of 2020, the Museum houses thirteen exhibits that display approximately 800 fossils on permanent display.

The Royal Tyrrell Museum is connected by a portion of the Rails-to-Trails pathway to the Rosedale suspension bridge and the downtown that offers stunning scenic views and access to other historical sites.

Draft

6 OPPORTUNITY

Drumheller is embarking on a bold new chapter. It is a moment of reflection – reading the story again from the beginning to ensure it makes sense. It is a moment of challenge – accepting into the story unfamiliar new characters and settings. And ultimately, it is a moment of excitement – at the immense opportunity that lies in Drumheller’s future. Drumheller’s residents share a sense of the untapped potential of their place, though it is not always clearly rendered. It is part of the responsibility of this Plan to shine a light on this potential.

Much of the success of this Plan will emerge from a shift in the process of planning and building in Drumheller. Where previous planning documents and authorities have been characterized by constraint and restriction, the new documents and authorities should be encouraging and inviting. Equipped with the vision and policies in this document, development can be more easily assessed – and modified – in support of the Town’s goals.

This plan underlines the opportunity in front of Drumheller. Residents, administrators, decision-makers, and investors all have a role to play in bringing this opportunity to life. This will be achieved by seeking out common ground, rallying around the Plan’s goals, and keeping open the lines of communication and debate.

TOP OF NACMINE LOOKING NORTH FROM MONARCH HILL



SCHEDULE 'B'

PART I - VISION AND CONTEXT

FOUR FORCES

- Rivers
- Badlands
- Neighbourhoods
- Opportunity

Drumheller's Vision

A PLACE TO GROW AND
A PLACE TO DISCOVER

SIX KEY GOALS

and supporting objectives

1 COMPLETE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Diverse housing & mix of uses
Fiscally responsible municipal services
Clear land use and engineering to support growth

4 TRAILS AND PARKS SYSTEM

Promote pathways and parks
Protect river and riparian function
Trail network to key destinations

2 UNIQUE NEIGHBOURHOODS

Downtown as centre of public life
Unique form and uses in neighbourhoods
Conservation and historic resources
Showcase through open space

5 VALLEY-WIDE TRANSPORTATION

Sense of arrival
Multi-modal mix
Regional Connections

3 EFFECTIVE FLOOD MITIGATION STRATEGY

Emergency response plans
Land use regulation to protect development
Design standards to promote flood-resilience

6 DIVERSE ECONOMY

Coordinated visitor experience
Growth of tourism, recreation & entertainment
Support existing local businesses
Expand into emerging sectors

PART II - POLICIES



TRAILS, PARKS &
NATURAL AREAS



GROWTH



TOURISM & ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT



TRANSPORTATION
& INFRASTRUCTURE

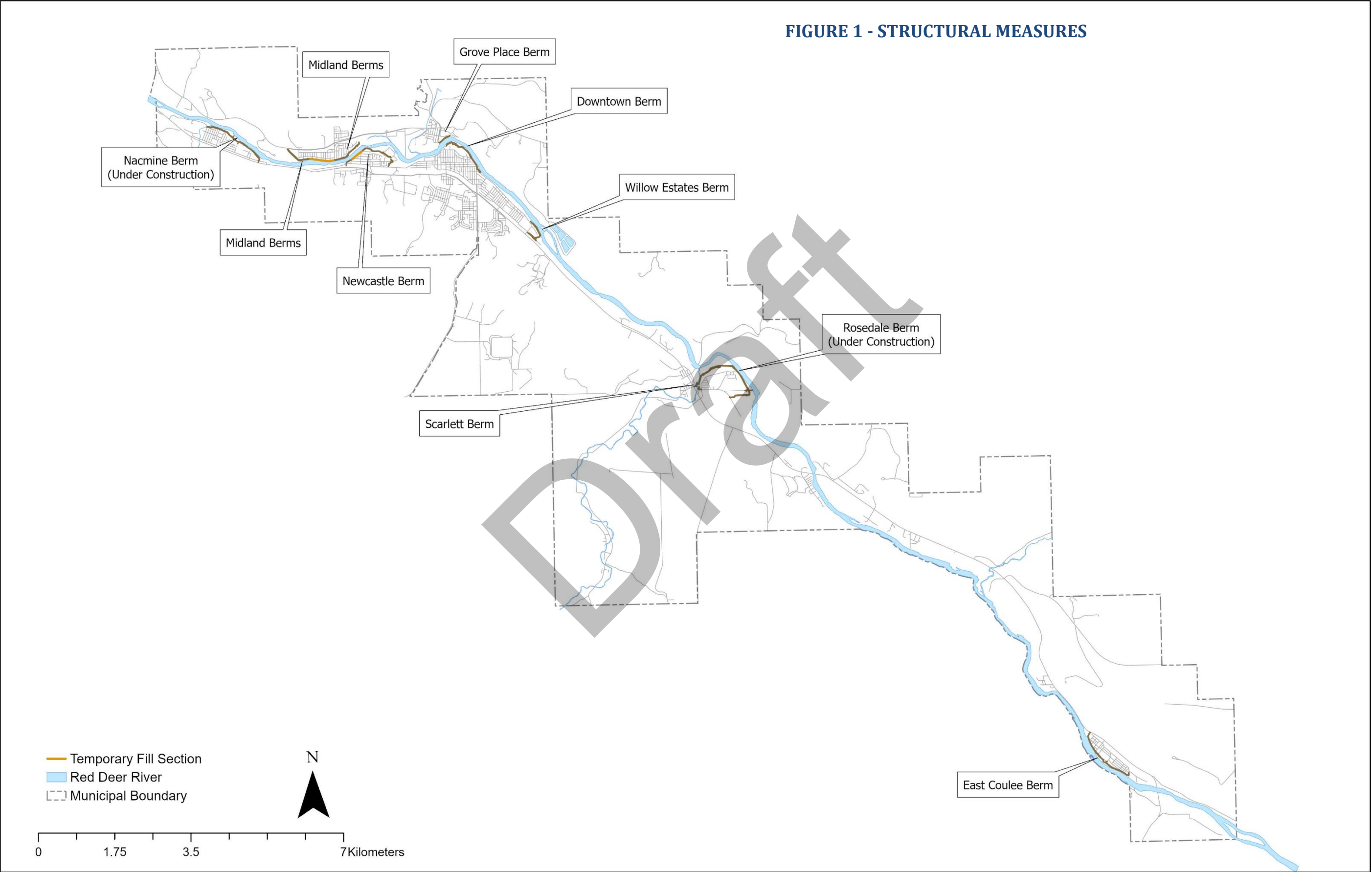


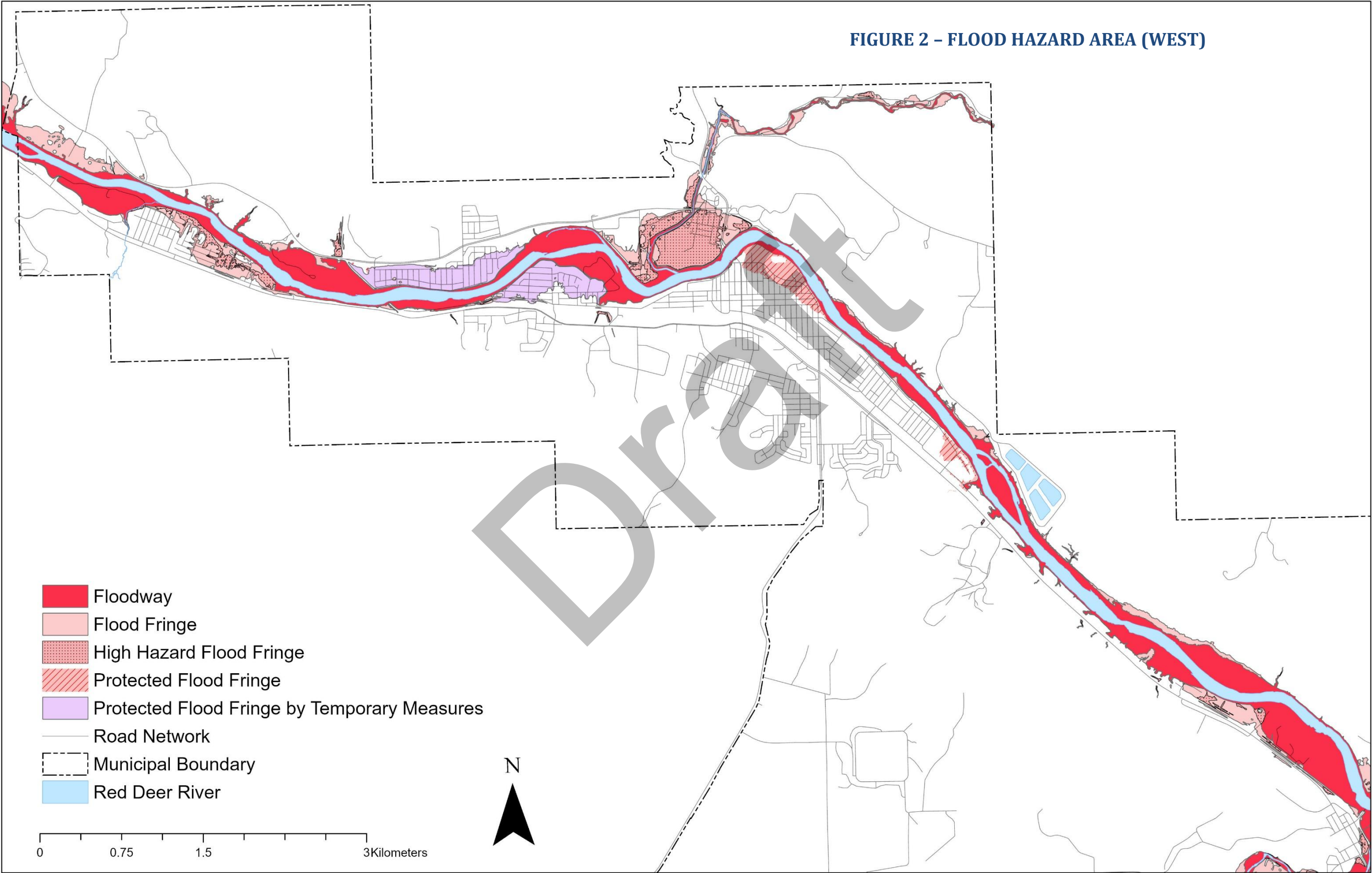
CULTURAL &
COMMUNITY SERVICES



IMPLEMENTATION

FIGURE 1 - STRUCTURAL MEASURES





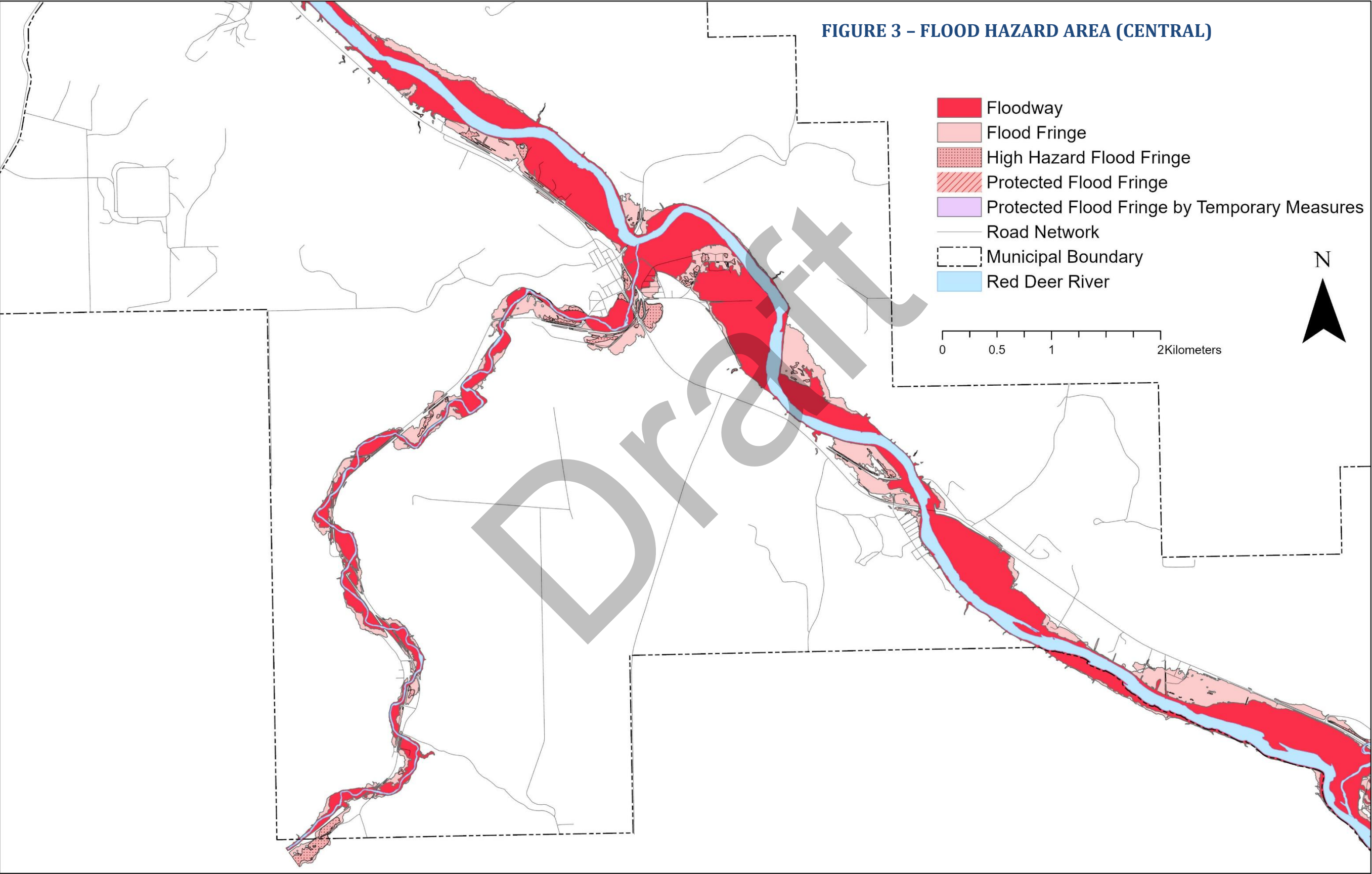


FIGURE 4 – FLOOD HAZARD AREA (EAST)

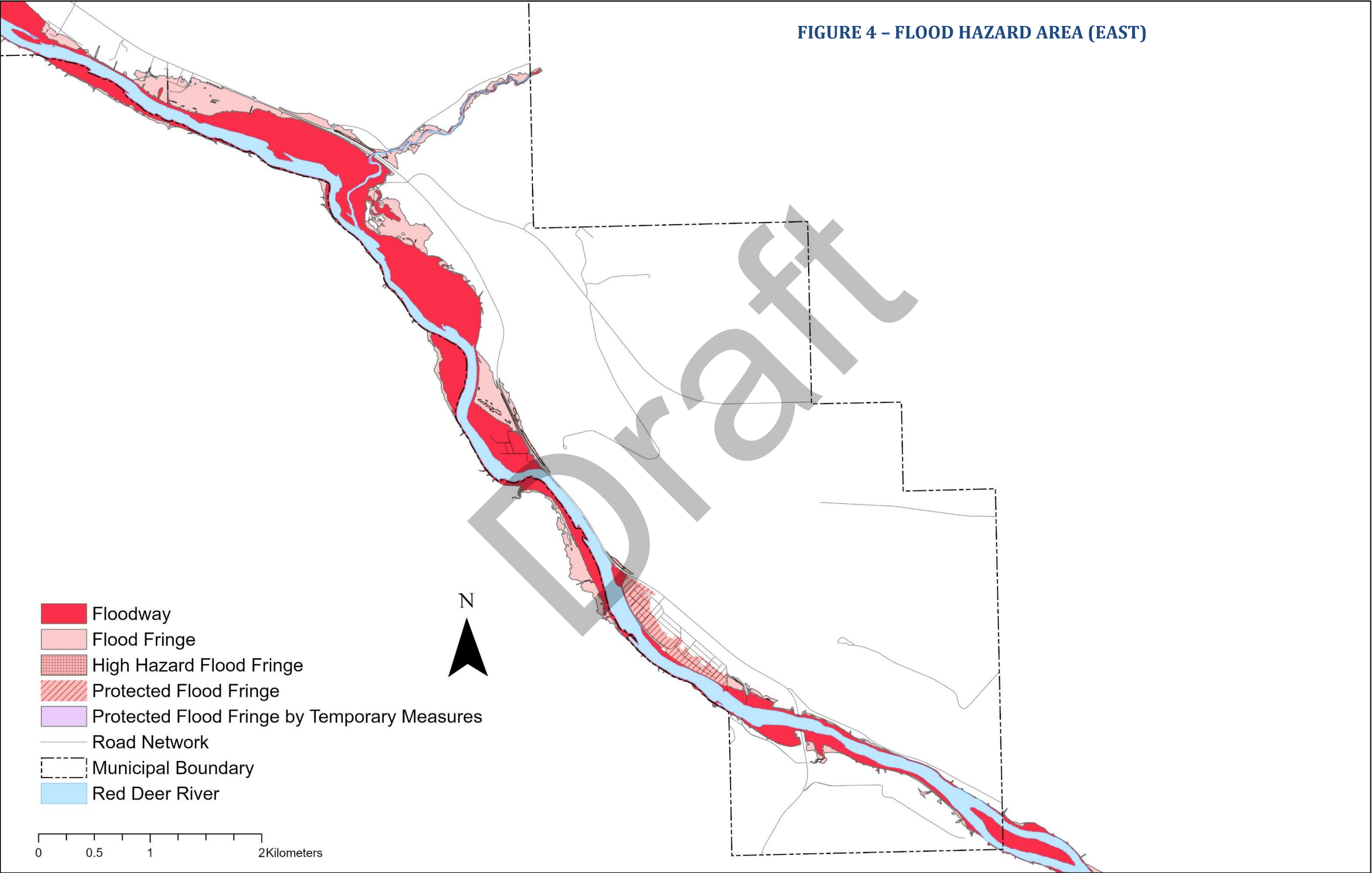


FIGURE 5 – EXISTING LANDSCAPE CONDITIONS



Legend

- Municipal Boundary
- River and Waterways
- Natural District
- Native Grassland
- Northern Fescue Grassland
- Agriculture
- Forest
- Shrubland
- Existing Leisure Parks
- Provincial Park

0 2 4 8 Kilometers

FIGURE 6 – SIGNIFICANT PLACES

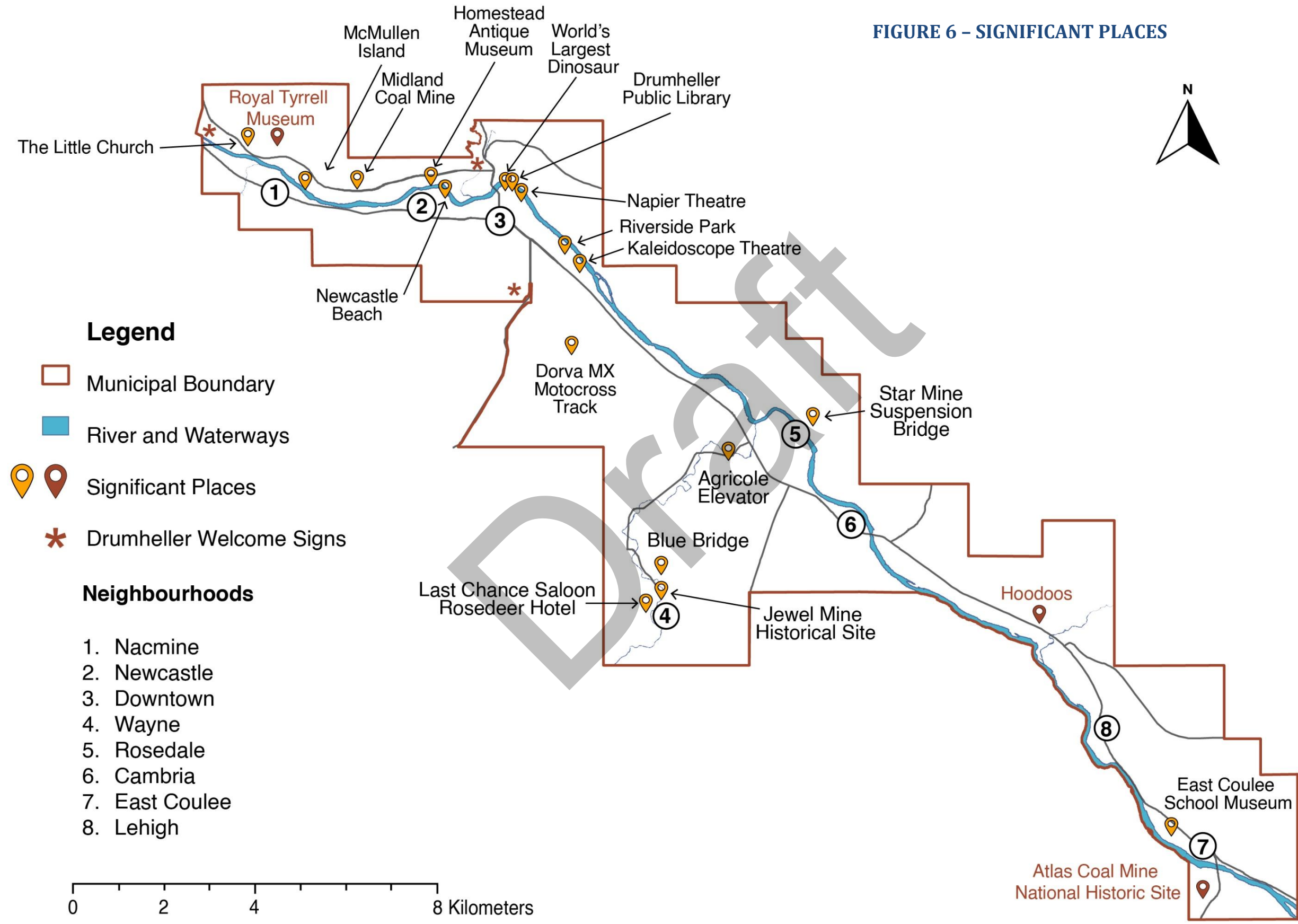


FIGURE 10 – GROWTH AREAS

