

TOWN OF HIGH RIVER
BYLAW 4629/2024

A BYLAW OF THE TOWN OF HIGH RIVER TO REPEAL BYLAWS 4236/2009, 4347/2012, AND 4337/2012 AND REPLACE WITH THIS BYLAW 4629/2024.

A Bylaw of the Town of High River in the Province of Alberta for the purpose of adopting a new Town Plan (Municipal Development Plan) in accordance with Section 632 of the *Municipal Government Act*, Chapter M26.1, Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000, as amended.

WHEREAS pursuant to Section 632(1) of the Municipal Government Act, R.S.A. 2000, c.M-26, every Council of a municipality must by bylaw adopt a municipal development plan; and

WHEREAS The Town of High River has made the determination that it is expedient to replace the Town's existing Municipal Development Plan with a new Municipal Development Plan; and

WHEREAS The Town of High River chooses to refer to its Municipal Development Plan as its Town Plan;

NOW THEREFORE Be it resolved that the Council of the Town of High River in the Province of Alberta adopt the attached Town Plan (Municipal Development Plan).

READ A FIRST TIME this 22nd day of April, A.D. 2024



Mayor/Deputy Mayor


Chief Administrative Officer

DATE OF FIRST PUBLIC HEARING: May 27, 2024

MINUTES APPROVED the 10th day of June, A.D. 2024

DATE OF SECOND PUBLIC HEARING: August 12, 2024

MINUTES APPROVED the 9th day of September, 2024.

READ A SECOND TIME this 28th day of October, A.D. 2024



Mayor/Deputy Mayor


Chief Administrative Officer

READ A THIRD AND FINAL TIME this 28th day of October, A.D. 2024



Mayor/Deputy Mayor


Chief Administrative Officer



Town Plan

October 2024





Project Acknowledgment

The Town Plan was prepared by High River's residents, Town Administration, and the Town Plan Task Force Members.

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Executive Summary

For High River, the 2024 Town Plan (The Plan) is more than just a statutory document required by the Province of Alberta as specified by the Municipal Government Act. *The Plan* is a living document that reflects the community's vision and will include a process to remain current as Town priorities and local issues change. *The Plan* commits to regular reviews of key objectives. Council, in conjunction with public consultation, will amend the Plan to ensure the community's needs are met.

The Plan includes a long-term vision of what life in High River will look like in 20 years. Daring to be different, the path towards achieving this vision was intentionally kept simple. A Guiding Principle and nine (9) goals, each with associated objectives and policies were developed. The goals relate to fostering a small-town feel, responsible growth, interconnected community, health and well-being, parks, recreation, and the environment. Other facets of Town operations such as economic diversification, safety and security, and partnerships add further detail about the elements and actions required to achieve the vision. The goals, objectives, and policies, influence how High River will grow and evolve as a community over the next two decades. They provide Council, Town Administration, and the development community with direction on land use and community development matters.

To further facilitate High River's continued evolution to a highly sustainable, resilient, and livable community, *The Plan* takes a focused, practical approach to the guidelines for growth and development over the next 20 years. A comprehensive land use policy framework outlines where and how development and growth may take place throughout the community. In this regard, *The Plan* identifies priority growth areas for future development and growth. These growth areas, presented as the Town's growth concept, provide a planning framework that balances sustainable development with a high quality of life and a diverse range of residential and economic opportunities. This

Ultimately, *The Plan* is about who we are as a community and what we want our common future to look like; a place where we can live and enjoy today, and plan for a better tomorrow.



approach was taken with full awareness of the need for fiscal responsibility in both public and private sectors will have a profound influence on the outcomes of this plan.

The Plan also endorses the implementation of a “High River Standard” of sustainable development practices appropriate to the High River context as a key element of future growth. This standard will be achieved through the strategic use of population density, promoting alternative modes of transportation to the automobile, and the incorporation of natural features into the design of the community. *The Plan* emphasizes the integration of land use, transportation, infrastructure, and environment, and the importance of optimizing utilization of the Town’s existing infrastructure and available land development opportunities.

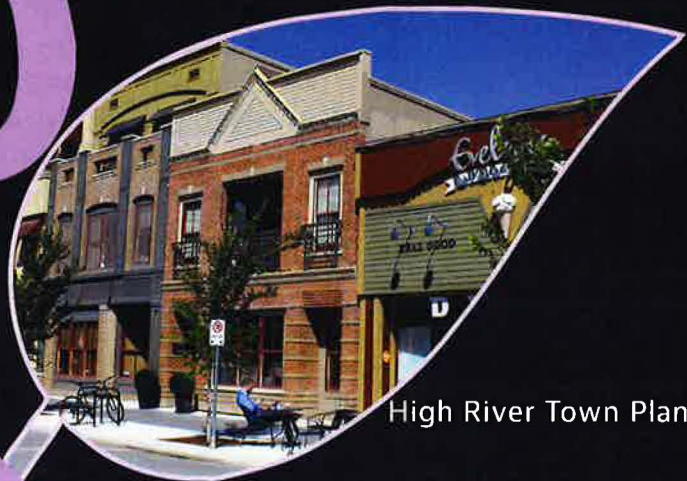
The Plan was developed over 5 phases, spanning 17 months. The process was extensively community-driven, and each successive phase informed the following phases. Public input was collected from a wide range of interest groups and stakeholders, including input from residents, the Task Force, the development community, schools, the Town Council, the Administration, and provincial and regional agencies at a variety of community-oriented events. The community directly contributed to shaping the key elements of *The Plan*, particularly the vision, goals, objectives, and policy framework, which determined High River’s growth direction over the next 20 years.

Guided by *The Plan*, High River will achieve our vision in a manner that is well-considered, collaborative, realistic and focuses on collective community efforts. Ultimately, *The Plan* is about who we are as a community and what we want our common future to look like; a place where we can live and enjoy today, and plan for a better tomorrow.

Part I

Introduction

The Plan includes a vision, guiding principle, goals, objectives, and policies. These components collectively provide direction for the development and growth of the Town over the next 20 years.



As a member municipality of the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board (CMRB), the Town has the responsibility of implementing the policies of its Growth Plan primarily through statutory planning documents including *The Plan* and subsequent Area Structure Plans.



The Plan includes a vision, guiding principle, goals, objectives, and policies. These components collectively provide direction for the development and growth of the Town over the next 20 years.

The Town has a leadership role in the growth and development of land in a balanced and responsible manner. The Town's commitment towards creating a resilient and sustainable community is visible throughout *The Plan*, through a vision and policies that encourage contiguous and compact development, the integration of infrastructure with land use, and the conservation of natural areas, and ensure citizens have access to natural areas and community services.

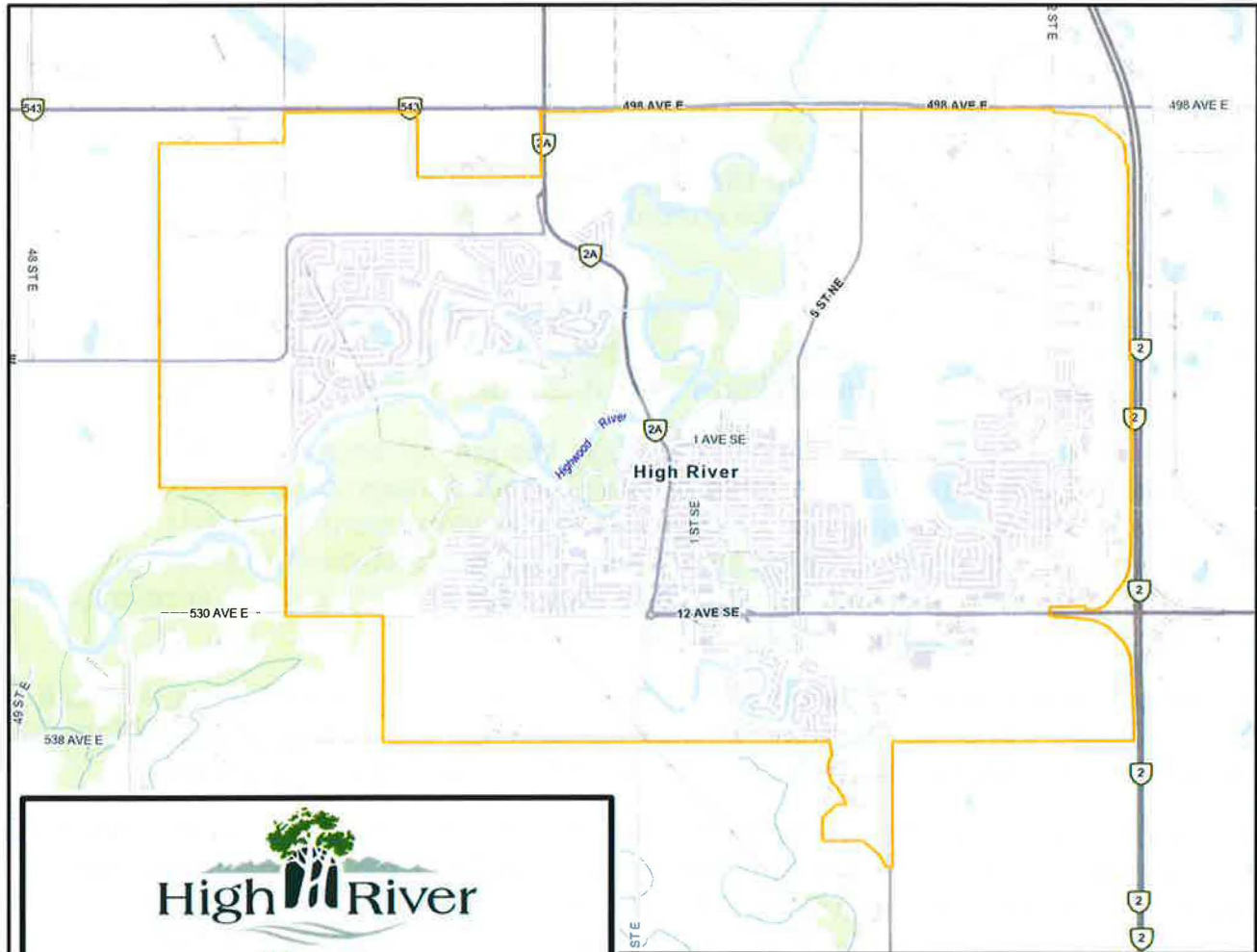
The Plan also reflects alignment with the regional growth framework as established in the Calgary Metropolitan Region Growth Plan. As a member municipality of the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board (CMRB), the Town has the responsibility of implementing the policies of its Growth Plan, primarily through statutory planning documents including *The Plan* and subsequent Area Structure Plans.


The Plan also recognizes High River's role in the CMRB structure as an urban centre, providing for land use policies to meet population and employment projections and density targets for built-up and greenfield areas as established by the CMRB Growth Plan.


1.1 Purpose


The Town is required by the Municipal Government Act (MGA) to have a Municipal Development Plan (*The Plan*). *The Plan* is the Town's senior strategic planning document and is intended to guide the future development of the Town. It is a policy document and a point of reference for all strategic planning decisions. It presents the long-term vision (20 years) for the community and sets out the required policy framework that guides decision-making on planning, land use, and the provision of municipal services. In doing so, it helps us determine how and where we live, work, play and move.

Map 1: Town Plan Boundary





High River
Map 1
Town Boundary Map

 Town Boundary

Scale: 0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5
1:30,000  km

Topo: ESRI Canada, Community Maps of Canada.
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1.2 Navigating the Plan

The Plan is intended to be used by the Council, Town Administration, residents, developers, property owners, business owners, service providers, community groups, non-governmental organizations, and school boards as well as any other groups interested in the growth and development of our community. These stakeholders should use this Plan to understand the long-term vision for our community and to gain an understanding of how the community is expected to develop over the lifetime of this Plan.

Town Council will use *The Plan* to inform and guide strategic decisions about the Town's growth and development, including the review and adoption of Area Structure Plans (ASPs), Area Redevelopment Plans (ARPs), and any other municipal studies.

Town Administration will view *The Plan* through the lens of each division's role and responsibilities, with an understanding of their detailed programs and projects, including the review and approval of planning and development proposals. In addition, the development community will use *The Plan* to understand the Town's expectations for development, including the vision for growth and requirements associated with the planning and development processes.

The Plan contains a vision, a guiding principle, nine (9) goals, 21 objectives, and 236 specific policies. These components of the Plan describe the context for how land in all areas of the Town can be developed to support our community's growth.

The implementation section of *The Plan* provides information regarding the essential tools, strategies and implementation metrics that will be used to implement and measure the progress and success of *The Plan*. Some of the implementation tools are the Town's Land Use Bylaw (LUB), statutory plans such as ASPs and ARPs, non-statutory plans such as Neighbourhood Outline Plans, guidelines for development, and strategic decisions by Council.

The Glossary of terms used throughout *The Plan* is provided for the convenience of the reader and appended to this Plan.

Maps and figures are included in *The Plan* and will help clarify where the priority growth areas are, open spaces amenities, Happy Trail network, and where certain policies apply.



1.3 Legislative and Policy Context

The Plan must be in alignment with the MGA, Alberta Land Stewardship Act, Alberta Land Use Framework, and the Calgary Metropolitan Region Growth Plan (CMRB). Should inconsistencies arise between *The Plan* and any federal, provincial, or CMRB Growth Plan, the higher-order policy, plan, or regulation will prevail.

Other statutory plans, such as ASPs and ARPs, as defined by the MGA, for lands within the Town must be consistent with *The Plan*. In addition, all non-statutory municipal plans and guidelines should also be aligned with the vision and policies of *The Plan*. Where there is any inconsistency between municipal statutory plans, the provisions of *The Plan* will prevail.

Government of Alberta

The Government of Alberta has a variety of planning documents and legislation that provide direction and requirements to municipalities regarding land use planning.

Municipal Government Act

The Act empowers municipalities to shape their communities. It regulates how municipalities are funded and how, as local governments they should govern and plan for growth. The Act enables the Town of High River to plan and implement developments within the municipal boundary.

The MGA is the provincial legislation that sets out the roles and responsibilities of municipalities and elected officials. The Act requires that the Town adopt a Municipal Development Plan (MDP) to guide long-range planning and land use. It also identifies the required and optional contents of an MDP. The MDP may be amended from time to time, through a process defined by the Act.

Alberta Land Stewardship Act

The Act enables the government to provide direction and leadership in identifying current and future land use objectives of the province, including economic, environmental, and social objectives while respecting private property rights.

Alberta Land Use Framework (LUF)

This framework sets out a new approach for managing land and natural resources to achieve Alberta's long-term economic, environmental, and social goals. The LUF establishes seven new land-use regions and calls for the development of a regional plan for each.

South Saskatchewan Region Plan (SSRP)

The Town of High River falls under the area subject to the SSRP. It establishes a long-term vision for the South Saskatchewan Region and aligns provincial policies at the regional level to balance Alberta's economic, environmental, and social goals. The regional plan also includes strategies for responsible energy development, sustainable farming and ranching, recreation, forest management, and nature-based tourism.

Alberta Water Act and Alberta Wetland Policy

The Water Act supports and promotes water conservation and the management of water, through the use and allocation of water in Alberta. Approval processes for water-related activities and diversions, such as those that might occur through urban development, are governed by the Water Act. The Water Act also provides the primary legislative basis for implementing the Alberta Wetland Policy. The goal of the Alberta Wetland Policy is to conserve, restore, protect, and manage Alberta's wetlands to sustain the benefits they provide to the environment, society, and economy.

Calgary Metropolitan Region Board (CMRB)

The CMRB is a board comprised of eight (8) municipalities that is established by the Government of Alberta to plan for and manage the growth of the region in a strategic, coordinated, and integrated manner that preserves the unique characteristics of each municipality while ensuring the long-term sustainability and prosperity of the region.

The Plan is required to comply with the policies of the Regional Growth Plan. The Growth Plan recognizes the distinct roles, opportunities, and constraints for the growth of its member municipalities. Therefore, the Town will continue to respect and live by the values of the CMRB including collaboration, respect, innovation, diversity, and good governance.

The Town is responsible for its growth which must be in alignment with the Regional Growth Plan policies as they apply to sub-regional and urban centres. It must also be consistent with the following seven themes to guide future growth of the region:

- Blueprint for Growth;
- Economic Wellbeing;
- Protect and Enjoy Environment;
- Water Stewardship;
- Shared Services Optimization;
- An Amazing Quilt of Rural and Urban; and
- Vibrant Inclusive Communities.

In addition, the Town will continue to maintain effective collaborative working relationships with the federal and provincial governments, CMRB, and neighboring municipalities.

Joint Planning Area 4 (JPA4)

The CMRB Growth Plan identifies several Preferred Growth Areas throughout the region where most of the future population and employment growth is to be directed. High River has been identified as one of the preferred growth areas within the region. JPA4 is an area that includes land from municipalities, including the Town of High River, and Foothills County (Map 2). As a result, the Town and Foothills County are required to undertake a Joint Context Study to address the coordination of land

use and servicing for a large area. The JPA4 Context Study will identify opportunities for municipal collaboration in areas where growth may impact both the Town and the County and where a high level of municipally provided services will be necessary to support the full potential of the area.

JPA4 provides opportunities to collaborate in areas where growth may impact both municipalities and where a high level of municipally provided services will be necessary to support the full potential of the area.

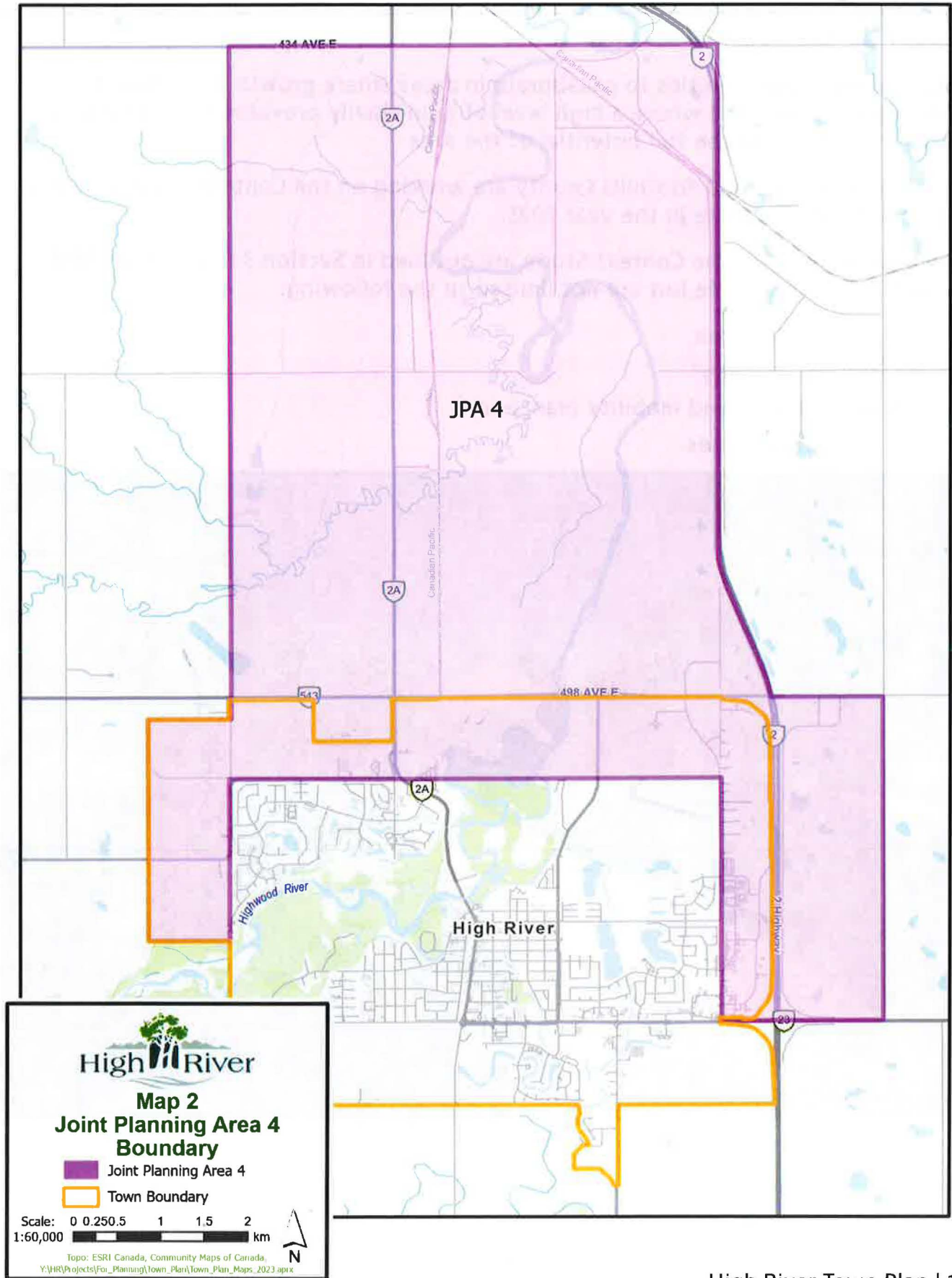
Currently, the Town and Foothills County are working on the Context Study which is expected to be complete in the year 2025.

The requirements for the Context Study are outlined in Section 3.1.9.7 of the CMRB Growth Plan And include but are not limited to the following:

- A vision for the area;
- A servicing strategy;
- A transportation and mobility plan; and
- Environmental issues.



Map 2: Joint Planning Area 4 Boundary



CMRB Growth Plan Alignment

The MGA requires that local municipal development plans align with regional plans for their respective river basins. The Town lies within the area of the South Saskatchewan River Regional Plan, and more specifically the CMRB shown in Map 3.

As supporting the growth directions of the CMRB Growth Plan is a key policy direction in the Plan, it aligns with the aspirations of the CMRB and the policies provided in the CMRB Growth Plan.

The CMRB's Growth Plan identifies High River as a preferred growth area where growth is to be expected and encouraged. The CMRB Growth Plan is based upon scenario planning, public consultation, and planning best practices that indicate preferable outcomes for the region if growth is compact and transit-oriented (current and/or future transit infrastructure). Compact and transit-oriented development reduces water consumption, vehicle mileage, carbon emissions, land consumption, and the cost of infrastructure.

The Town will actively participate in CMRB committees and initiatives that support the sustainable growth of our community. In this regard, the Town will work with the provincial government and regional partners in a collaborative planning approach to support development in priority growth areas and to protect existing and future regional infrastructure, including highways and major utility corridors such as regional water lines, wastewater lines, and power line corridors.

A general land use pattern for future community development is shown in Map 3, which indicates where growth will be encouraged, and proposes that 75% of expected growth over the next 20 years occur within serviced areas. This ensures that new development will be adjacent to existing development facilitating logical and efficient service extension and provision. It will also help the town in accomplishing its vision by reducing land consumption, carbon emissions, and the cost of infrastructure.

In addition, this approach requires redevelopment and contiguous development at targeted densities that are in alignment with the Regional Growth Plan. The minimum target density for new residential development in High River is 8 units per acre (upa), per the CMRB Growth and density targets.

Furthermore, to maintain our community's connectivity, new development shall be linked to existing active transportation networks within our community, and when possible, beyond. This physical connectivity fosters social connectedness by strengthening access to existing services including cultural, recreational, institutional, commercial services, and civic facilities.

Based on the CMRB population and employment projections for our community, and the CMRB density targets, the Town has sufficient land available to support growth for the next 25 - 30 years. This allows our community the opportunity to manage community growth sustainably. Once *The Plan* has been finalized, it will be submitted to the CMRB for a formal review and approval.

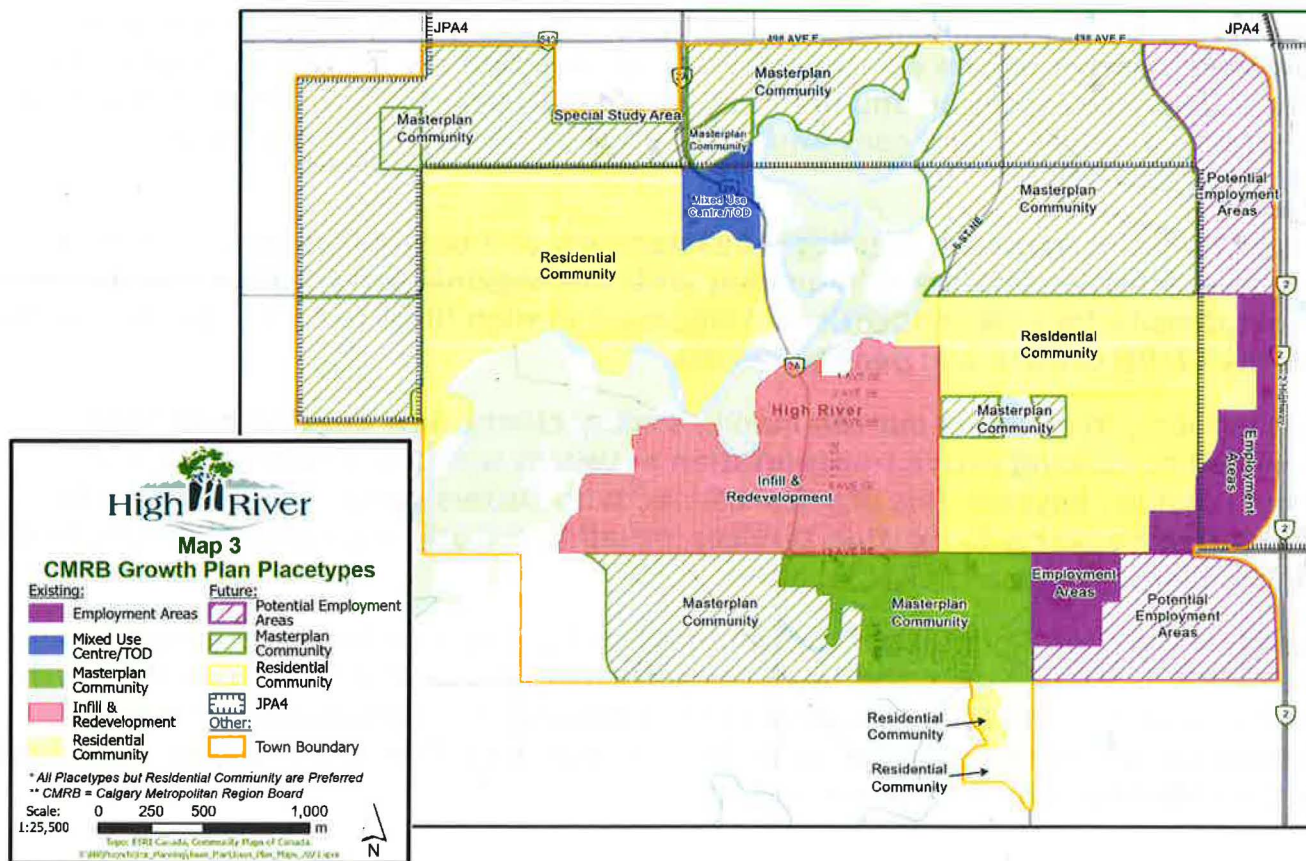
Placetypes Alignment

Map 3 shows the distribution of the Regional Placetypes identified in the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board (CMRB) Growth Plan (GP) within the Town of High River. The Regional Placetypes represent development forms, generally described by densities, land use mix, and connectivity. The Placetypes speak to a generalized land use approach at a regional level and do not replace local land use planning or terminology. The following Regional Placetypes are found within the Town of High River:

- Infill and Redevelopment;
- Mixed use Centre/Transit Oriented Development;
- Masterplan Community;
- Employment Area; and
- Residential Community.

Of these Regional Placetypes, all except Residential Community are considered to be Preferred Placetypes. The GP guides municipalities to increase their use of Preferred Placetypes to achieve better outcomes in infrastructure efficiency, service coordination, economic prosperity, and environmental stewardship. The Town anticipates that all new development in the Town will be in the form of a Preferred Placetype. For more information, please see the CMRB GP.

Map 3: CMRB Growth Plan Placetypes



Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP)

The IDP is a statutory plan under the Municipal Government Act that is created and adopted as a bylaw by more than one municipality. It provides a framework for land use planning between municipalities, leading to enhanced regional cooperation and collaboration. The IDP for the Town and Foothills County was jointly prepared and adopted by both municipal councils in May 2012. It was developed per the MGA and is designed to identify an area of mutual interest, minimize land use conflicts across municipal borders, provide opportunities for collaboration and communication, facilitate environmental management, and outline processes.

Foundation Report

Before establishing *the Plan's* vision, policy direction, and the process of strategic sustainability, one must understand what the current situation is so that there is a clear understanding of both the future goals and the current reality. Establishing the foundation is a key factor in understanding the current reality.

Background research and assessment were completed based on previous studies and reports. This includes but is not limited to population growth projections, land demand and supply, infrastructure and transportation, and growth and development.

This critical information has been used to facilitate conversation at the Task Force meetings and various public information sessions.

The Town Plan Foundation Report contains the following:

- Background information;
- Drivers of change;
- Historical population growth and projections;
- Demographic profile;
- Housing profile;
- Labour force and employment;
- Growth and development;
- Proposed growth direction;
- Appendices on CP Land Improvement Study;
- Open Space Master Plan Action Plan; and
- Policies from Downtown ARP.

The information presented in the Foundation Report creates a solid base for supporting the proposed policy direction. It has been appended to this Plan as the backbone to this Plan (Appendix VIII).



Land Use Concept Map

Managing growth and development through land use and development planning is a critical component of *The Plan*.

While *The Plan* sets out the general vision and patterns for future land use and development, the Land Use Bylaw determines specific uses and the conditions under which the land can be developed for each site. The principal mechanism by which we do this in High River is designating the location and type of use: residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, recreational, and public utility land use. View the Land Use Concept Map on page 17 for more details.

The land use concept map is a conceptual, high-level view of the Town's future physical form and provides a framework for decision making. It will be further defined through the preparation and adoption of statutory and non-statutory plans for smaller geographic areas of the Town.

The Land Use Designations reflect the vision, goals and objectives of *The Plan* will inform more detailed bylaws related to land use, which may include permitted uses and discretionary uses, densities, and building form.

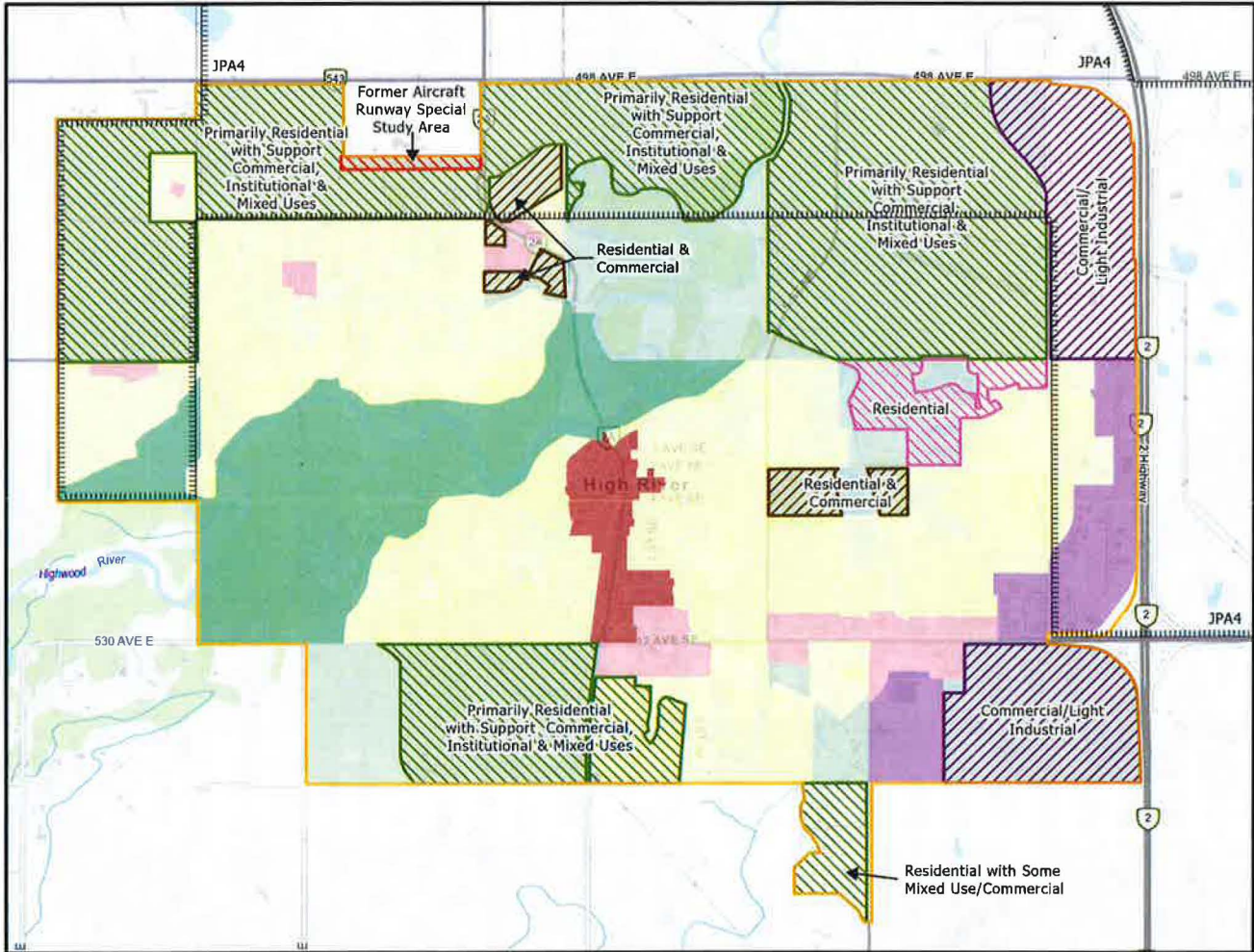
The land use designations used in this Plan are outlined on page 16.




Land Use Designations

Principle Land Use	Map Label	Intent
Natural Areas	Natural District (ND)	To protect the river corridor from development that may impede the flow of floodwater and to support the healthy ecological function of riparian areas.
Land for Future Growth	Urban Reserve District (URD)	To support rural forms of development and temporary uses before transitioning to a more urban form through an Area Structure Plan, Neighbourhood Outline Plan, and/or land use redesignation.
Residential and Mixed Use	Traditional Neighbourhood District (TND)	To allow for primarily ground-oriented residential development with the integration of local services that serve the daily needs of residents, such as cafés, day care facilities, home occupations, personal services, and small-scale professional offices in order to enhance and support a walkable neighbourhood, and to primarily serve local residents.
Economic Centre	Neighbourhood Centre District (NCD)	An area of focused community activity acts as a social and economic centre of a neighbourhood and usually defines the approximate centre of a walkable service area. The built form is characterized by buildings located closer to the street, enhanced public spaces with wide sidewalks, and street trees. High-quality pedestrian connectivity to adjacent areas and the broader community is essential.
Downtown	Central Business District (CBD)	To support a cluster of mixed-use buildings and high-quality spaces with wide sidewalks, pedestrian connectivity, and street-level activity. Businesses and services should support the entire town, and residential forms should support the business activity in the Land Use District. The Central Business District (CBD) is intended to act as a destination for residents and visitors where patrons can either walk to or park once and walk around.
Employment and Mixed Use	Service and Employment District (SED)	To support a mix of local and regional service and employment opportunities with integrated industrial, institutional, recreational, and residential uses that require larger Lots. The public realm within this Land Use District should include both local and regional pedestrian connectivity opportunities, as well as alternative modes of transportation to support employment and civic uses.

Map 4: Land Use Concept Map





Map 4
Land Use Concept Map

Legend:

- Town Boundary
- JPA4
- Land Use Concept:**
- Commercial/Light Industrial
- Primarily Residential with Support Commercial, Institutional & Mixed Uses
- Residential
- Residential & Commercial
- Special Study Area

Land Use Bylaw:

- Natural District
- Urban Reserve District
- Traditional Neighbourhood District
- Neighbourhood Centre District
- Central Business District
- Service & Employment District

Scale: 0 0.25 0.5 1 km

1:27,000

Topo: ESRI Canada, Community Maps of Canada.
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Part

Vision and Guiding Principle

From its early days as an agricultural, professional, and medical services hub, High River has grown into a centre renowned for its arts, culture, tourism, and film activity, and for hosting innovative new business ventures, all while maintaining the small-town feel its residents cherish.



Environmental sustainability has been front and centre in new developments and High River is recognized for its responsible approach to growth.



2.1 Vision

High River in the early 2040's is a growing town of nearly 25,000 people dedicated to honouring and maintaining its historical small-town feel. Commercial growth throughout the town compliments the downtown core's classic 1900's architecture; but the real story of "small-town" in High River is its people, its values, and its sense of community. With an ever-strengthening network of community organizations, not-for-profits, and informal connections, citizens of all ages, abilities, circumstances, and cultures find a warm and welcoming home in High River.

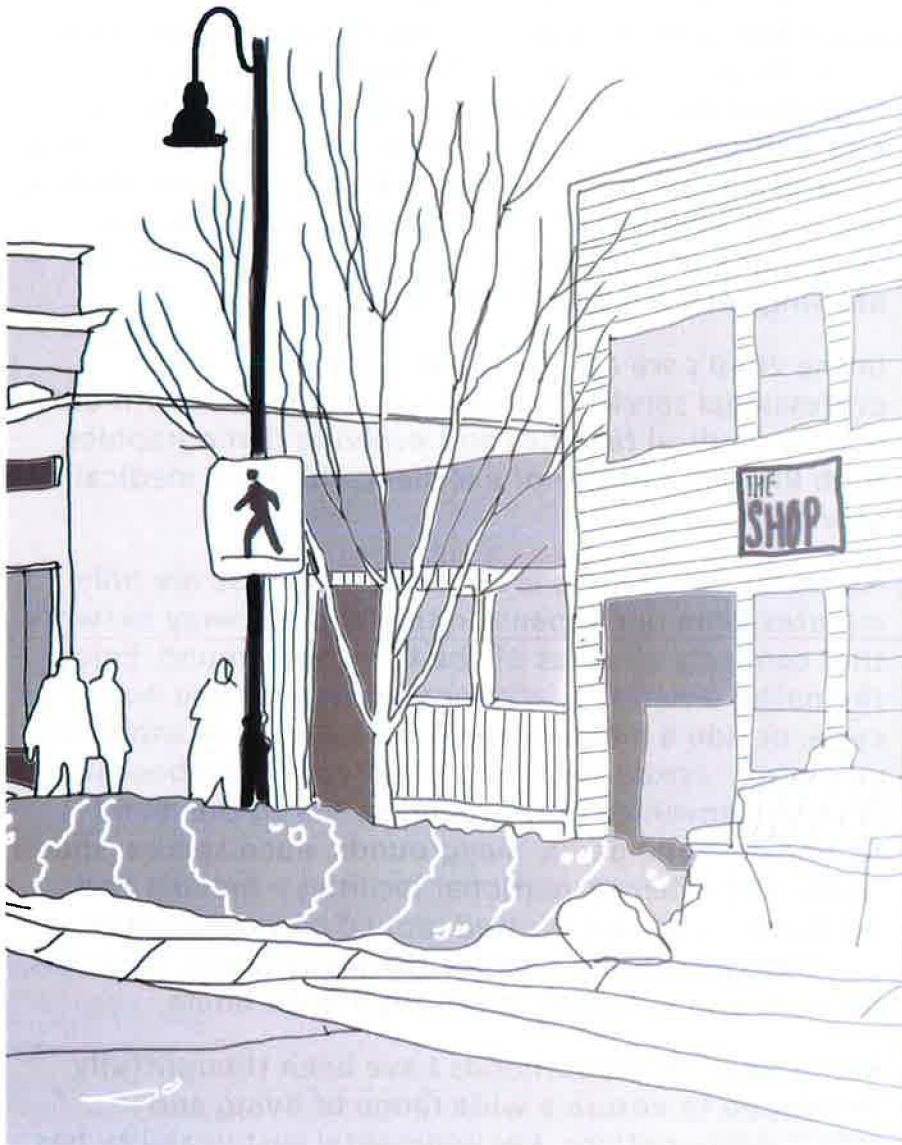
Today, High River is the community of choice in Southern Alberta for people who want a rural lifestyle and urban amenities in one. From its early days as an agricultural, professional, and medical services hub, High River has grown into a centre renowned for its arts, culture, tourism, and film activity, and for hosting innovative new business ventures, all while maintaining the small-town feel its residents cherish. High River's wide range of local/regional commercial and retail offerings ensures its citizens' needs are met.

In the 2040's we are the major agricultural and professional services hub for the region; and with our quality medical facilities and evolving demographics, High River is a centre of excellence for rural medical services.

No matter where you are in High River, you are only minutes from our expansive trail and pathway network that connects all areas of the town year-round. Enjoy the paths, amenities, and local scenery as you walk, cycle, or ride a mobility scooter - even ski or snowshoe in winter - across town or around your neighbourhood. There is convenient year-round access to the many second-to-none parks, playgrounds, open spaces, sports fields, and other recreational facilities - indoors and outdoors - that are located around town and often serve as the staging area for the many annual festivals, parades, and events that call High River home.

Residential neighbourhoods have been thoughtfully developed to ensure a wide range of living and affordability options. Environmental sustainability has

been front and centre in new developments and High River is recognized for its responsible approach to growth. Transportation, commercial, and recreational infrastructure have all grown in alignment with neighbourhood and population growth as well as with holistic consideration of the Town's needs. As new neighbourhoods grow, our vibrant community organizations continue to be key players supporting the development and operation of facilities, events, activities, and services that bring the community together and make the small-town quality of life in High River among the best in Canada.



2.2 Guiding Principle



2.3 Goals

Protecting the “Small-Town Feel” Through Responsible Growth Management

Goal 1

High River’s Parks and Open Spaces are Year-Round Facilities Actively Used by Individuals and Groups of All Ages

Goal 2

High River is Committed to Being a Healthcare Centre of Excellence in Improving Community Healthcare and Well-being for All

Goal 3

High River is a Vibrant, Interdependent Community Accessible to all Ages and Abilities for Sharing Social and Cultural Connections

Goal 4

High River Protects its Natural Environment Now and For Future Generations

Goal 5

High River is a Regional Hub for Health Care, Agricultural Support, and Innovative Small Business

Goal 6

High River Community Growth is Purpose-Driven, Balanced, and Pays for Itself

Goal 7

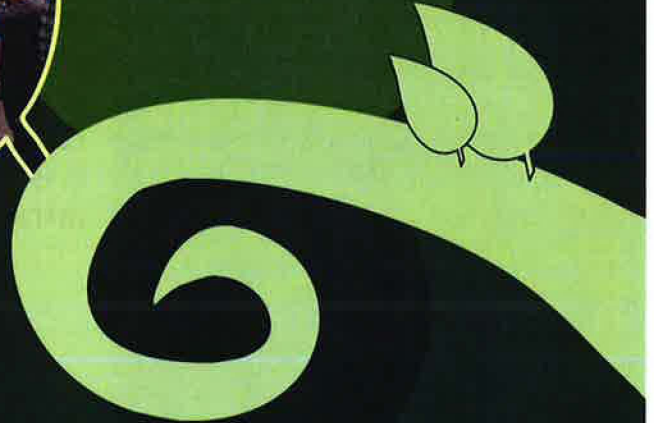
High River Existing Infrastructure Use is Optimized to its Full Extent

Goal 8

High River is a Compact and Walkable Community

Goal 9

Part



Growth Management Strategy

Growth can assist in building a complete community by attracting new businesses and investment, attracting new residents of all ages, and building innovative opportunities to be a creative and unique community.

The Town's Growth Philosophy is that new growth must be fiscally responsible so that it does not impact our residents with increased costs. It must pay for itself and show evidence that it is financially sustainable over the lifecycle of the infrastructure created.

3.1 Town of High River's Growth Philosophy

High River is a growing community, which has experienced steady growth over the last ten (10) years. As growth continues in High River it will be shaped and guided by our community vision and Council strategic planning and priorities.

Growth can assist in building a complete community by attracting new businesses and investment, attracting new residents of all ages, and building innovative opportunities to be a creative and unique community. Growth also brings challenges that could force our community to compromise on its values and the places High River residents love, including the small-town feel, our urban-rural natural environment, the trail networks and open spaces amenities.

As such, growth will challenge the Town financially, as it may impact taxes and quality of municipal services. Therefore, new growth must be fiscally responsible so that it does not impact our residents with increased costs. It must pay for itself and show evidence that it is financially sustainable over the lifecycle of the infrastructure created.



3.2 Growth Values of High River Residents

Through the community engagement process, the following values were established:

- Protect the small-town feel of a caring, connected community;
- Manage balanced growth based on smart growth principles (intensification versus sprawl);
- Ensure growth does not exceed the capacity of our existing water supply;
- Protect the natural environment and landscape; and
- Attract a variety of businesses and developments that fit our vision.

Although the Town has an opportunity to pursue multiple growth scenarios, the comprehensive community consultation process used to develop *The Plan*, resulted in one chosen growth scenario.

Chosen Growth Scenario

Our Chosen Growth Scenario is managed, guided, balanced, and responsible growth. The people of High River want growth that respects and protects the community's values. Therefore, our community will strive to ensure existing infrastructure is enhanced and maintained properly and new infrastructure is built when needed and is complete, connected, and multi-functional.

Guided growth has many benefits, including but not limited to:

- Achieving the long-term vision described in the Town Plan, Council Strategic Plan, and other statutory documents.
- Supporting complete and vibrant neighbourhoods in the growing and changing established areas, in support of a sustainable and compact urban growth pattern.



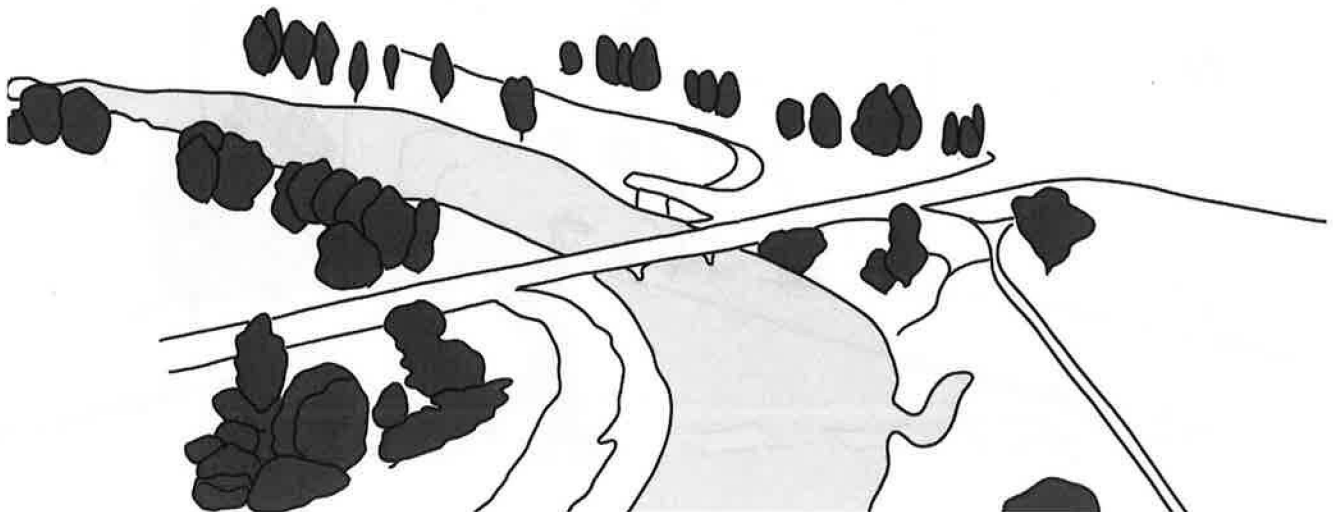
3.3 Smart Growth Principles (SGP)

The *Smart Growth Principles* (SGP) provide the Town and community with tools to help guide the future growth within our community. Smart growth supports sustainability, affordability, and climate change resiliency and ensures that fiscal, environmental, economic, and social responsibilities are recognized and considered in the planning and development decision-making process. Being resilient and adaptive in the way we grow will better prepare us for what's ahead.

Smart Growth Principles

- Create a variety of housing opportunities and choices for all residents;
- Create Active Transportation friendly communities where healthy options to walk or cycle are convenient and attractive to residents;
- Create compact and complete communities by mixing land uses and using land more efficiently;
- Provide transportation services in a safe, effective, affordable, and efficient manner;
- Preserve open space, agricultural land, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas;
- Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place;
- Engage community members to ensure that growth responds to local needs and makes the community a better place;
- Direct development towards existing neighbourhoods and communities; and
- Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost-effective.

Incorporating these principles into the design and development of new communities will result in a guided growth approach that balances public interests with private innovation, while promoting long-term fiscal sustainability to meet the needs of our current residents and future generations. For more information about growth management, growth scenarios, and priority growth areas, please review the Foundation Report appended to this Plan in Appendix VIII.





Part

Goals, Objectives, and Policies

The Town Plan goals reflect the hopes and aspirations shared by High River residents throughout public consultation process. They lay out the Town's priorities for growth, development, and community well-being in the coming years.

Goal 1: Protecting the “Small-Town Feel” Through Responsible Growth Management

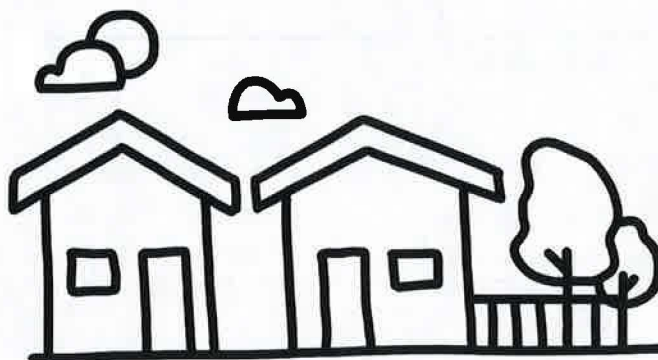


The community’s unique “small-town feel” reflects the values of caring, connected, and a people-first community. Neighbourhoods are complete, inclusive, and safe. Abundant opportunities for social interaction are available within the neighbourhoods, through parks, recreational areas, and civic spaces. Individuals have a sense of pride and belonging. Everyone has a roof over their head and knows (and interacts with) their neighbours. Community members enjoy the safety and security that a small town brings.

Development and future growth promote and enhance this sense of pride and belonging. The community grows responsibly and slowly, and uses infrastructure and capacity efficiently. Services are provided to meet the needs of the changing community in a cost-effective manner. In addition, development will not interfere with the character of the community which retains a special focus on maintaining the “small-town feel.”

Objectives

1. Create complete, livable, and inclusive neighbourhoods.
2. Commit to preserving the unique character of the community.
3. Provide resilient infrastructure.
4. Create a safe and efficient mobility network that allows all forms of transportation.
5. Ensure design enhances safety and security.





Goal 1: Protecting the “Small-Town Feel” Through Responsible Growth Management

Objective 1: Create complete, livable neighbourhoods.

1.1A Policies for Existing Neighbourhoods

The Town Shall

1.1A.1 Protect, enhance and redesign established neighbourhoods, to consider the neighbourhood context, while integrating additional services, including retail commercial opportunities.

1.1A.2 Develop Local Area Plans for existing neighbourhoods, in consultation with the community, with opportunities for increased density, by 2028.

1.1A.3 Ensure the form and character of new developments respect and complement existing neighbourhood character.

1.1A.4 Require development of wide sidewalks (minimum 2 m) on both side of the roads in new phases of existing neighbourhoods.

1.1A.5 Reduce the speed limits within neighbourhoods to 40 km per hour by 2025.

1.1B Policies for New Greenfield Neighbourhoods

The Town Shall

1.1B.1 Establish exclusive high-quality design standards.

1.1B.2 Build complete communities that provide economic, social, and environmental sustainability for people to live, work, and play.

1.1B.3 Require a minimum of 10% of new residential units be universally accessible in multi-residential development applications, or that developers provide funds or land-based upon 10% of their unit yield, to allow for aging in place and inclusivity.

1.1B.4 Advocate the upper levels of government to amend the building code and engrain universal accessibility in all new dwelling unit construction.

1.1B.5 Ensure that landscaping, building placement, building form, and architectural treatment of commercial development in all districts provide a high-quality development and visual appearance.

1.1B.6 Ensure that greenfield neighbourhoods are developed as complete communities, with a mix of housing choices and sizes that promote higher density, integrated greenspace, and park spaces that support active lifestyles, recreation choices, and retail services.

1.1B.7 Require that greenfield neighbourhoods offer a range of mobility choices and are developed in a manner consistent with transit-oriented development (TOD) principles.

1.1B.8 Require greenfield neighbourhoods to be compact and walkable, with wide sidewalks (minimum 2 m) on both sides of the road.

1.1B.9 Require new parks be in prominent, accessible locations, and be connected to the community trail network.



Goal 1: Protecting the “Small-Town Feel” Through Responsible Growth Management

1.1B.10 Require greenfield neighbourhoods be designed with featured architectural and natural elements that contribute to local identity, community pride, and a strong sense of place.

1.1B.11 Ensure the planning, design, and development of greenfield neighbourhoods incorporates both pedestrian and cycling connections to community gathering places, to destinations within Town, and within and between neighbourhoods.

1.1B.12 Ensure development of greenfield neighbourhoods provides the required infrastructure for future public transit. This may include but is not limited to the provision of the required spaces for bus shelters, looped routing options, and the ability to serve most of the plan area with a short walk between different destinations.

1.1B.13 Require a minimum of two access routes be established in all greenfield neighbourhoods.

1.1B.14 Require that greenfield neighbourhoods are designed with integrated social interaction components.

1.1B.15 Prepare a Terms of Reference for preparing new Area Structure Plans by 2026.

Objective 2: Recognize and preserve the unique character of the community.

Policies

The Town Shall

1.2.1 Promote Downtown as a centre of business activity and ensure it continues

to be a place that feels comfortable for pedestrians through control of development characteristics such as building height, scale, intensity, and quality.

1.2.2 Ensure public open spaces and facilities are designed with flexibility and managed to encourage high levels of activity throughout the year.

1.2.3 Encourage and support a wide variety of community-led initiatives and festivals or events that reflect the diversity, heritage, and cultural traditions of our community, such as the Little Britches Parade, Santa Claus Parade, Heritage Inn International Hot Air Balloon Festival, Show and Shine, and the Farmers’ Market, etc.

1.2.4 Promote opportunities for public art in and around public buildings and facilities, and in public outdoor spaces.

1.2.5 Prohibit billboards and other large signs in our community to avoid visual clutter, and to protect the views of attractive landforms and community features.

1.2.6 Review the creation of a municipal planning commission tasked with reviewing some of the subdivision and development applications including building design, to investigate impact on public spaces and ensure high quality development and the use of climate-resilient materials by 2027.

1.2.7 Promote the 4th Avenue living street (**woonerf**) as a formal gathering place for community celebrations and proactively promote and increase the



Goal 1: Protecting the “Small-Town Feel” Through Responsible Growth Management

number of events that draw people into the downtown core.

1.2.8 Ensure that the Land Use Bylaw undergoes a review by 2025 and be brought into alignment with the Plan.

The Town Should

1.2.8 Maintain the green and forested character of the Town, while allowing for growth through techniques such as:

- Design that minimizes impact on natural systems;
- Integration of nature-based infrastructure solutions;
- Innovation in public projects that protect and improve natural systems; and
- Preserving key areas of open space.

1.2.9 Encourage landscaping designs that:

- Create character and a sense of place;
- Enhance existing green character and help protect natural features;
- Preserve and utilize native trees and plants;
- Enhance water and air quality;
- Minimize water consumption;
- Provide aesthetic value;
- Provide buffers for transitions between uses; and
- Softens the impact of roads and hard surfaces by shading areas and integrating roadside rainwater gardens and dedicated snow storage areas.

Objective 3: Provide resilient infrastructure.

Policies

The Town Shall

1.3.1 Create a Subdivision and Development Standards policy to be adopted by Council, that reflects our unique natural environment, considers climate change impacts, and integrates nature-based solutions by 2028.

1.3.2 Integrate the Canadian Standards Association Flood Standard into our Subdivision and Development Standards policy by 2026.

1.3.3 Complete a climate-based risk assessment to the Town’s infrastructure by 2027. Identify priority areas for adaptation interventions, and factor in climate change impacts when designing and locating public infrastructure.

1.3.4 Ensure that high efficiency and energy efficient improvements be included in municipal capital upgrades including, but not limited to water and sewage pumps, treatment, and conveyance; streetlights and other public realm lighting; and solid waste transportation and treatment.

1.3.5 Integrate green infrastructure standards into the Town’s land use regulatory tools by 2029.

1.3.6 Complete a review of the Town’s Utility Master Plan by 2026.

1.3.7 Support the generation of more renewable energy within the Town,



Goal 1: Protecting the “Small-Town Feel” Through Responsible Growth Management

subject to quality of development and land use considerations, to ensure all new homes are deemed solar ready. Encourage developers to install solar panels and heat pumps on all new homes.

1.3.8 Encourage all non-municipal utilities to install their services underground to reduce service disruptions.

1.3.9 Consider the installation of renewable energy systems on all new municipal facilities and infrastructure.

Objective 4: Foster a safe and efficient transportation network.

Policies

The Town Shall

1.4.1 Require all new streets to be designed and built in the form of a complete street, as specified in the Town’s Subdivision and Development Standards.

1.4.2 Require the use of traffic calming features in the design of new roads and redesign of existing roads.

1.4.3 Not support the use of curvilinear road networks that lead to crescents, p-loops, and cul-de-sacs in new developments.

1.4.4 Require paved rear lanes to be provided for all greenfield neighbourhoods.

1.4.5 Consider a pedestrian bridge across the Highwood River to link the northwest when the required financial resources are available.

1.4.6 Require that the road design for greenfield neighbourhoods be based on the Town’s historical grid and lane pattern.

1.4.7 Complete a review of the Transportation Master Plan by 2026.

Objective 5: Design and build to enhance safety and security.

The Policies

The Town

1.5.1 Ensure that the design and development of infill, greenfield communities, neighbourhoods, commercial centres, and municipal facilities incorporate techniques from Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED).

1.5.2 Ensure that crosswalks and school zones are designated with well-lit streets, and integrated traffic calming designs, and that road maintenance is completed regularly.

1.5.3 Maintain and enhance community emergency preparedness and management planning for supporting a prompt and coordinated response to emergencies.

Goal 2: High River's Parks and Open Spaces are Year-Round Facilities Actively Used by Individuals and Groups of All Ages

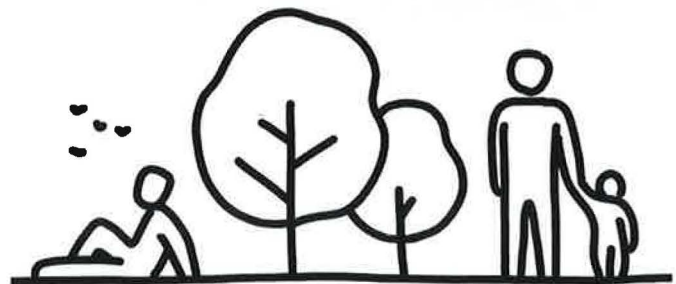


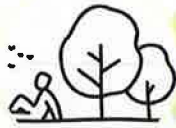
High River's parks and open spaces connect our residents and visitors to nature and promote active lifestyles that support a healthy community. Open spaces provide plenty of opportunities for residents to enjoy the outdoors with the added benefit of improving peoples' health. Whether enjoying a picnic in a public park or riding your bicycle along the Happy Trails network, such facilities enhance the quality of life for both our residents and visitors alike.

Residents identified parks, trails, recreation, and other green spaces among the most valued attributes of High River. Open spaces should offer unique opportunities and amenities that meet the community's needs while remaining flexible over time.

High River's *Parks, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan* (2021), identifies future needs for the community, with directions that center around eight goals:

- Protect and enhance ecological significant natural areas and wildlife.
- Improving connectivity of our neighbourhoods and Happy Trails network.
- Provide safe ways to access the river
- Provide winter programming and activities.
- Create interesting places for people to gather and build community.
- Incorporate education and interpretive opportunities.
- Make parks sustainable.
- Enforce the rules to make parks enjoyable for all.





Goal 2: High River's Parks and Open Spaces are Year-Round Facilities Actively Used by Individuals and Groups of All Ages

- Maintain for generations to come.
- Increase regional connections.

The community engagement results for this Plan emphasized and complemented these priorities, including an identified need for more recreational opportunities for all, improving park and trail connectivity, and protecting and enhancing access to the river.

Objectives

1. Enable convenient access to the parks, trails, and open space network.
2. Ensure facilities meet the needs and desires of the community.
3. Support urban agriculture throughout the community.



I LIKE THE
GRASS
VERY MUCH
TO HIGH RIVER

Students in grades 2 and 3 at Joe Clark School share what they enjoy about living in High River.



Goal 2: High River’s Parks and Open Spaces are Year-Round Facilities Actively Used by Individuals and Groups of All Ages

Objective 1: Enable convenient access to the parks, trails, and open space network.

Policies

The Town Shall

2.1.1 Maintain and expand the active transportation pathway system and link all areas of High River as a pedestrian and people-first community.

2.1.2 Require new developments to conduct green space planning at the beginning of the project before road locations are determined, to prioritize the connectivity of the trails and natural systems.

2.1.3 Ensure wooded areas along the river be left in their natural state, with the exception of passive recreation.

2.1.4 Ensure all parks and open spaces incorporate universal design principles and include barrier-free accessible amenities including year-round washrooms.

2.1.5 Ensure bicycle and scooter parking facilities are constructed at key locations throughout the Active Transportation pathway system.

2.1.6 Require covered bicycle and scooter parking facilities for all new commercial and multi-family developments.

2.1.7 Enhance the parks and trails network by providing additional furniture including lighting, open and accessible benches, and public washrooms.

2.1.8 Develop guidelines for Municipal Reserve land dedication and development by 2026.

2.1.9 Ensure an emergency alarm/security system be developed and implemented along trails system, including near the river and dead spots by 2027.

The Town Should

2.1.10 Cost out the viability of creating safe and designated river float drop in/out access points to accommodate the activity that is already occurring in the community by 2029.

Objective 2: Ensure facilities meet the needs and desires of the community.

Policies

The Town Shall

2.2.1 Enhance and expand recreation amenities to support increased health, wellness, and social gathering connections for all residents, where financially viable.

2.2.2 Require provision of a diversity of parks and playfields in terms of size, scale, and activities to serve the needs of residents in greenfield neighbourhoods.

2.2.3 Keep the *Parks, Trails, and Open Spaces Master Plan* current by completing a review and update to the Plan every ten (10) years.



Goal 2: High River's Parks and Open Spaces are Year-Round Facilities Actively Used by Individuals and Groups of All Ages

2.2.4 Prioritize the implementation of the Parks, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan. Projects identified in the Action Plan shall be presented to Council on an annual basis as part of the financial planning process.

2.2.5 Require a minimum of 10% of developable land within an area covered by an ASP to be dedicated as a Municipal Reserve.

2.2.6 Require the dedication and finalization of the Municipal Reserve at the subdivision stage, in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Government Act.

2.2.7 Prioritize parkland dedication over cash-in-lieu option.

2.2.8 Require new playgrounds and sports facilities to incorporate universal design principles to ensure inclusivity.

2.2.9 Design new public spaces for use throughout all four seasons and for residents of all abilities.

2.2.10 Identify land opportunities to support the development of additional community recreational opportunities.

2.2.11 Strive to enhance, maintain, and increase the number of parks, trails, open spaces, and recreation options that are available.

2.2.12 Ensure the expansion of the Happy Trails network and increased trail connectivity remains a community priority.

2.2.13 Maintain and preserve natural amenities and areas, including native

species, topography, and scenic corridors, wherever possible.

2.2.14 Encourage community members to be involved in the maintenance and enhancement of parks and open spaces by creating programs to support their involvement.

2.2.15 Ensure all new landscaping areas include trees and vegetation species that are drought tolerant.

2.2.16 Develop an outdoor washroom strategy by 2026.

2.2.17 Designate and dedicate specific areas for off-leash dog parks for supporting existing and future communities.

2.2.18 Require a designated area be dedicated for an off-leash dog park in new Area Structure Plan areas.

The Town Should

2.2.19 Ensure that all residents live no further than 400 meters (5- minute walk) from at least one park and/or open space.

2.2.20 Provide additional youth-targeted sports and recreation programming including creating an additional skate park in a different location.

2.2.21 Incorporate multipurpose court options within existing parks and open space facilities, while taking into consideration noise and proximity to residents including pickleball, basketball, volleyball, and soccer fields.



Goal 2: High River's Parks and Open Spaces are Year-Round Facilities Actively Used by Individuals and Groups of All Ages

2.2.22 Ensure future development considers the ability to build on the existing parks and trails network system to create a cohesive and easily navigated active transportation network.

2.2.23 Ensure trail expansions are connected to key shopping and recreational areas.

Objective 3: Support urban agriculture throughout the community.

Policies

The Town Shall

2.3.1 Develop an urban agricultural strategy by 2029.

2.3.2 Support the expansion of community gardens and require spaces for new community gardens at the ASP stage, in greenfield neighbourhoods.

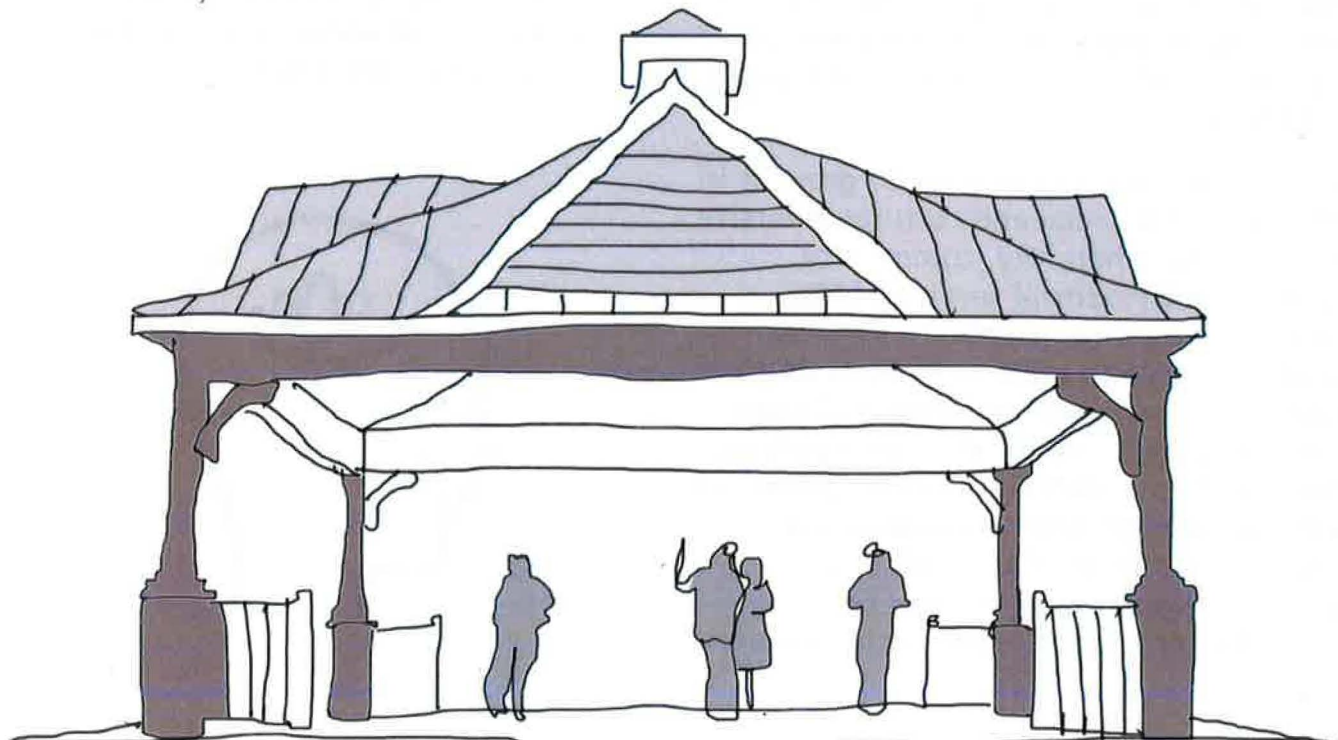
2.3.3 Maintain and expand urban agriculture and edible landscapes in public open spaces, public lands, and gathering places.

2.3.4 Develop a strategy to increase local food security, local food production, and programs to teach residents to grow their own food by 2028.

2.3.5 Encourage the provision of community gardens in new multi-residential housing for the use of residents.

The Town Should

2.3.6 Encourage and support landowners of vacant spaces to offer temporary use of their land for urban agricultural purposes.



Goal 3: High River is Committed to Being a Healthcare Centre of Excellence in Improving Community Healthcare and Well-being for All

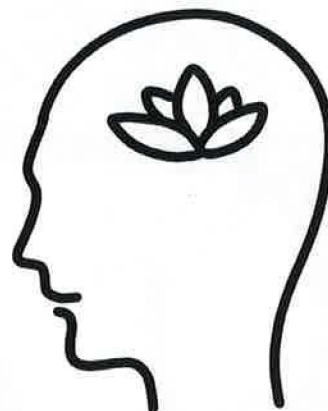


A people-first community considers the health and well-being of residents when decisions are being made. Advocating for improvements in healthcare and community well-being is a pillar to creating a complete community. We support residents not only during emergencies and times of critical need, but also through the regular provision of municipal services that increase overall residents' well-being, health, and a sense of inclusion.

As the community continues to grow, it is expected that social and cultural diversity will increase. Therefore, community public facilities, social services, child-care facilities, and healthcare services need to evolve to meet the needs of all community members regardless of their cultural background or abilities. Applying this lens to our decision-making processes will ensure High River maintains and enhances a high quality of life that it is known and loved for, and the environment for diversity and inclusion.

Objectives

1. Continue supporting and enhancing healthcare services within our community.
2. Support the community in utilizing an active transportation to meet their daily commuting needs.
3. Ensure community members have access to the social services that respond to their needs.





Goal 3: High River is Committed to Being a Healthcare Centre of Excellence in Improving Community Healthcare and Wellbeing for All

Objective 1: Continue supporting and enhancing health care services within our community.

Policies

The Town Shall

3.1.1 Advocate to the Government of Alberta to develop a long-term community healthcare plan that is focused on improving the level of health and asset investment in High River Hospital, including but not limited to Orthopedics, Cardiac care, Dementia, Ophthalmology, Maternity, and enhancing Mental Healthcare.

3.1.2 Develop a business case and action plan by 2028, to support acquiring a designated property for the establishment of specialized health services, such as an innovative Dementia Care Centre, when financially viable.

3.1.3 Engage with the local medical community and identify potential partnerships and innovative ways for enhancing existing community healthcare services by 2025.

3.1.4 Support programs and initiatives that enhance the physical, mental, and social wellbeing of community members.

3.1.5 Invest in the existing community Recreation Centre, as a recreation destination that promotes community health and wellbeing.

3.1.6 Monitor air quality to address adverse impacts of any environmental concerns and advocate to the Government of Alberta to protect and enhance air quality.

3.1.7 Create a Healthcare Task Force by 2025, for healthcare professionals' recruitment and retention that encourages them to work and reside in the community.

The Town Should

3.1.8 Collaborate with Foothills County and regional partners to monitor and take coordinated action to improve local air quality.

Objective 2: Support the Community in utilizing active transportation to meet their daily commuting needs.

Policies

The Town Shall

3.2.1 Require that developers plan universally accessible neighbourhood parks, open spaces, and trail networks through the early stages of subdivision design for all developments.

3.2.2 Ensure the design of open spaces and recreation facilities is inclusive and universally accessible.

3.2.3 Ensure the required infrastructure for supporting active transportation within our community is well-built, regularly maintained, furnished with benches and garbage bins, and has sufficient lighting.

3.2.4 Promote and support bicycles, scooters, walking, and other modes of active transportation for all-season safe access.

3.2.5 Engage the public every five (5) to ten (10) years, in consideration of



Goal 3: High River is Committed to Being a Healthcare Centre of Excellence in Improving Community Healthcare and Wellbeing for All

other modes of active transportation to expand the range of alternative local transportation modes.

3.2.6 Create a walkable environment by enhancing streets to be active transportation friendly for all users.

3.2.7 Increase the number of pedestrian crosswalks with unique striping and painting materials across the community.

3.2.8 Develop a sidewalk improvement program by 2028, to maintain the pedestrian network and review options for expansion.

3.2.9 Prepare a plan by 2027, to create an interconnected and accessible green network of trails for connecting existing and new neighbourhoods and natural areas, and for connecting residents with their places of employment.

3.2.10 Consider infrastructure for walking, cycling, and transit in all municipal transportation investments.

3.2.11 Provide open space and recreational multi-season opportunities that can be accessed by all residents regardless of income or ability for passive and structured recreation activities, opportunities such as walking, cycling, hiking, snowshoeing, and cross-country skiing.

The Town Should

3.2.12 Initiate and integrate the local trails network as part of the regional green trail network opportunities.

3.2.13 Encourage cyclists to bike on the Happy Trails network.

3.2.14 Create pedestrian-friendly refuge islands on major roads that provide safe landing zones for pedestrians, when feasible.

3.2.15 Ensure that trails, sidewalks, and bike lanes be designed and built to increase connectivity for people by providing safe, direct, and convenient links between the following:

- Residential neighbourhoods;
- Schools;
- Recreation facilities and parks;
- Employment centres;
- Shopping and service destinations; and
- Community gardens.

Objective 3: Ensure community members have access to the social services that respond to their needs.

Policies

The Town Shall

3.3.1 Review and evaluate every five (5) years, through community engagement processes, the level of social services that the Town offers, to address any gaps or adapt to changing circumstances.

3.3.2 Contribute to addressing homelessness through advocacy to the GOA for prevention services and by addressing, the underlying causes, continuing to be aware of, and investing in, housing options that address needs across the continuum.

3.3.3 Collaborate with not-for-profit local agencies and organizations to



Goal 3: High River is Committed to Being a Healthcare Centre of Excellence in Improving Community Healthcare and Wellbeing for All

welcome newcomers, through programs that promote awareness, involvement, inclusivity, and cultural diversity.

3.3.4 Review recreation programs fee structure every three (3) years and offer more affordable or no-cost activities for those who have limited access to recreational programs.

3.3.5 Conduct a recreational needs assessment by 2029, to define the appropriate supply of recreational services to match population growth and demographic trends.

3.3.6 Promote and support the concept of social responsibility and volunteerism in our residents through year-round formal recognition and celebration of the

dedicated and active volunteer base.

3.3.7 Create community engagement opportunities for the public, in an open-forum format, a minimum of every two years, to dialogue and exchange ideas with the Town Administration about municipal services in a fair and respectful manner.

3.3.8 Promote and encourage resident-led activities to develop social connections for fostering the small-town feel and sense of belonging.

3.3.9 Support and encourage the formation of Community Associations for different communities.



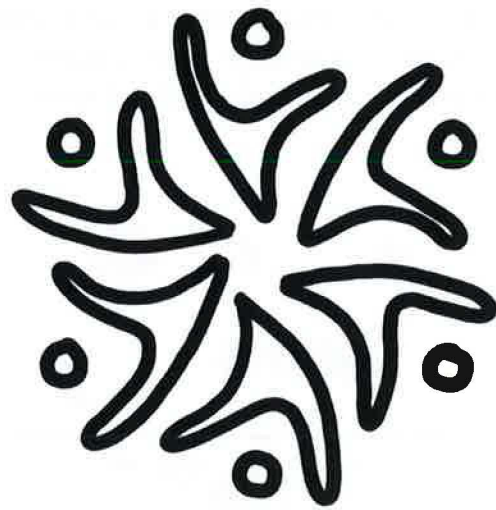
I like High River
for the beautiful
things it has

Students in grades 2 and 3 at Joe Clark School share what they enjoy about living in High River.

Goal 4: High River is a Vibrant, Interdependent Community Accessible to all Ages and Abilities for Sharing Social and Cultural Connections



High River is well connected, with every community member or group having a role to play that is valuable and worthy of respect and caring. Our community has a rich legacy of urban, rural, and natural landscapes that define its image. Businesses are strongly connected to the people and attached to the community. This connectedness creates a vibrant, active community that is accessible to all ages and abilities and is inviting to all residents to share our social and cultural differences.



Objectives

1. Increase opportunities for social connections.
2. Design the community to be accessible, inviting, and inclusive, to everyone in all seasons.
3. Provide opportunities for the community and visitors to experience arts, culture, and heritage.



Goal 4: High River is a Vibrant, Interdependent Community Accessible to all Ages and Abilities for Sharing Social and Cultural Connections

Objective 1. Increase opportunities for social connections.

Policies

The Town Shall

4.1.1 Provide a variety of public spaces such as parks, plazas, and community halls in neighbourhoods.

The Town Should

4.1.2 Support local community organizations and agencies and provide programs that encourage and bring more people to our downtown core.

4.1.3 Ensure neighbourhood commercial development opportunities include uses compatible with social gathering.

Objective 2: Design the community to be accessible, inviting, and inclusive, to everyone in all seasons.

Policies

The Town Shall

4.2.1 Investigate community public transit options including carpool, car share, bike share, short-term vehicle rentals, and other privately-operated transportation services by 2027.

4.2.2 Provide charging stations and the required infrastructure in various locations for electric vehicles, electric bikes, and electric scooters use by 2029.

4.2.3 Engage the public in consideration of other modes of active transportation to expand the range of alternative local transportation modes by 2027.

4.2.4 Ensure the Town's municipal facilities are built based on a universal design to enable access and use to all residents.

4.2.5 Audit all municipal buildings by 2029 to identify any accessibility issues.

4.2.6 Establish a Community Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan by 2026.

Objective 3: Provide opportunities for the community and visitors to experience arts, culture, and heritage.

Policies

The Town Shall

4.3.1 Collaborate with the Arts and Culture community to develop an action plan that promotes and expands the role of arts and culture within the community by 2027.

4.3.2 Ensure that conservation of municipal historic resources aligns with the *Standards & Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*.

4.3.3 Work with the *Highwood Museum* to create a heritage preservation and retention of historic buildings program that suits the community by 2027.

4.3.4 Ensure that new murals celebrate our diversity and are inclusive to reflect the past, the present and the future of the community.

4.3.5 Partner with the GOA in the preservation of historic buildings.



Goal 4: High River is a Vibrant, Interdependent Community Accessible to all Ages and Abilities for Sharing Social and Cultural Connections

4.3.6 Review the public arts policy and guidelines by 2026.

4.3.7 Support the renewal, expansion, and ongoing maintenance of the Town's murals through the creation of a Mural Guidebook that details the process for approval, installation, and maintenance of the murals by 2027.

4.3.8 Create policies and bylaws that preserve our historical assets by 2029.

4.3.9 Encourage preservation, restoration, and appropriate adaptive reuse of historic

properties to serve as tangible reminders of the area's history and cultural roots.

The Town Should

4.3.10 Encourage public art and historic features to be included in new communities, civic facilities, and commercial developments, in consultation with the public.

4.3.11 Promote and support the development of special spaces for visual and performing arts, culture, music, and programming.



Goal 5: High River Protects its Natural Environment Now and For Future Generations.



Our community is connected to the natural environment and values the benefits that nature provides. High River is a community that wants to balance development and the protection of the environment by strongly guiding development close to these areas.

Our environmental stewardship practices will respect and protect our rich natural areas, reduce energy consumption, and waste, and do our part to address and adapt to the impacts of climate change. We will ensure that our natural resources including a clean water supply are protected for today and future generations.

Objectives

1. Protect, conserve, and enhance natural area systems and wildlife habitats.
2. Implement water management and aquifer protection practices for people and nature.
3. Adapt to Climate Change and implement mitigative measures that make sense locally.





Goal 5: High River Protects its Natural Environment Now and For Future Generations

Objective 1: Protect, conserve, and enhance natural area systems and wildlife habitats.

5.1A Natural and Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Policies

The Town Shall

5.1A.1 Require all developments to meet or exceed provincial and federal acts and regulations relating to the environment, including but not limited to, those relating to air quality, water quality, wetlands, wildlife, floodway, and floodplain/riparian areas.

5.1A.2 Protect Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs), by implementing the following measures:

- Creating and maintaining a local inventory of ESAs;
- Dedicating these areas as a Conservation Reserve, an Environmental Reserve or easements, in accordance with Section 664 of the Municipal Government Act;
- Restricting land use for passive recreation;
- Requiring appropriate setbacks from identified ESAs;
- Protecting, restoring, and increasing riparian areas to create additional room for the river; and
- Entering into conservation easements with not-for-profit agencies to protect the land for generations.

5.1A.3 Continue with the annual Tree Management Program, and work towards achieving a 1:2 ratio for replacement of trees that were removed the previous year until the year 2044.

5.1A.4 Develop an education program for supporting community awareness regarding the purpose of natural areas and ESAs by 2028.

5.1A.5 Not permit development within the identified floodway network except for passive recreation and critical municipal infrastructure.

5.1A.6 Require that new Area Structure Plans incorporate flood protection of all developable areas against a flow rate of 1,820 cubic meters per second (m³/s) (designated Design Event) plus one (1) meter of freeboard in the Highwood River upstream of the Town.

5.1A.7 Require that ESAs be dedicated to the Town at the time of subdivision as an Environmental Reserve. Such lands shall not be considered as part of the required 10% of Municipal Reserve dedication.

5.1A.8 Maintain the Mercer land, Wallaceville, Beachwood, and the land area along the river as natural undisturbed areas, with an opportunity for trail network extension.

5.1A.9 Require a Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment study to be conducted in support of development applications, when deemed appropriate by the development authority.



Goal 5: High River Protects its Natural Environment Now and For Future Generations

5.1B Wildlife Habitats

Policies

The Town Shall

5.1B.1 Map and maintain existing wildlife nesting and denning sites by 2026, and create additional sites, where beneficial, by 2029.

5.1B.2 Maintain the interpretive signage initiative and create and place additional heritage interpretive signage along trail systems, and in park spaces, to provide information about the community's culture and ecology, including local wildlife and natural species.

5.1B.3 Develop maintenance standards regarding natural vegetation by 2027, and ensure sufficient maintenance of natural vegetation (e.g., mowing, clearing, removing deadfall) within natural areas to avoid risk to humans and wildlife.

5.1B.4 Develop educational materials by 2025, for the public regarding the importance of wildlife in our urban environment.

5.1B.5 Develop a human-wildlife conflict management plan by 2027, to detail residents' responsibilities in reducing conflicts with wildlife that live in and travel through our community.



Objective 2: Implement water management and aquifer protection practices for people and nature

Policies

The Town Shall

5.2.1 Develop, gain Council approval, and implement a Water Management Policy by 2026.

5.2.2 Develop an awareness program to decrease residential and commercial discharges of pollutants into water bodies by 2029.

5.2.3 Meet or surpass all federal and provincial regulatory requirements for water discharges and pollution controls.

5.2.4 Develop an *Aquifer and Water Source Protection Plan* to ensure water quality is maintained by 2026.

Objective 3: Adapt to climate change and implement mitigative measures that make sense locally

5.3A Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction

Policies

The Town Shall

5.3A.1 Incorporate measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in our community not limited to:

- a. Use of renewable energy alternatives to traditional sources of energy as aging infrastructure is replaced and new infrastructure is constructed.



Goal 5: High River Protects its Natural Environment Now and For Future Generations

b. Incorporating energy-efficient design and best construction practices into new and existing municipal buildings.

5.3A.2 Implement strategies as identified in the *Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan* (CCAAP).

5.3A.3 Ensure the Town's long-term decision-making process is guided through the lens of climate change adaptation.

5.3A.4 Promote community practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions by developing a GHG Inventory and Reduction Strategy by 2028.

5.3A.5 Require a *Wildfire Risk Assessment*, prepared by a qualified *FireSmart* professional be completed for supporting new Area Structure Plans by 2027.

5.3A.6 Require *FireSmart* principles and best practices to be incorporated into all new development by 2026.

5.3A.7 Develop a pamphlet by 2025, for increasing public awareness about *FireSmart* principles.

5.3A.8 Conduct reviews of the *Town's Flexible Work Policy* by 2026, including evaluating the physical office capacity to support a reduced environmental footprint.

5.3A.9 Install charging stations in various locations to support all electric-powered transportation modes by 2028.

5.3A.10 Develop an incentive program by 2027 that encourages green building construction in renovations and new developments.

5.3A.11 Review lighting standards and create a dark sky standard by 2027.

5.3B Solid Waste Reduction

Policies

The Town Shall

5.3B.1 Minimize the production of solid waste by:

- a. Promoting town-wide programs that encourage residents and businesses to reduce, reuse, and recycle solid waste products.
- b. Encouraging the use of best landscaping practices that minimize yard and garden waste.

5.3B.2 Prepare a business case for Council consideration to implement curbside recycling and food waste pick-up in residential areas by 2028.

The Town Should

5.3B.3 Encourage new development and redevelopment to utilize best practices in building construction and demolition, with emphasis on:

- Design practices that reduce construction waste
- Adaptive reuse of existing buildings, where possible
- Reused, salvaged, and refurbished products



Goal 5: High River Protects its Natural Environment Now and For Future Generations

5.3C Stormwater Management

Policies

The Town Shall

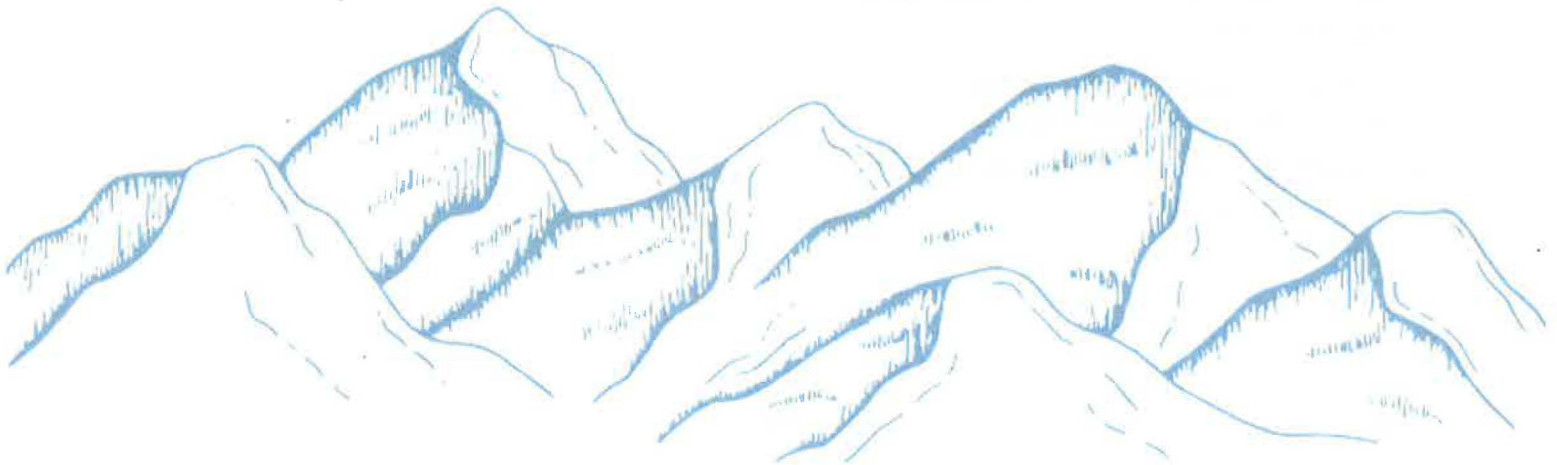
5.3C.1 Require the use of the best practices, *CSA Standards for Stormwater Management*, and *Low Impact Development* principles in new developments and redevelopment opportunities, including but not limited to green roofs or walls, pervious pavement, rain gardens, xeriscaping and bioswales.

5.3C.2 Require an engineer's stamped wastewater servicing study or report for all new and amended statutory plans (as applicable), and multi-unit residential, commercial, industrial development.

The Town Should

5.3C.3 Encourage the use of nature-based solutions to help manage stormwater storage and flows, based on analysis and recommendations of registered biologists and/or engineering professionals.

5.3C.4 Encourage the use of landscaping, and green infrastructure tools to limit the impervious surface area.



Goal 6: High River is a Regional Hub for Health Care, Agricultural Support, and Innovative Small Business



High River's economic longevity is founded in being a regional service centre to the surrounding area. We have grown to be recognized as healthcare and agricultural hubs. This economic landscape supports our existing businesses to grow, expand, and produce quality employment opportunities for our residents. Innovation, creativity, and the tenacity of our community create our entrepreneurial spirit. Our economy is adaptable, inclusive, resilient, and inventive in economic ventures.



Objectives

1. Support growth, innovation, and entrepreneurship in the local business community.
2. Attract, support, and retain businesses and employers.
3. Develop tourism opportunities for the community.



Goal 6: High River is a Regional Hub for Health Care, Agricultural Support, and Innovative Small Business

Objective 1: Support growth, innovation, and entrepreneurship in the local business community

Policies

The Town Shall

6.1.1 Support home-based businesses to grow and increase the quality of local employment opportunities.

6.1.2 Complete a review every five (5) years of the types of commercial/ industrial spaces needed for business proposals and attract commercial/ industrial development for that specific space.

6.1.3 Direct future industrial development within the Town to the southeast area and discourage new industrial development in other areas of the Town.

6.1.4 Ensure home-based businesses are compatible with residential area character.

6.1.5 Liaise with the business community to identify barriers and streamline the internal applications review and approval processes by 2025.

6.1.6 Implement and stay current with high-speed internet connectivity infrastructure solutions.

6.1.7 Encourage medical, agricultural and ag-tech related services to develop in High River.

6.1.8 Work with partners to develop and keep updated *Doing Business in High River* and *Welcome to High River for Business* packages by 2026.

6.1.9 Develop a small business incubator site, that provide growth opportunities for small local businesses, in collaboration with local business organizations by 2029.

The Town Should

6.1.10 Increase collaboration with educational institutions to promote entrepreneurship and skills development.

Objective 2: Attract, support, and retain businesses and employers

Policies

The Town Shall

6.2.1 Collaborate with the CMRB and member municipalities in creating regional economic development opportunities that align with values and goals of the Town.

6.2.2 Review our internal processes and procedures every two (2) years, to ensure the process remains streamlined and supportive of existing and new businesses.

6.2.3 Create a community economic development statement that outlines the vision for community development and that supports our existing businesses while providing new opportunities for entrepreneurs by 2025.

The Town Should

6.2.4 Work with local partners to support business retention and expansion of existing businesses.

6.2.5 Remain engaged with Foothills County on development initiatives within the joint planning areas.



Goal 6: High River is a Regional Hub for Health Care, Agricultural Support, and Innovative Small Business

6.2.6 Increase the Town's digital presence to assist in attracting businesses, investors, and tourists.

6.2.7 Continue with the implementation of the policies in the Downtown ARP, appended to *The Plan*.

Objective 3: Develop tourism opportunities for the community

Policies

The Town Shall

6.3.1 Consider creating a tourism strategy by 2027, that supports our local businesses, arts, culture, and heritage, and attracts visitors to diversify commercial opportunities.

6.3.2 Continue to collaborate with the local and regional tourism industry to promote existing tourism facilities, events, and services.

6.3.3 Investigate opportunities to

expand existing tourism facilities, such as campsites, pathway expansion, and connections.

6.3.4 Support the development of businesses and events that encourage visitors to stay overnight in High River, including festivals, conferences, and cultural events.

6.3.5 Promote our recreation facilities, the natural environment, our historic amenities, and pathways to visitors as tourism destinations.

6.3.6 Consider developing a strategy regarding investment in art, culture, and heritage as a local tourism attraction by 2029.

6.3.7 Partner with the tourism industry including, but not limited to Tourism Alberta, Travel Alberta, Foothills Tourism Association, and marketing agencies to raise awareness of High River as a key tourism destination for tourism activities.



I. Will teach
Dance class
I want to teach ballet class.

Students in grades 2 and 3 at Joe Clark School share what they enjoy about living in High River.

Goal 7: High River Community Growth is Purpose-Driven, Balanced, and Pays for Itself



Objective 1: Ensure decision-making regarding growth considers Town's financial and infrastructure capacities

Policies

The Town Shall

7.1.1 Give priority to servicing of development within town boundaries.

7.1.2 Complete a review of the Offsite Levy Bylaw a minimum of every five (5) years or less to reflect the costs of growth-related infrastructure including emergency services, and parks and recreation and allow for incremental increases.

7.1.3 Require *Area Structure Plans* and *Functional Servicing Reports* to be completed for all annexed lands prior to subdivision and development occurring.

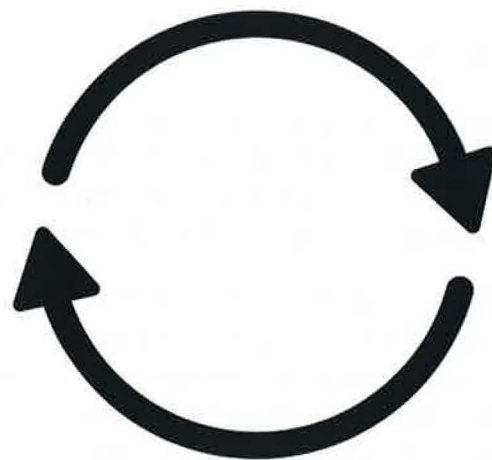
7.1.4 Ensure that the required *Area Structure Plans* be prepared to the satisfaction of the Town and shall include all requirements specified in the Municipal Government Act.

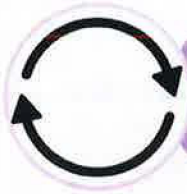
7.1.5 Require that new *Area Structure Plans* provide planning and analysis regarding infrastructure full lifecycle costs and include options to pay for these costs over the long-term.

7.1.6 Require that all new developments within the Town boundary be fully and sustainably serviced with appropriate water, sanitary sewer, and stormwater services.

7.1.7 Continue to engage with regional partners to ensure the best possible outcomes to issues of mutual interest within the framework of the *CMRB Growth Plan*.

7.1.8 Ensure water security for the community through integrated planning and efficient resource management.





Goal 7: High River Community Growth is Managed, Balanced, and Pays for Itself

Objective 2: Ensure the Town does not subsidize development proposals

Policies

The Town Shall

7.2.1 Ensure that new developments pay for all required infrastructure.

7.2.2 Ensure that development and redevelopment proposals provide adequate services to the proposed development, which may require improvements to municipal services funded by the proponent.

Objective 3: Require developers to provide detailed business cases or cost of growth outlining the impacts of their proposed growth to confirm that it will not impact existing taxpayers in the future

Policies

The Town Shall

7.3.1 Require developers to provide financial analysis to ensure that any new development does not adversely affect the existing taxpayers of High River.

7.3.2 Ensure that developers' business cases include a minimum of five (5) percent of affordable housing units in their *Neighbourhood Outline Plan* or development applications (if an NOP was not required) shall be distributed within each phase of the proposed development, to the satisfaction of the Development Authority.

7.3.3 Demonstrate commitment to expand and improve affordable housing by:

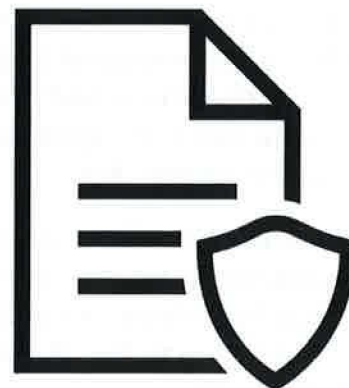
- a. Annually reviewing its own existing affordable housing supply and exploring options for owning/operating additional units;
- b. Providing ongoing advocacy for the private sector to build attainable and affordable housing as long-term solutions to rental and ownership; and
- c. Supporting initiatives, such as *Habitat for Humanity*, which contribute to affordable home ownership.

Objective 4: Create a High River development standard

Policy

The Town Shall

7.4.1 Develop and ensure High River's development standards reflect the *Land Use Bylaw, Town Plan, and Engineering Specifications* by 2026.



Goal 8: High River Existing Infrastructure Use is Optimized to its Full Extent



Objective 1: Promote smart growth within the existing residential and employment areas

Policies

The Town Shall

8.1.1 Review and identify existing municipal servicing capacities by 2027, to determine upgrade requirements.

8.1.2 Promote infill residential and non-residential development whenever possible to maximize the use of existing infrastructure and assets.

8.1.3 Strategically invest in supporting the established community's growth, specifically by improving public spaces, such as open spaces, parks, bike racks, sidewalks, pathways extensions, and playgrounds.

8.1.4 Create and implement an infill development incentive program by 2026.

8.1.5 Prohibit growth in areas that are not serviced by existing or planned municipal infrastructure.

8.1.6 Prioritize and promote sensitive intensification within existing communities and strategic Priority Growth Areas (PGAs).

8.1.7 Strategically direct seventy-five percent (75%) of annual population growth towards established Priority Growth Areas (PGAs) during the lifetime of *The Plan*.

8.1.8 Review and update the Town's Infrastructure Master Plan every five (5) years to align with the land use policies.

8.1.9 Encourage developers to maximize investment in alternatives to high automobile use.





Goal 8: High River Existing Infrastructure use is Optimized to its Full Extent

Objective 2: Should administer policy through proper planning process and apply development standards in a consistent manner

Policies

The Town Shall

8.2.1 Meet or exceed the CMRB's minimum density requirement targets of 20 dwelling units/hectare (8 dwelling units/acre) for residential development in new Area Structure Plans.

8.2.2 Meet or exceed a minimum of residential density of 37 dwelling units/hectare (15 dwelling units/acre) for multi-family development and mixed-use areas.

8.2.3 Require a shadow plan and development renderings before development to ensure impacts of higher density on adjacent properties will be minimal.

8.2.4 Support employment growth by restricting residential development within the employment areas and only allowing live-work development opportunities.

8.2.5 Require new development or redevelopment of sites within the employment area to provide active transportation connections to the Town's pedestrian and Happy Trails system.

8.2.6 Require a high caliber of urban design for development.

8.2.7 Encourage high-density housing of various types provided it:

- Is in proximity to employment centres, shopping, and other community amenities;
- Is in proximity to park spaces;
- Considers and addresses the impact of additional traffic on the surrounding neighbourhood; and
- Is supported by the required infrastructure capacity.





Goal 8: High River Existing Infrastructure use is Optimized to its Full Extent

Objective 3: Prioritize the efficiency and optimization of regionally significant transportation corridors

Background

While the Town does not have care and control over Level 1 and Level 2 Highways, the Town does recognize that development that the Town approves adjacent to these corridors can affect their efficiency and optimization.

The Town is only directly responsible for development on the Town's side of the Regional Transportation corridors. The Town will continue to collaborate with Foothills County in accordance with our Intermunicipal Development Plan to ensure the efficiency and optimization of Regional Transportation Corridors is maintained.

Policies

The Town Shall

8.3.1 Require all development proposals adjacent to regionally significant transportation corridors include mitigation measures for controlling glare and reducing any other applicable distractions to motorists to achieve efficiency and optimization of the Regional Transportation corridors. All outdoor storage shall be screened from view.

8.3.2 Work with Foothills County to create an access management strategy for the 543 Corridor adjacent to the Town of High River which should include a set of design guidelines to preserve the visual character of this gateway area (as per the Intermunicipal Development Plan). The 543 Corridor (498 Ave. E) is a Level 2 Highway. It is identified in the Intermunicipal Development Plan between the Town of High River and Foothills County as a corridor that needs to be carefully managed.

8.3.3 Ensure that new signage along Level 1 and Level 2 Highways be directed toward the public realm within the Town of High River boundary and not toward the Level 1 and Level 2 Highways. New signage directed toward the Level 1 and Level 2 Highways shall not be approved.

8.3.4 Collaborate with adjacent landowners, and Alberta Transportation to review the slip ramp located at High River, 24 St. NE, by considering available accessibility options and creating a viable and sustainable solution.

Goal 9: High River is a Compact and Walkable Community



Objective 1: Support and promote compact, mixed-use development and walkable community

Policies

The Town Shall

9.1.1 Not support annexation of land over the lifetime of this Plan.

9.1.2 Review existing Area Structure Plans with development opportunities by 2028, to ensure their alignment with the new policy direction to achieve density requirement.

9.1.3 Develop an infill intensification strategy by 2025.

9.1.4 Ensure municipal policies and bylaws conform to CMRB's Growth Plan and Servicing Plan and policies, especially regarding the CMRB's mandates relating to regional land use, intermunicipal collaboration, and geographic information services.

Priority Growth Areas

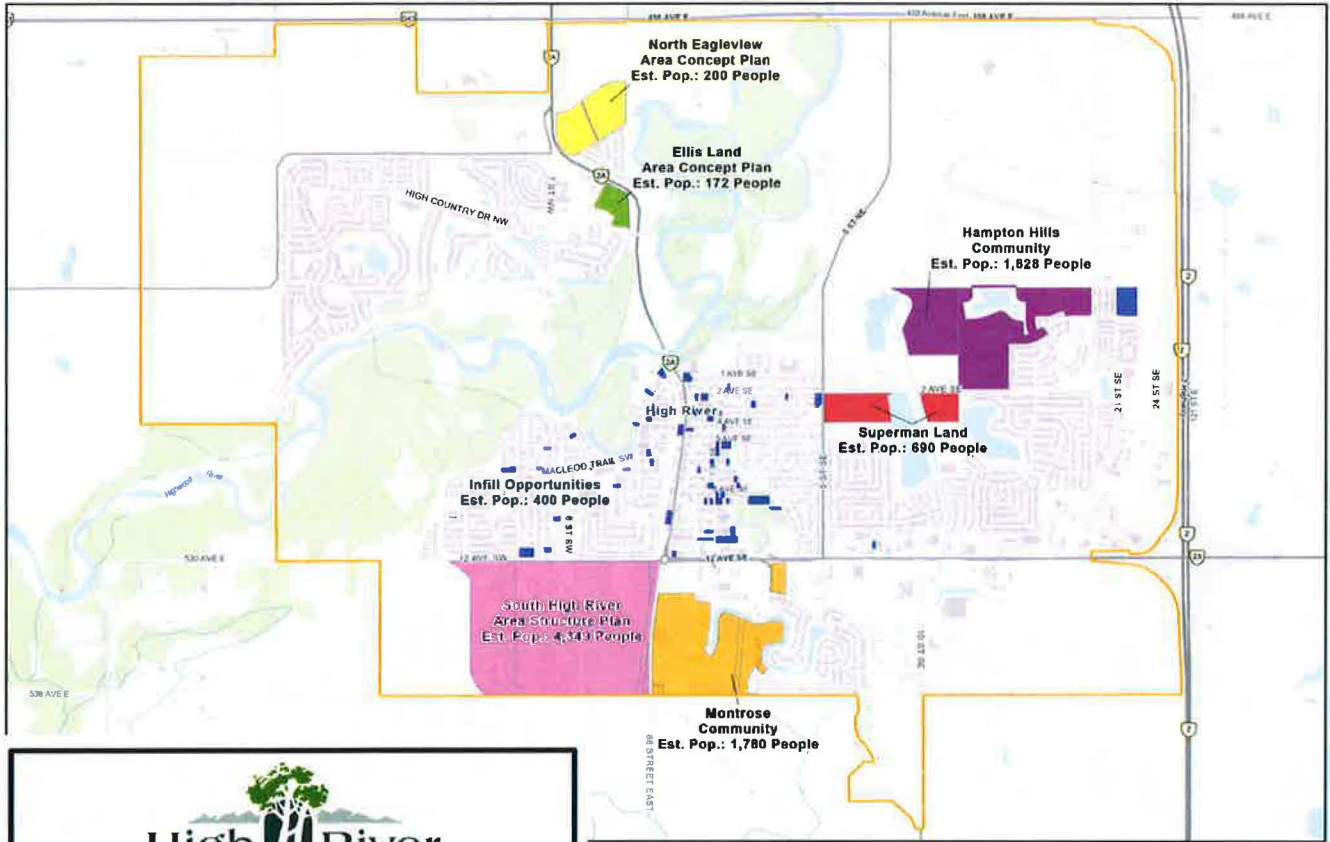
Based on the land supply, density requirement, available servicing, and projected population, it is fair to assume and consider all available land identified within established neighbourhoods as PGAs. This will require a prioritization of municipal capital infrastructure projects to support and facilitate the intensification and development of these areas when needed.




In previous years, the Town focused on striving to achieve 75% of future growth in the greenfield areas and 25% of growth within infill development opportunities. Based on the state of available infrastructure capacities and land supply within established communities, together with a well-thought inward growth strategy that focuses on taking advantage of available development opportunities, may help us achieve the long-term vision described in the Town Plan while mitigating the short --and medium-term risks.

Furthermore, with the need to have balanced and managed growth, it is essential to target 75% of future growth over the next 20 years within the established communities, while allowing 25% of growth in the greenfield areas, provided that the required planning studies, servicing, technical studies have been completed.

Map 5: Priority Growth Areas (PGA)






Map 5

Priority Growth Areas (PGA) Map

- Ellis Land ACP (3.5 ha/8.5 ac)
- Hampton Hills Community (37 ha/ 91.4 ac)
- Infill Opportunities (8 ha/19.8 ac)
- Montrose Community (36 ha/89 ac)
- South High River ASP (88 ha/217.5 ac)
- Superman Land (10.5 ha/20.6 ac)
- North Eagleview ACP (11.6 ha/28.7 ac)
- Town Boundary

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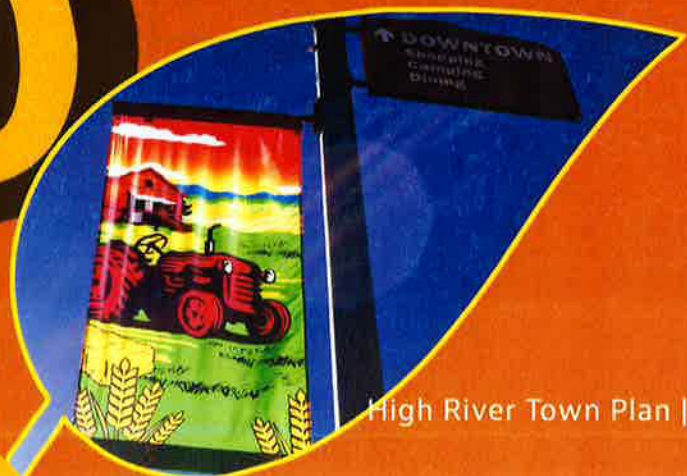
April 9, 2024
Topo: ESRI Canada, Community Maps of Canada.
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Part

General Discussion, Plans, and Development Opportunities

Infill development is the process of developing vacant or underutilized land parcels within established neighbourhoods, or the replacement of existing homes with new development.



Infill projects attract people and businesses back into the heart of the community.

5.1 Special Study Area

One property within the Town boundary has been identified as a special study area. It is the strip of land, formerly being an airstrip, located south of the Agricultural Society grounds.

The Plan recognizes the importance of including this area and recommends that a special study be completed for this parcel that could review and address best available options prior to development.

Policy

The Town shall prepare a study for the identified special study area (the former airstrip) and determine the best land use for this area by 2028.

5.2 Infill Redevelopment Opportunities

Infill development is the process of developing vacant or underutilized land parcels within established neighbourhoods, or the replacement of existing homes with new development. By refocusing development in these neighbourhoods, infill projects attract people and businesses back into the heart of the community. It is a valuable land use strategy to maintain a viable population and revitalize established areas.

Infill development may help our community achieve the following:

- Make efficient use of existing infrastructure;
- Revitalize a neighbourhood and give it a facelift;
- Diversify the housing stock; and
- Provide more housing options close to existing amenities and workplaces.

In addition, good infill practices shall:

- Be compatible and respectful of the design of existing development;
- Maintain the privacy of the existing neighbours;
- Sensitively increase the number of residents; and
- Use good urban design practices that respect the streetscape and development pattern.

5.3 Brownfield Sites with Redevelopment Opportunity

Development of brownfield sites is one type of infill opportunity. Brownfield sites are underutilized commercial or industrial properties, where past activities have potentially contaminated soils. These contaminated sites can cause health and environmental concerns years after they have been abandoned.

In Alberta, provincial legislation outlines requirements for reporting, assessing, and remediating the release of a contaminating substance on a property. These requirements must be met before redevelopment can take place, or liability and risk issues may arise for all involved parties. There are also provincial requirements for municipalities to account for, and report on, any liabilities associated with the remediation of a contaminated site under their ownership.

There are ways municipalities can promote private investment in redevelopment of brownfield sites, including grant programs and streamlining approval processes.

Currently there are 3.8 ha (9.4 acres) of brownfield sites with redevelopment opportunity within our boundary. Based on the locations and ownership of properties, once the required mitigations have been completed, these sites may be used for a variety of development opportunities, including mixed use and commercial development.

5.4 Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan

The Town of High River adopted the *Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan* (ARP) in 2016. The ARP was prepared after the 2013 high water event, to ensure that Downtown area was redeveloped, renewed, and re-energized. In addition, to setting the tone for redevelopment of the entire community over the foreseeable future.

The existing ARP has many relevant policies that have yet to be implemented. Those relevant policies that have not been implemented yet have been identified appended to this Plan for further review and implementation (Appendix V).

5.5 Parks, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan Action Plan

In 2021, the Town completed its *Parks, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan*, which considers how the Town can manage and improve the green spaces across the community. The projects and initiatives recommended in the Master Plan have been summarized in an Action Plan.

The Master Plan is a living document and intended to provide a road map regarding management and improvement of the green spaces within our community during the next 10 years. Therefore, the Action Plan has been appended to this plan (Appendix III).

The Action Plan includes a specific group of projects, implementation timeframe, sponsors together with high-level cost estimates.

5.6 CP Land

The Town's Public Realm Improvement Study on the Former Railway Lands (CP Lands) was prepared and received by Council for information in 2017. The Study focusses on opportunities for the redevelopment of underutilized CP Lands corridor into a vibrant and interconnected open green space. The Land Design Concept has been appended to this plan for review and implementation when possible (Appendix IV).

5.7 Climate Change

Its likely that dynamic climate conditions will have a significant effect on High River within a short span of time. Research indicates that the annual number of +30 degrees Celsius days in the High River region could more than double, from 7.6 days (1976-2005) to 19.5 days (2021-2050).

In 2023, the Town has completed a *Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan*, which provides strategic prioritization and implementation of actions that could address our highest risks. A summary of the Action Plan has been appended to this plan (Appendix VI).

5.8 Active Transportation Plan

The Town is committed to making it safer, easier, and more enjoyable to walk, bicycle, and use other forms of active transportation in High River. To work towards this commitment, the Town has developed an *Active Transportation Plan* (ATP), which provides direction for the development of a well-connected active transportation network that enhances accessibility, safety, and convenience. This active network will provide an additional way for residents and visitors to get around, increasing transportation choices for all ages and abilities. The ATP will guide the Town's investments in active transportation over the short, medium, and long-term. A summary of the ATP is appended to this plan (Appendix VII).



5.9 Indigenous Peoples Engagement and Reconciliation Process

The Plan recognizes that the history of Indigenous Peoples in High River has often been overlooked when telling the story of the Town's development, and when making community-wide development decisions. *The Plan* also acknowledges the importance of Indigenous Peoples culture within the context of the history and future growth of the Town. As such, the Plan welcomes, and celebrates traditional and contemporary Indigenous arts and culture in the community.

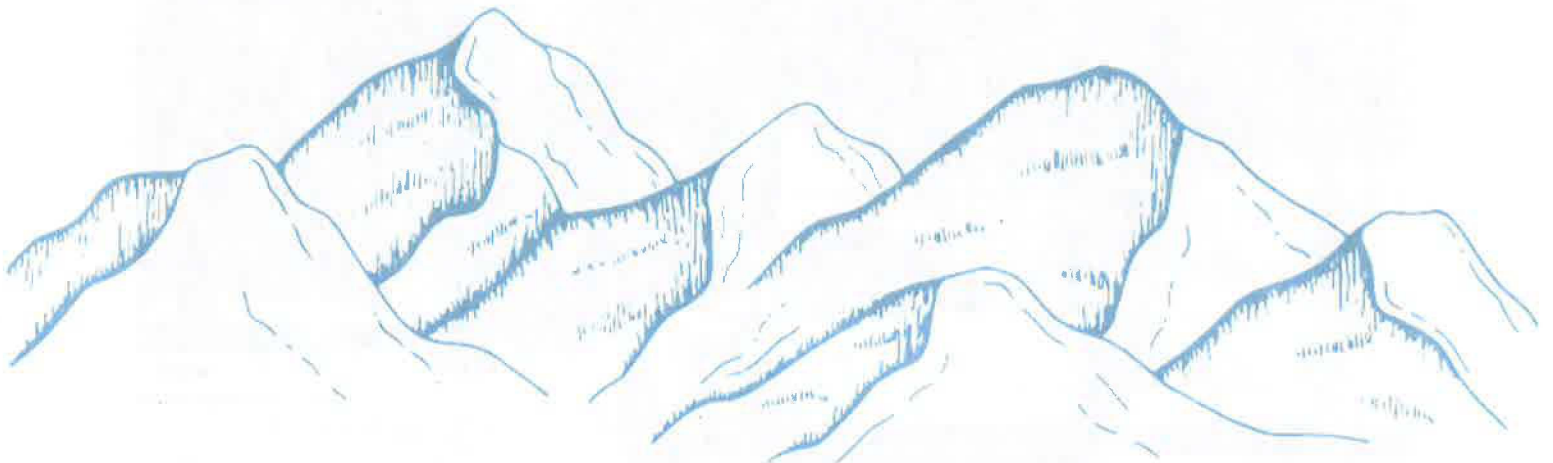
The reconciliation process takes time and commitment, and it hinges on the ability to deepen trust between all involved parties. The Town's commitment to reconciliation begins with a recognition of the Town's responsibility to examine the ways in which its policies, processes, and structures are established, and for the Town to ensure that a meaningful consultation process with the Indigenous Peoples becomes a priority to the Town for supporting development and growth of the High River.

The Town and the Indigenous Peoples have experience working together and are committed to building on successes of the past while supporting the conditions to continue a strong and productive respectful relationship by 2025.

Due to some technical difficulties and timing constraints, engagement with Indigenous Peoples has been initiated but was not completed at the time *The Plan* was finalized.

The Town Shall

1. Engage and collaborate with the Indigenous Peoples and identify opportunities to contribute to reconciliation efforts through Town land use policies, processes, and municipal-wide decision-making.
2. Incorporate the outcome of the engagement process with the Indigenous Peoples into this Plan. Review the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Framework for Reconciliation by 2027 and prepare a report for Council consideration to follow the framework for reconciliation.



Part

Plan Implementation

The Plan is not a static document. Rather, it is a living document intended to be utilized to regularly measure and monitor progress towards the community's aspirations for the future.



The Plan guides the community until it needs review and amendments, which is generally done every five to ten years. The Plan will be reviewed and updated to ensure it remains relevant and compliant with other guiding legislation.



The Plan may be implemented through direct actions arising from some of the precise policies, preparation of future *Area Structure Plans*, *Area Redevelopment Plans*, *Neighbourhood Outline Plans*, and/or Land Use designation through the approval processes under the Town's LUB, and through the authority of Town Council, Town Administration, and appropriate Town committees. The implementation of all proposed initiatives in *The Plan* are subject to the availability of resources as determined through the annual budget process and Council strategic community priorities.

6.1 Plan Review and Amendments

The Plan is not a static document. Rather, it is a living document intended to be utilized to regularly measure and monitor progress towards the community's aspirations for the future. *The Plan* guides the community until it needs review and amendments, generally conducted every five years. *The Plan* will be reviewed and updated to ensure it remains relevant and compliant with other guiding legislation.

Through extensive public engagement, the community has expressed great passion and commitment to the direction established in this Plan. Subsequently, as *The Plan* is a living document, it is not intended to be revised arbitrarily or to advance individual interests at the expense of the community. However, while implementing the vision of *The Plan* requires commitment, it also requires flexibility, something inherent in the regular reviews.

Developers and community members may request an amendment to *The Plan* by submitting a complete application, consisting of comprehensive proposals with clear rationale, to Council for consideration. Proposals to amend *The Plan* are often significant and shall be the subject of much community scrutiny. Under the MGA, Council must consider these proposals to amend the Plan. However, Council has no obligation to approve these proposals.

Town Council may also initiate its own amendments to *The Plan*. For example, by refining and adding clarity to policies, or by adding new policies that result from new studies or plans.

To maintain faith in the planning process that created *The Plan*, each decision to amend it must be informed by an objective, holistic, and consistent analysis and in alignment with the vision of the community that engages residents in a meaningful manner.

6.2 Monitoring and Progress Program

It is important to highlight that not all initiatives within *The Plan* may be completed as intended at the time of *The Plan's* implementation. Further investigation into the projects may reveal the benefit is not worth the cost of some of the proposed projects, or priorities may shift to reflect the current circumstances.

To ensure the Town is taking action to achieve the vision of the community, Administration will monitor *The Plan* implementation measures/targets, which are designed for this specific purpose. Administration will report to Council and the public every three years.

Evaluating *The Plan* implementation progress requires carefully monitoring indicators to quantify community change. The Town will develop a comprehensive list of indicators for the following measures to evaluate the effectiveness of policies over the lifetime of *The Plan*:

- Population growth
- Density of development
- Housing and housing diversity
- Transportation options
- Supply of land absorption for residential, commercial, and industrial development

Other indicators may be added and examined in the future depending on data availability.

6.3 Implementation Metrics

Upon the adoption of this Plan, Administration will prepare a comprehensive list of implementation metrics, to be used for monitoring and supporting the implementation of this Plan:

- Ensure that the Town's statutory plans are kept up to date and reflective of the community's values as well as socio-economic and environmental trends by 2025.
- Create and maintain an implementation, and monitoring program and report to the public every two years on progress and achievement.

- Ensure that the Town's Subdivision and Development Authority be strictly guided by the vision, goals, objectives, and policies of The Plan and applicable plans and policies in making subdivision and development decisions.
- Ensure that the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board (SDAB) receives the required training by 2026 and have regard to the vision and policies of the new Plan in making its decisions.

These will provide the Town with a clear and concise tool that will be used to measure the progress we make through the implementation of the policies and be able to report back to Council and the community on a regular basis.



Appendices

Appendix I: Glossary of Terms

Accessibility: Removing barriers to access, specifically for people with disabilities (which may include but is not exclusive to physical, sensory, and cognitive disabilities) to participate in Town Services.

Access: Services align with the ability for individuals to participate. This is often achieved through the removal of barriers impeding access, which may include social, financial, language, cultural, geographic, and physical barriers. The result is everyone is given the opportunity to participate in all aspects of society.

Affordable Housing: According to Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), housing is considered affordable if it costs less than 30% of a household's before-tax income.

Aging in Place: The ability to live in the same home or community safely, independently, and comfortably, as you age.

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

Area Structure Plans (ASPs): An ASP is a statutory plan adopted by Council by bylaw in accordance with Section 633 (1) of the Municipal Government Act, to provide a framework for the subsequent, subdivision, and development of specific area of land. It is intended to provide a link between The Plan and the development of neighbourhoods in High River. ASPs provide details on the growth and development of specific greenfield areas within a municipality, including direction for the future land use redesignation, subdivision, and

development of a site.

ASPs are prepared in accordance with Section 633 of the Municipal Government Act, which requires an area structure plan to describe:

- The sequence of the development proposed for the area
- The land uses proposed for the area, either generally or with respect to specific parts of the area
- The general location of major transportation routes and public utilities

In addition, all ASPs include information on design principles, function and infrastructure, and density as well as land use statistics and concept maps.

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

Business Incubator: A workspace created to offer startups and new ventures access to the resources they need, all under one roof. Most incubators are created as temporary launching pads for new businesses, with the expectation that participants will eventually grow and move out.

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

Cash-in-lieu: Money to be paid in place of Reserve Lands which are required by the MGA pursuant to a subdivision of land.

Calgary Metropolitan Region Board (CMRB): An organization committed to supporting the long-term social,

environmental, and economic wellbeing of the Calgary Metropolitan Region by facilitating collaborative regional planning practices, optimizing shared services and land use, and fostering sustainable growth. CMRB is comprised of eight (8) member municipalities, which include City of Airdrie, City of Calgary, City of Chestermere, Town of Cochrane, Foothills County, Town of High River, Town of Okotoks, and Rocky View County.

Climate Change: The long-term shift in weather conditions measured by changes in temperature, precipitation, wind, snow cover and other indicators. This could be a change in how much rain a place usually gets in a year, or it could be a change in a place's usual temperature for a month or season.

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

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

Culture: The opportunities to express the unique identity of a community or social group. Examples include art, food, performance, and other creative expressions that deepen social connections, increase cultural understanding and dialogue, reduce isolation, and brighten communities.

Community Well-being: A combination of social, economic, environmental, cultural, and political conditions identified by individuals and their communities as essential for them to flourish and fulfill their potential.

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

Compatible development: Development that, although it is not necessarily similar to the existing buildings in the vicinity, nonetheless enhances an established community and coexists with existing development without causing undue adverse impact on surrounding properties.

Designated Design Event: The 2013 high water event and the requirement to be flood-proofed to withstand a high-water event with a minimum flowrate of 1,820 m³/s.

Engagement: The purposeful dialogue between the Town and citizens and stakeholders to gather information to influence decision making.

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

Equitable or Equity: Conditions are adjusted to meet people's diverse needs, strengths, and social realities, requires that different barriers exist for diverse individuals or groups. The result of equity is all people can benefit equally from Town services.

Environmental Reserve: Section 664 of the Alberta Municipal Government Act allows for the Town of High River (as a subdivision authority) to take "...part of that parcel of land as environmental reserve if it consists of:

- A swamp, gully, ravine, coulee, or natural drainage course
- Land that is subject to flooding or is, in the opinion of the subdivision authority, unstable or
- A strip of land, not less than 6 metres in width, abutting the bed and shore of any lake, river, stream or other body of water

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

Environmentally Sensitive Areas: Environmentally Sensitive Areas are key natural components of the regional landscape, providing essential ecosystem functions and services. These functions and services include flood mitigation, drinking water supply, maintenance of regional biodiversity, preservation and connectivity of unique habitats and landscapes, and provision of culturally and economically valued resources and opportunities. They include areas that:

- Maintain the provision of water quality and quantity and provide protection against drought and flood events. Includes water courses, water bodies, and riparian areas;
- Provide habitat for identified local species of interest, designated species of conservation concern (SCC), or identified focal species groups;
- Provide rare, unique, or biologically

diverse ecosystems or unique landforms;

- Contribute to other important Ecosystems Services or functions at the local scale; and
- Include Provincial Environmentally Significant Areas.

Freeboard: The minimum height that is in addition to the elevation required by the Designated Design Event to provide adequate flood protection in the event a flood of similar magnitude to the one experienced in 2013.

FireSmart: Is a framework designed to mitigate the risk of and educate residents and stakeholders regarding the potential for large uncontrollable wildfires near communities and critical infrastructure.

Flood Hazard: It is the area of land that will be flooded during the Design Flood event under encroached conditions. Once is defined, it is typically divided into two zones, the Floodway and Flood Fringe.

Floodway: The portion of the Flood Hazard area where flows are deepest, fastest, and most destructive. The Floodway typically include the main channel of a stream and a portion of the adjacent overbank area.

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

Green Infrastructure: A systems or engineered structures designed to be environmentally friendly, and mimics natural processes and features to provide services. Examples include green roofs, constructed wetlands, and maintaining and enhancing existing natural areas that

are integrated into neighbourhoods and communities.

Greenfield: Type of land where there has been no previous urban development.

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

Home-based Business: Business that operates out of a residential location. This includes businesses where you may be working in different areas throughout the Town, but administrative activities are done in the home. Some examples of home-based businesses include online retail, contracting, cleaning services, photography, landscaping, and catering, etc.

Housing Continuum: Is the range of housing types available in a community—from emergency shelters on one end, all the way to homeownership on the other. In between lies an assortment of housing options and types, each critically important for different people at different times.

Impermeable Surface: Is a solid surface that does not allow water to penetrate the soil, forcing it to run off.

Inclusion: Environments in which any individual or group is respected, valued, and supported to fully participate in society.

Inclusive Community: A community that values all of its members and helps them to meet their basic needs so that they can feel safe, live with dignity, engage actively, and contribute to their community.

Inclusive and Barrier Free Amenities: Play space, playground, or open space set aside for play must be accessible and usable without restriction for all children, adolescents, adults, and older people. Everyone, with or without disabilities or special needs should be able to play together on the same footing.

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

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

Joint Planning Area: An area that is the subject of joint study and planning by the governing body of a county and one or more urban municipalities. The intention of joint planning areas is to identify areas where there should be a higher level of cooperation between municipalities to capitalize on future opportunities.

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

Local Area Plan: Referred to as an area redevelopment plan under Section 634 in the Municipal Government Act, outlines a future vision for a community and provides policies that residents, landowners, builders, developers, planners, and Councillors use to evaluate

development proposals.

A local area plan supports communities experiencing redevelopment by outlining:

- An overarching vision and core ideas for the growth and change in the area.
- A future land use concept for where and how new development can be integrated into the neighbourhood over time (when development is proposed) in a way that respects and enhances the existing context of the area.
- Development policies to guide local development.
- Information about future local investments to support the area as redevelopment occurs.

Low Impact Development (LID): A land development approach of using various planning and design techniques that minimize the effect that development will have on the quality of the surrounding environment. These include conserving and protecting natural resource systems and reducing infrastructure costs, allowing land to still be developed in a cost-effective manner that helps mitigate potential environmental impacts.

Multi-modal Transportation: Mobility systems that account for various means of transportation such as public transit, walking, biking, and personal vehicles. These include planning for the connections and synergies among various modes that play a role in the overall transportation system.

Municipal Government Act (MGA): An act of the legislature of the Province of Alberta, which authorizes, and creates the governance of urban and rural municipalities throughout Alberta.

Municipal Reserve: land provided as part of a subdivision by the developer without compensation for park and school purposes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Government Act.

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

New Neighbourhood: An area identified for new or potential neighbourhood development that includes the development of residential, retail, institutional, recreational and/or ancillary uses.

Non-Market Housing: Housing designed for independent living by single persons or families who cannot afford to pay market rents or who have needs that are not being met by the market and where the housing units are owned and operated by government agency, or a not-for-profit society and rents may be controlled by a housing agreement. Social housing is a subset of non-market housing.

Permeable Surface: A surface that allows water to percolate into the soil to filter out pollutants and recharge the water table.

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

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

Statutory Plan: A legal document/bylaw that must go through three readings and a public hearing before it is adopted by a municipal Council. Once adopted, there is a legal obligation on the part of both the municipality and the residents to adhere to the plan. A Municipal Development Plan, Area Structure Plan, Area Redevelopment Plan, or Inter- Municipal Development Plans are some of the types of statutory plans.

Stormwater: Runoff from rainstorm, hailstorm, or melting snow that is shed from landscapes.

Subdivisions: The process of dividing a property into 2 or more legal lots.

Traffic Calming: A system that utilizes design strategy and physical adjustments to reduce traffic speeds for the sake of safety and accessibility.

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

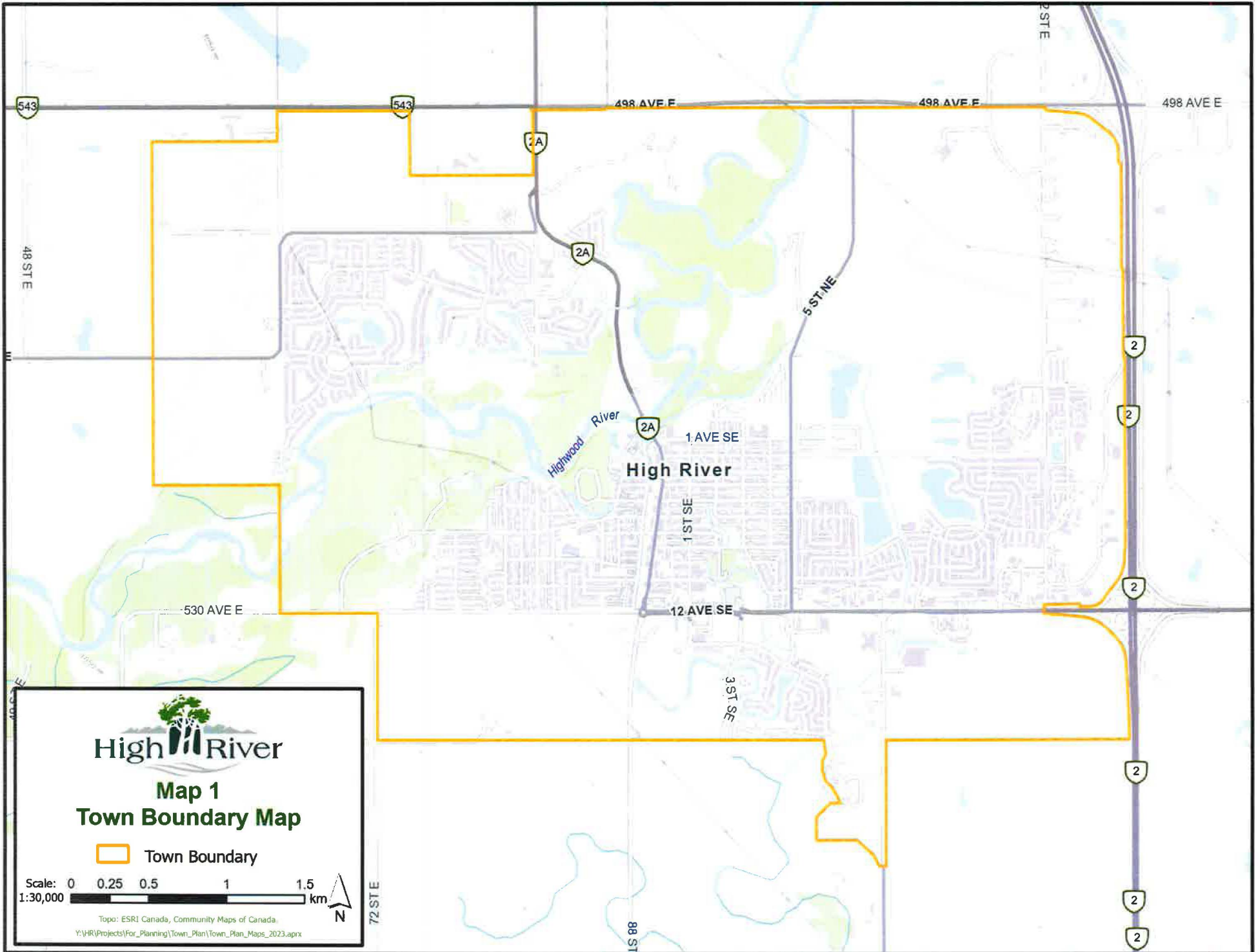
Design Place design that promotes equal opportunity for all individuals regardless of age, stature, or ability to use the space. These spaces are designed to accommodate a wide variety of abilities and minimize barriers to access or use.

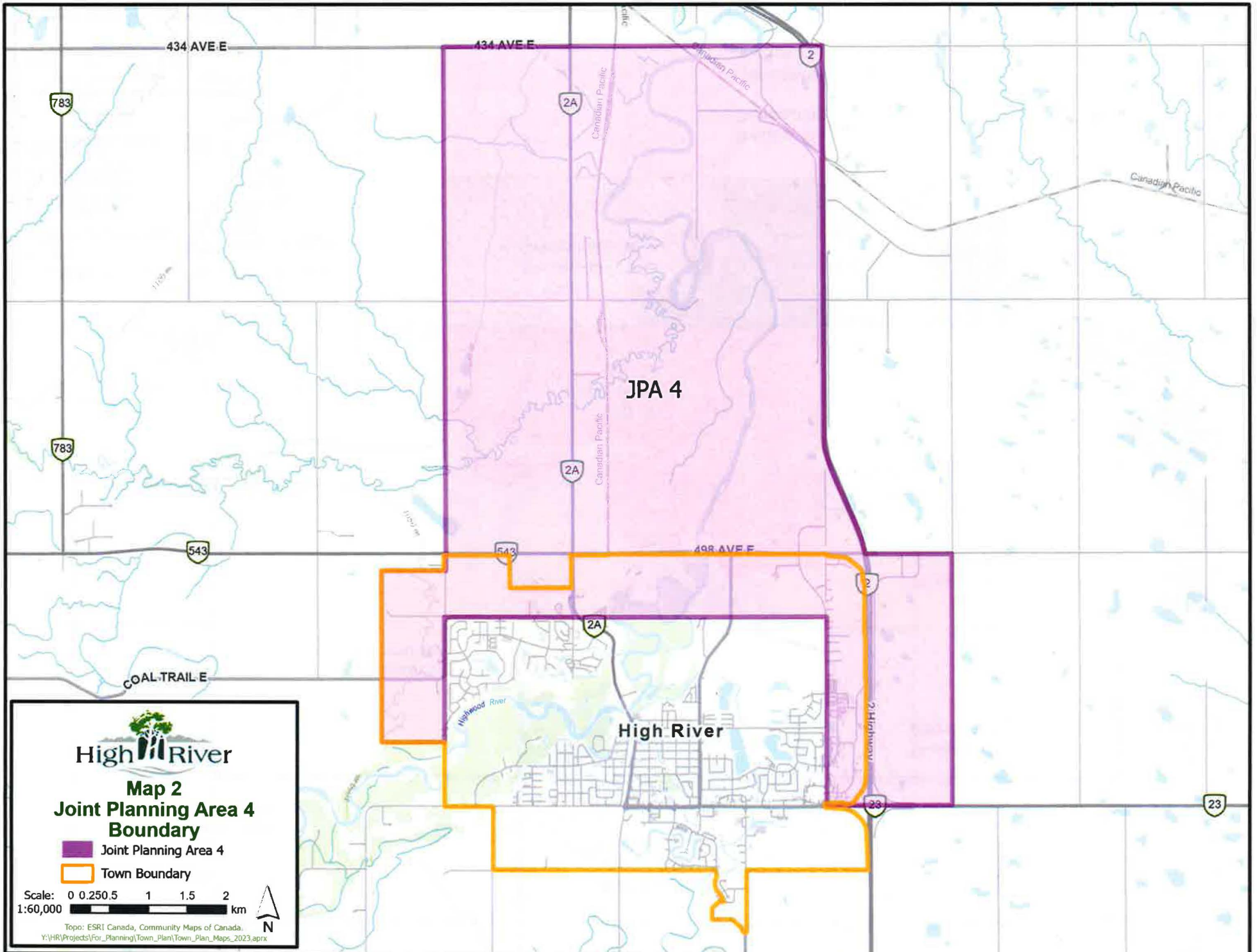
Universal Design: Is the design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood, and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability, or disability. An environment (or any building, product, or service in that environment) should be designed to meet the needs of all people who wish to use it.

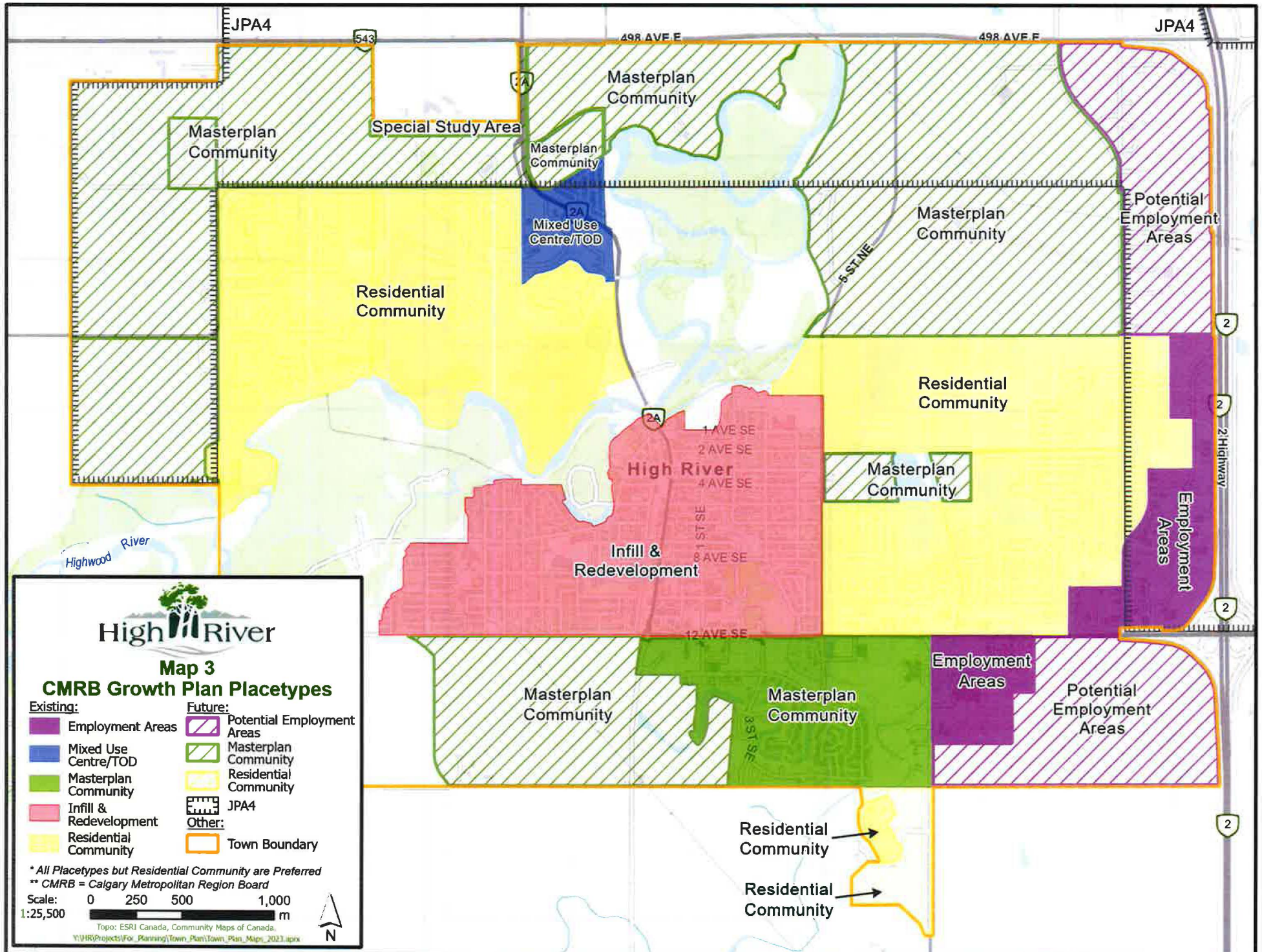
Urban Design: Application of architectural and planning principles to the design of buildings and spaces with the interest of the public and the community in mind. Concern is given to building form, style and materials, views and vistas, open space, and streetscapes to create a setting that is functional,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

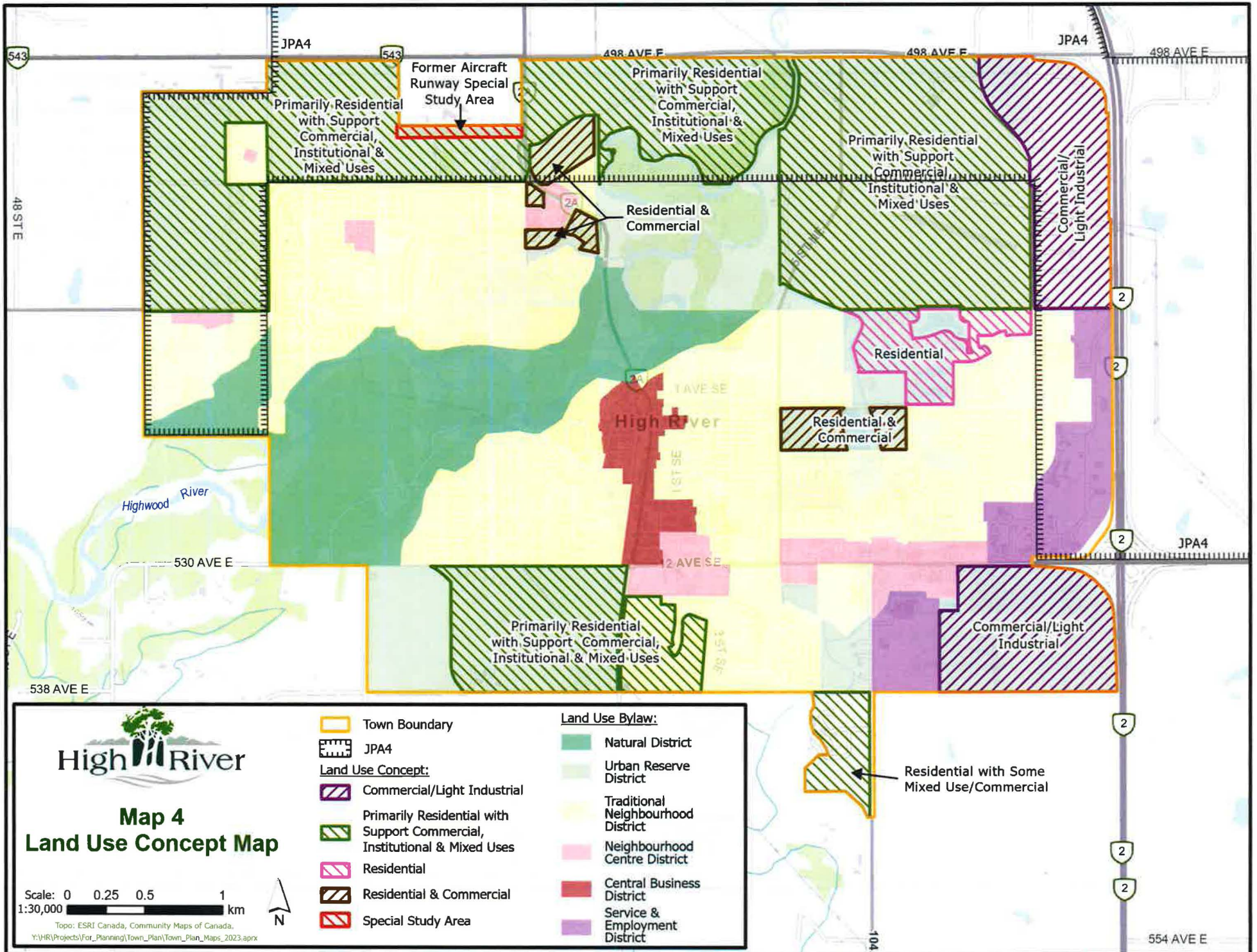
Woonerf: Design concept which creates streets as shared equally by pedestrians, bicyclists, and motor vehicles. However, pedestrians have priority over cars.

Appendix II: Maps









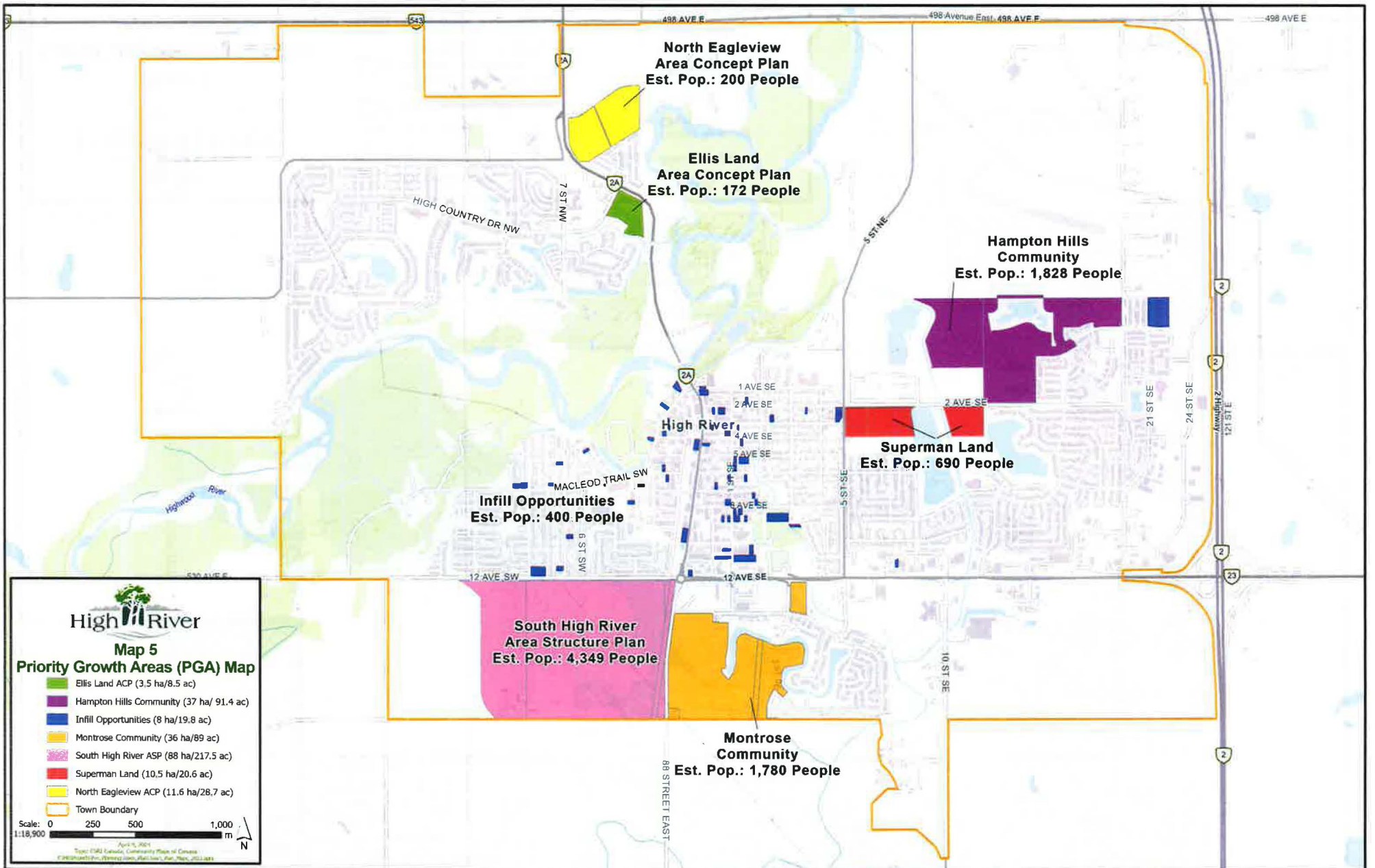
Map 4 Land Use Concept Map

Scale: 0 0.25 0.5 1
1:30,000 km



Topo: ESRI Canada, Community Maps of Canada.
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- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Town Boundary | Land Use Bylaw: |
| JPA4 | Natural District |
| Land Use Concept: | Urban Reserve District |
| Commercial/Light Industrial | Traditional Neighbourhood District |
| Primarily Residential with Support Commercial, Institutional & Mixed Uses | Neighbourhood Centre District |
| Residential | Central Business District |
| Residential & Commercial | Service & Employment District |
| Special Study Area | |



**North Eagleview
 Area Concept Plan
 Est. Pop.: 200 People**

**Ellis Land
 Area Concept Plan
 Est. Pop.: 172 People**

**Hampton Hills
 Community
 Est. Pop.: 1,828 People**

**Superman Land
 Est. Pop.: 690 People**

**Infill Opportunities
 Est. Pop.: 400 People**

**South High River
 Area Structure Plan
 Est. Pop.: 4,349 People**

**Montrose
 Community
 Est. Pop.: 1,780 People**

498 AVE E 498 Avenue East, 498 AVE E 498 AVE E

HIGH COUNTRY DR NW

7 ST NW

5 ST NE

2A

1 AVE SE

2 AVE SE

4 AVE SE

5 AVE SE

6 AVE SE

8 AVE SE

10 AVE SE

12 AVE SE

MACLEOD TRAIL SW

6 ST SW

12 AVE SW

2 AVE SE

21 ST SE

24 ST SE

2 Highway

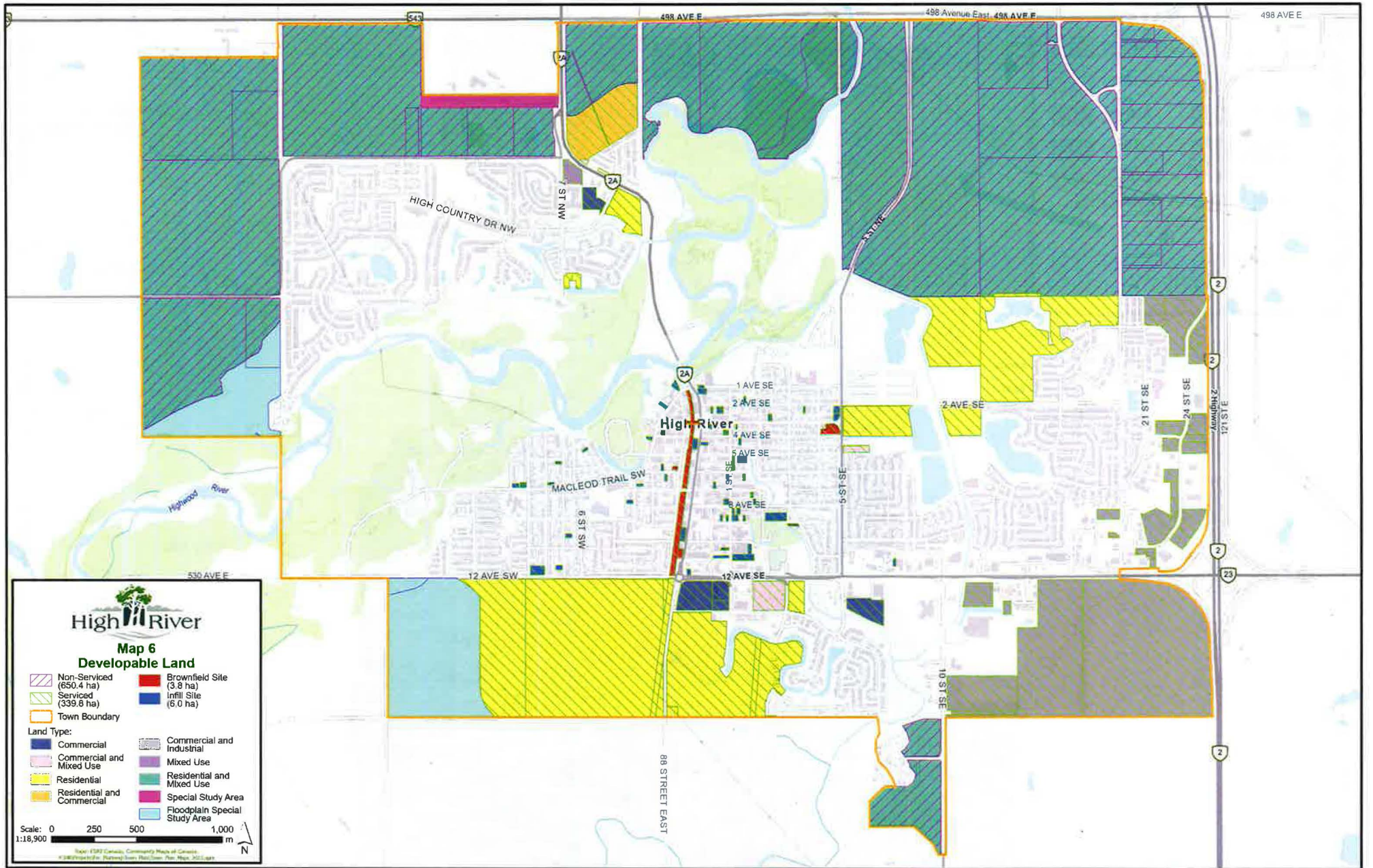
121 ST E

23

10 ST SE

88 STREET EAST

2

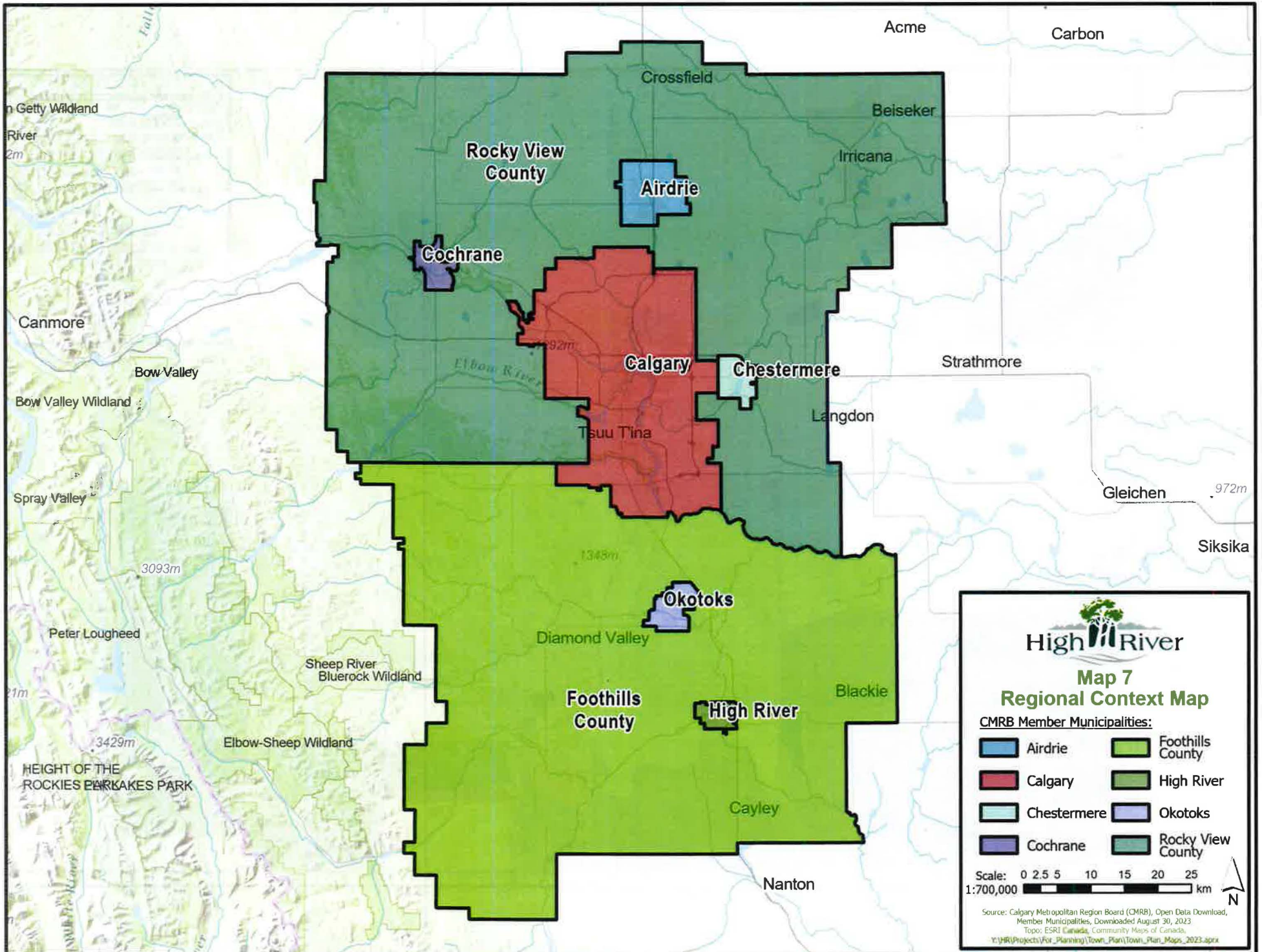


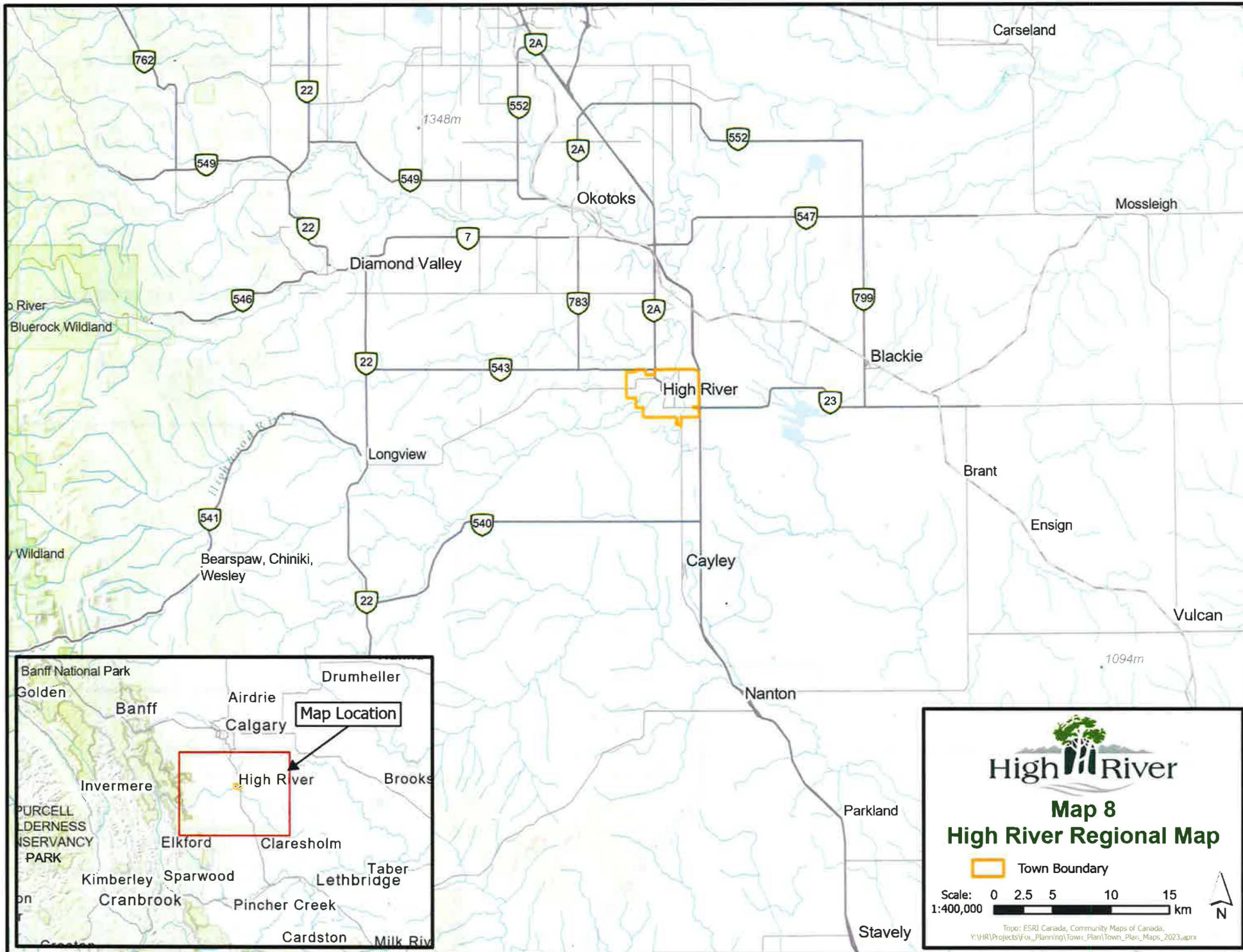
**Map 6
Developable Land**

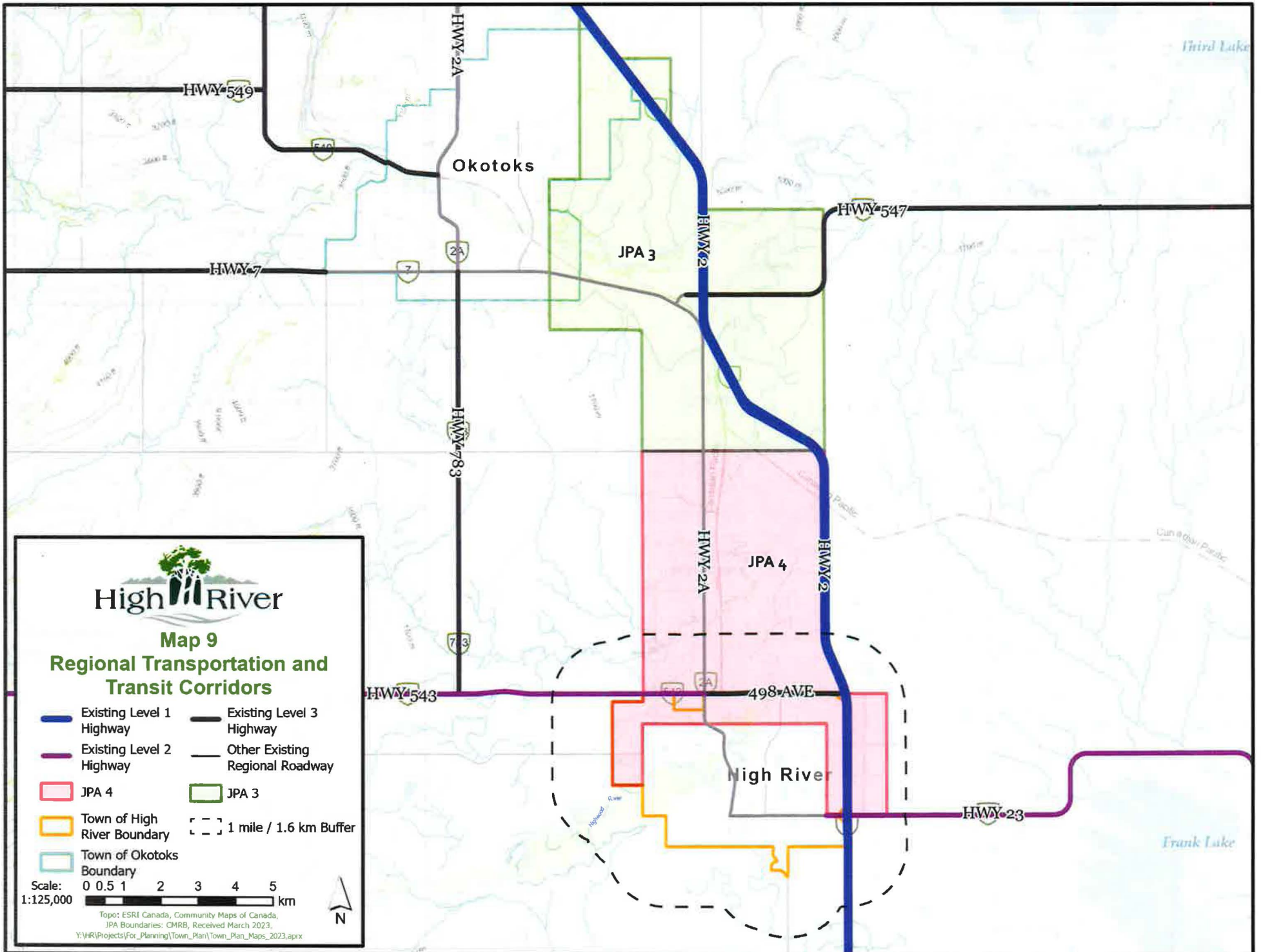
- Non-Serviced (650.4 ha)
- Serviced (339.8 ha)
- Town Boundary
- Commercial
- Commercial and Industrial
- Commercial and Mixed Use
- Mixed Use
- Residential
- Residential and Mixed Use
- Residential and Commercial
- Special Study Area
- Floodplain Special Study Area
- Brownfield Site (3.8 ha)
- Infill Site (6.0 ha)

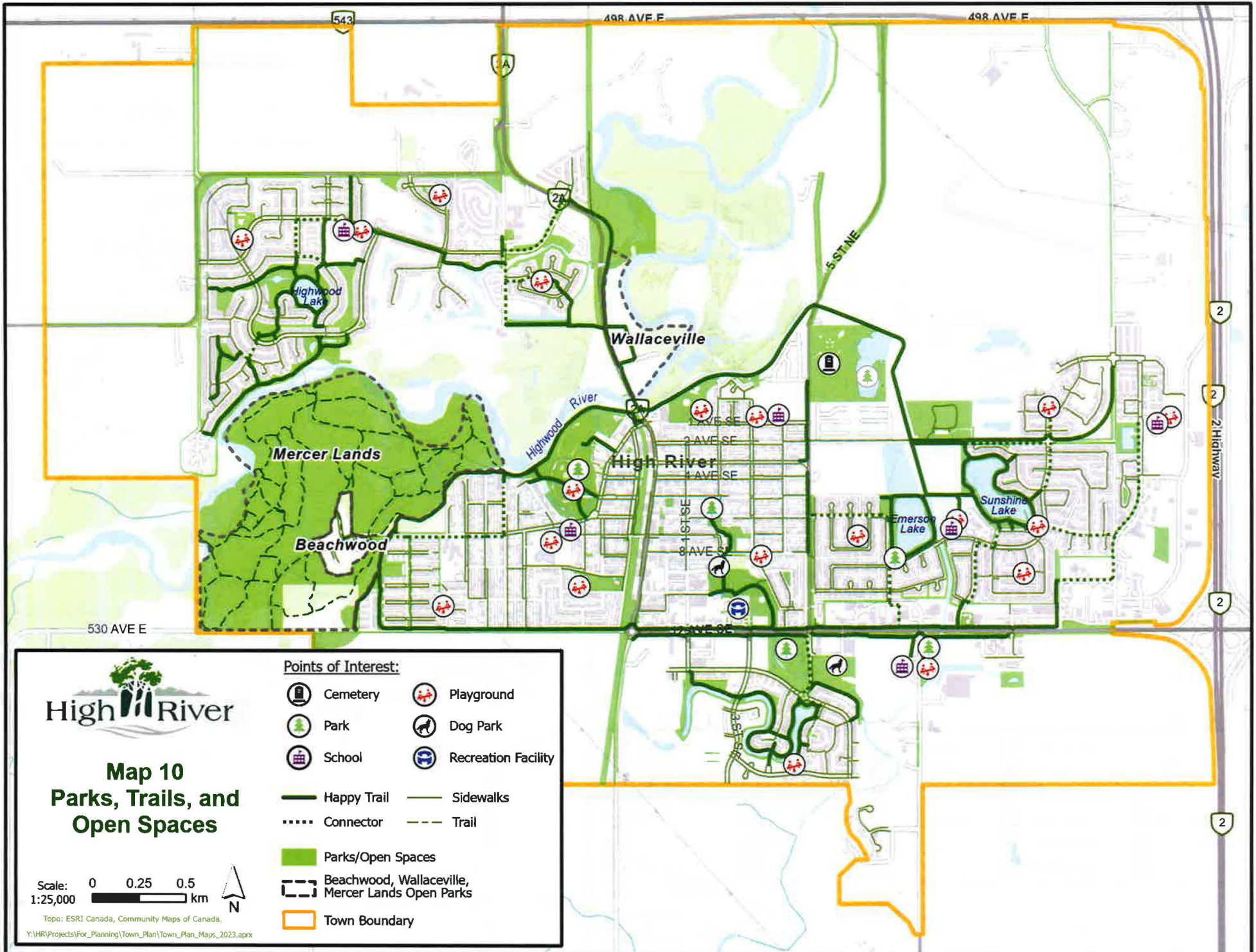
Scale: 0 250 500 1,000
1:18,900 m

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Map 10 Parks, Trails, and Open Spaces

Scale: 0 0.25 0.5
1:25,000 km



Topo: ESRI Canada, Community Maps of Canada.
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Points of Interest:

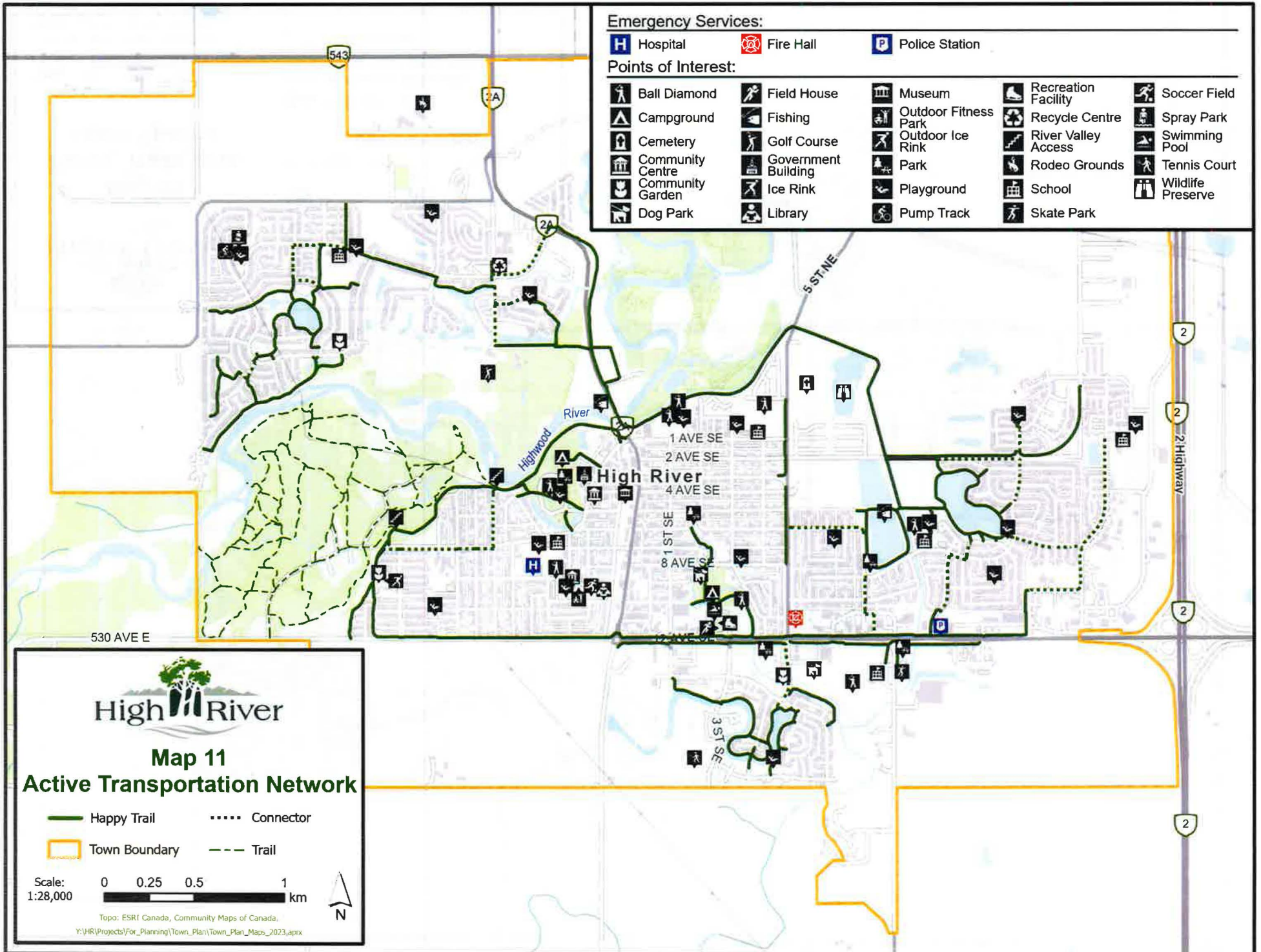
-  Cemetery
-  Park
-  School
-  Playground
-  Dog Park
-  Recreation Facility

-  Happy Trail
-  Sidewalks
-  Connector
-  Trail

 Parks/Open Spaces

 Beachwood, Wallaceville,
Mercer Lands Open Parks

 Town Boundary



Emergency Services:

-  Hospital
-  Fire Hall
-  Police Station

Points of Interest:

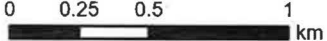
- | | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|---|
|  Ball Diamond |  Field House |  Museum |  Recreation Facility |  Soccer Field |
|  Campground |  Fishing |  Outdoor Fitness Park |  Recycle Centre |  Spray Park |
|  Cemetery |  Golf Course |  Outdoor Ice Rink |  River Valley Access |  Swimming Pool |
|  Community Centre |  Government Building |  Park |  Rodeo Grounds |  Tennis Court |
|  Community Garden |  Ice Rink |  Playground |  School |  Wildlife Preserve |
|  Dog Park |  Library |  Pump Track |  Skate Park | |



**Map 11
Active Transportation Network**

-  Happy Trail
-  Connector
-  Town Boundary
-  Trail

Scale: 1:28,000



Topo: ESRI Canada, Community Maps of Canada.

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Culture:

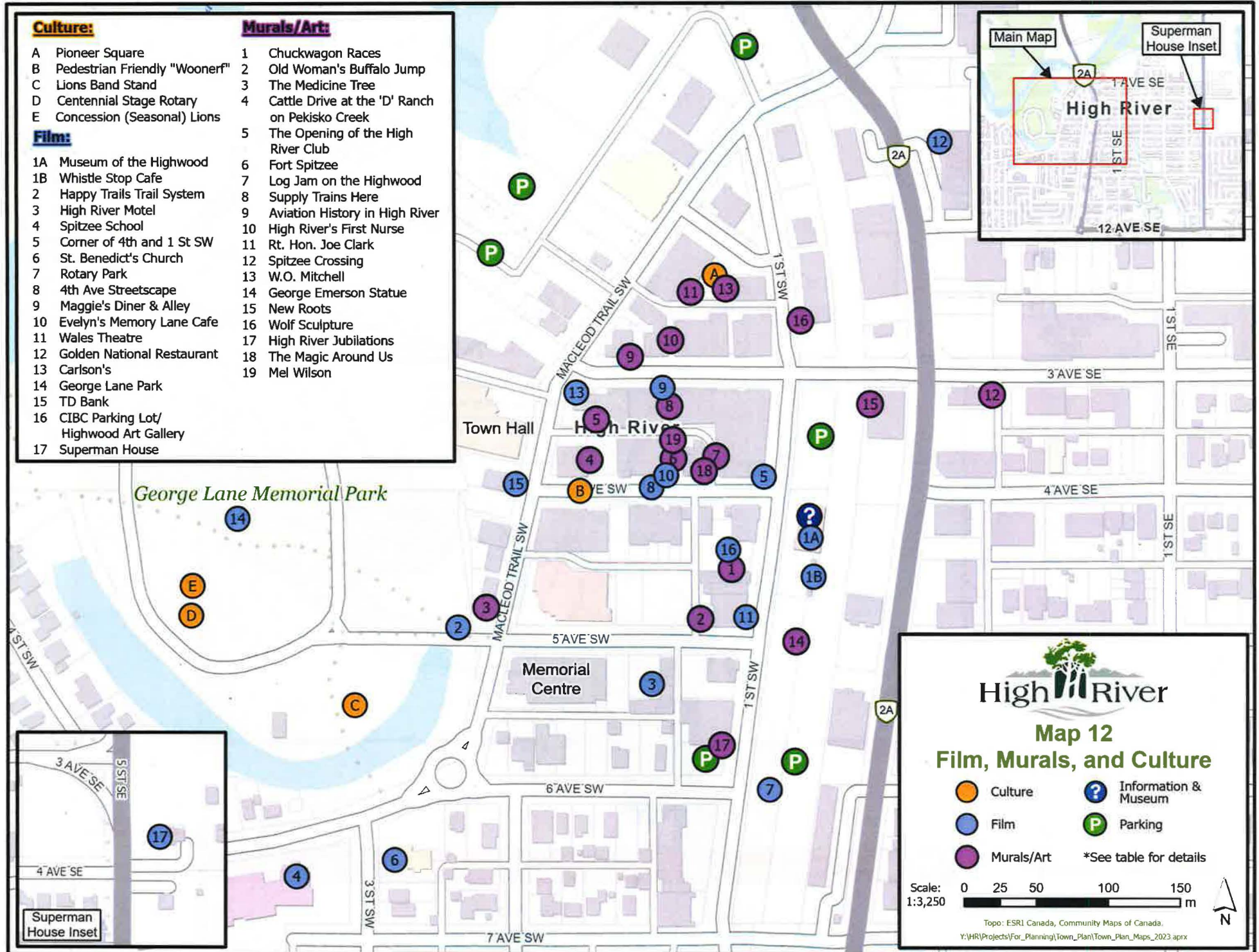
- A Pioneer Square
- B Pedestrian Friendly "Woonerf"
- C Lions Band Stand
- D Centennial Stage Rotary
- E Concession (Seasonal) Lions

Film:


- 1A Museum of the Highwood
- 1B Whistle Stop Cafe
- 2 Happy Trails Trail System
- 3 High River Motel
- 4 Spitzee School
- 5 Corner of 4th and 1 St SW
- 6 St. Benedict's Church
- 7 Rotary Park
- 8 4th Ave Streetscape
- 9 Maggie's Diner & Alley
- 10 Evelyn's Memory Lane Cafe
- 11 Wales Theatre
- 12 Golden National Restaurant
- 13 Carlson's
- 14 George Lane Park
- 15 TD Bank
- 16 CIBC Parking Lot/ Highwood Art Gallery
- 17 Superman House

Murals/Art:

- 1 Chuckwagon Races
- 2 Old Woman's Buffalo Jump
- 3 The Medicine Tree
- 4 Cattle Drive at the 'D' Ranch on Pekisko Creek
- 5 The Opening of the High River Club
- 6 Fort Spitzee
- 7 Log Jam on the Highwood
- 8 Supply Trains Here
- 9 Aviation History in High River
- 10 High River's First Nurse
- 11 Rt. Hon. Joe Clark
- 12 Spitzee Crossing
- 13 W.O. Mitchell
- 14 George Emerson Statue
- 15 New Roots
- 16 Wolf Sculpture
- 17 High River Jubilations
- 18 The Magic Around Us
- 19 Mel Wilson

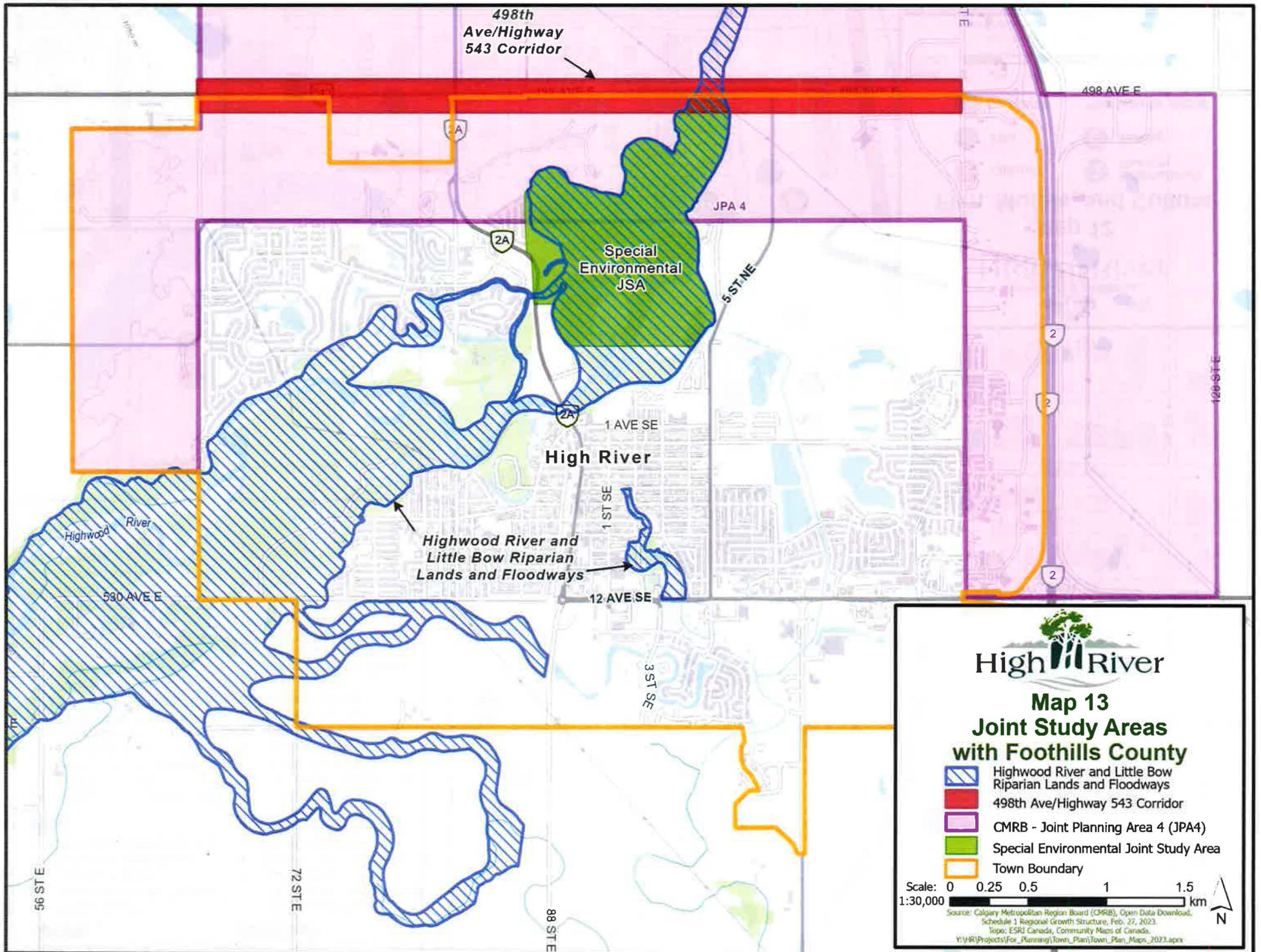


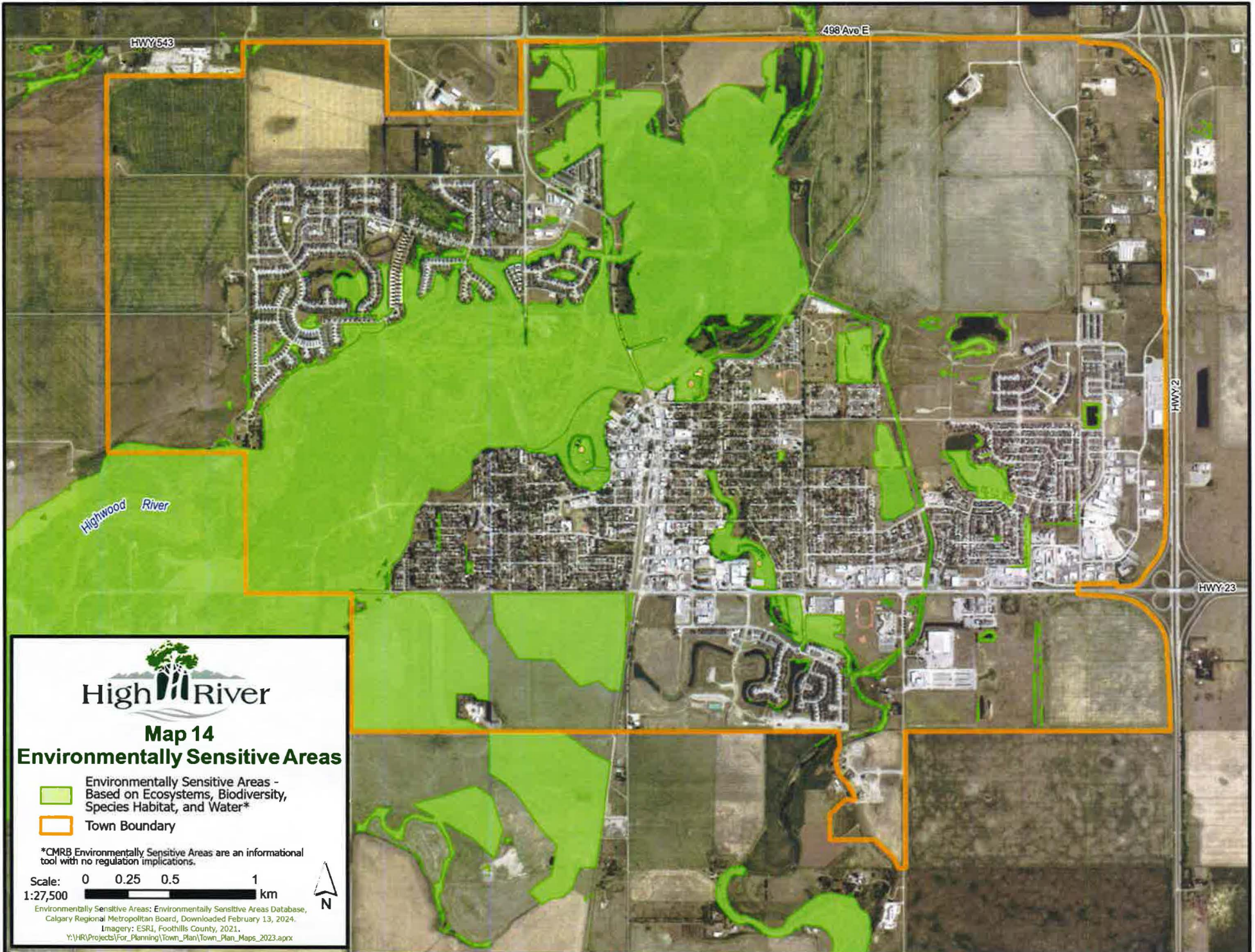

High River
Map 12
Film, Murals, and Culture

 Culture	 Information & Museum
 Film	 Parking
 Murals/Art	*See table for details

Scale: 1:3,250 0 25 50 100 150 m

Topo: ESRI Canada, Community Maps of Canada.
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**Map 14
Environmentally Sensitive Areas**

- Environmentally Sensitive Areas - Based on Ecosystems, Biodiversity, Species Habitat, and Water*
- Town Boundary

*CMRB Environmentally Sensitive Areas are an informational tool with no regulation implications.

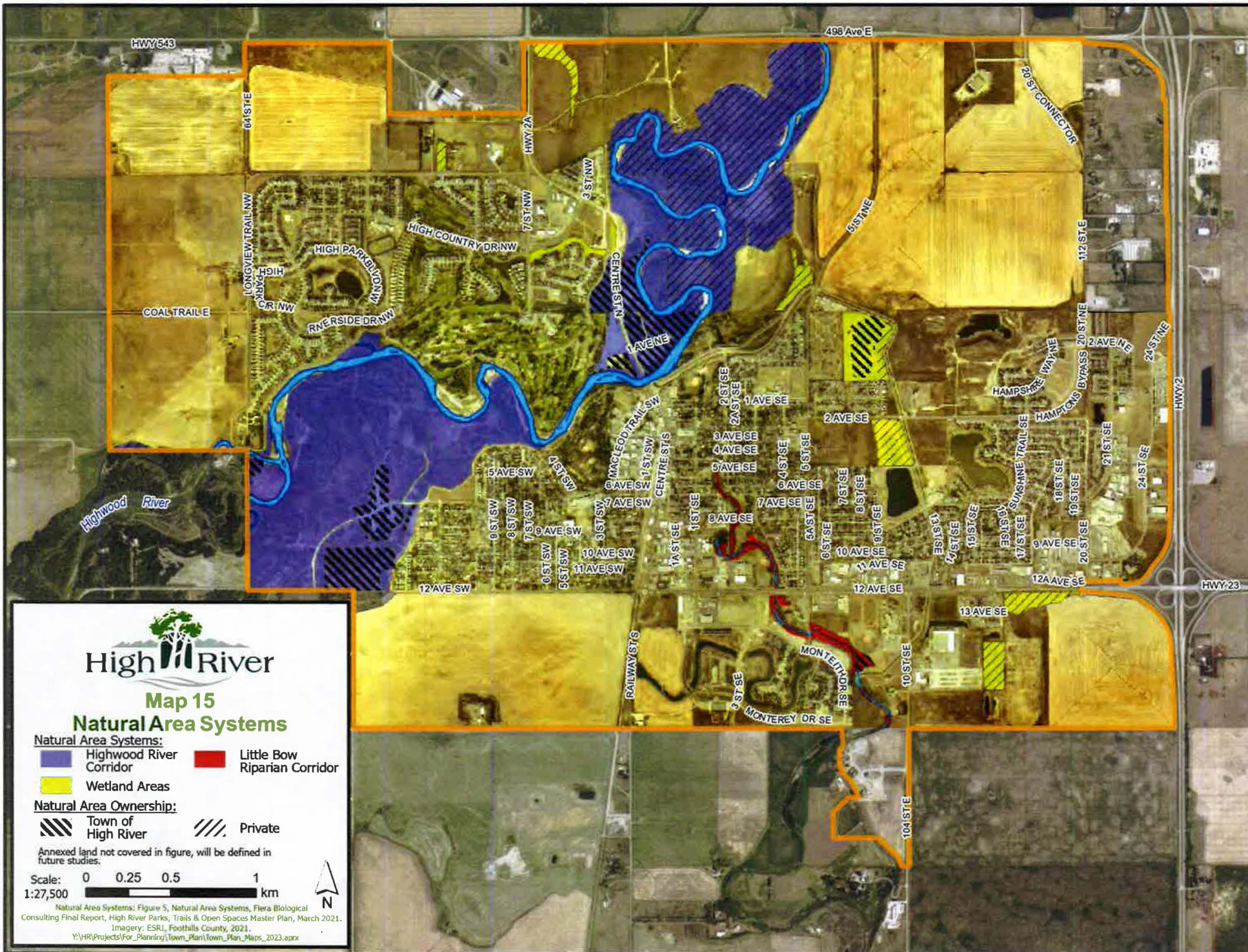
Scale: 0 0.25 0.5 1
1:27,500 km



Environmentally Sensitive Areas: Environmentally Sensitive Areas Database, Calgary Regional Metropolitan Board, Downloaded February 13, 2024.

Imagery: ESRI, Foothills County, 2021.

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Map 16

Wildlife Areas & Wildlife Corridors

- Key Wildlife and Biodiversity Zone
- Colonial Nesting Birds - Great Blue Heron Nest in Area
- Osprey Nest
- Town Boundary

Entire Mapped Area: Sensitive Raptor Ranges - Prairie Falcon, Golden Eagle, Ferruginous Hawk, Bald Eagle

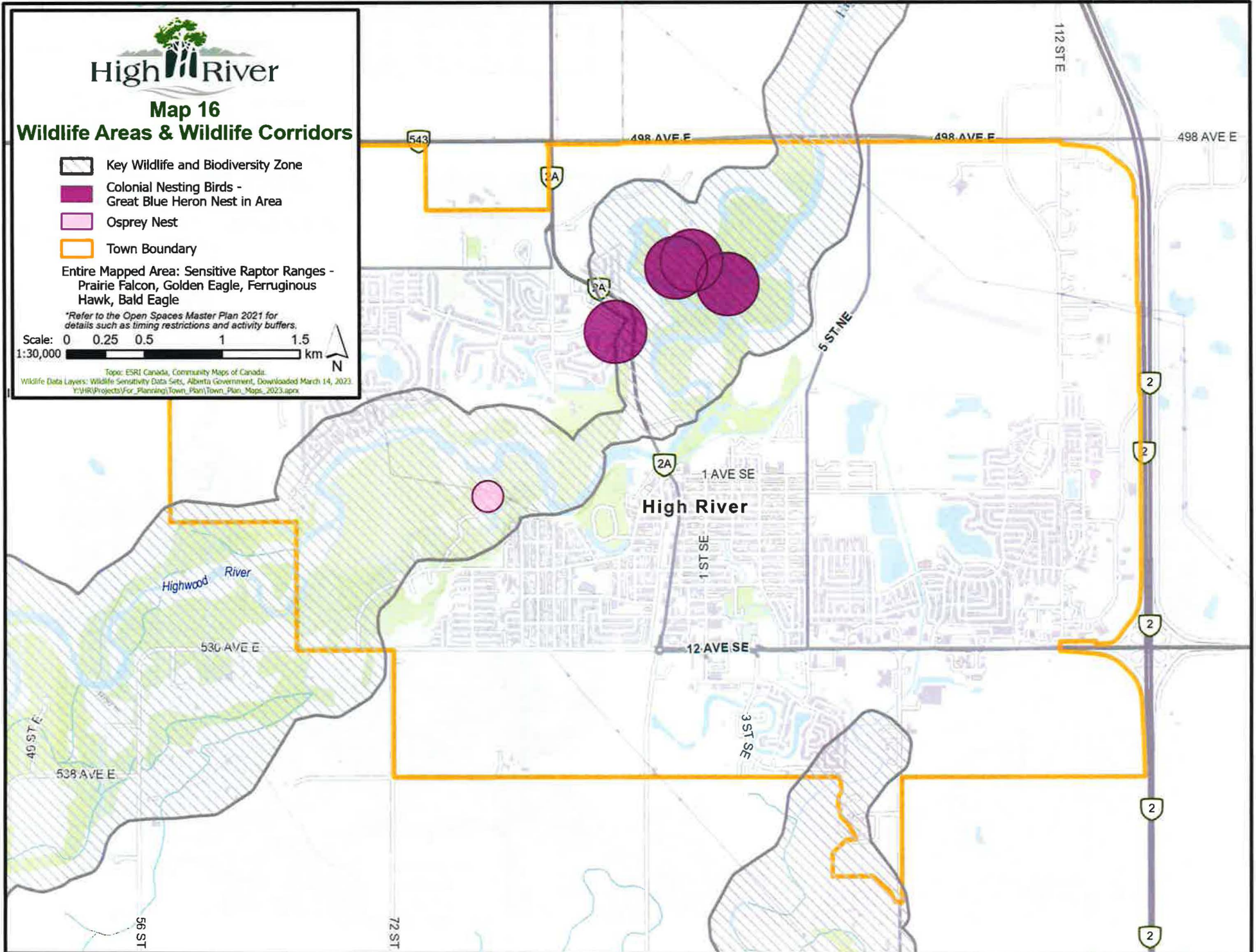
**Refer to the Open Spaces Master Plan 2021 for details such as timing restrictions and activity buffers.*

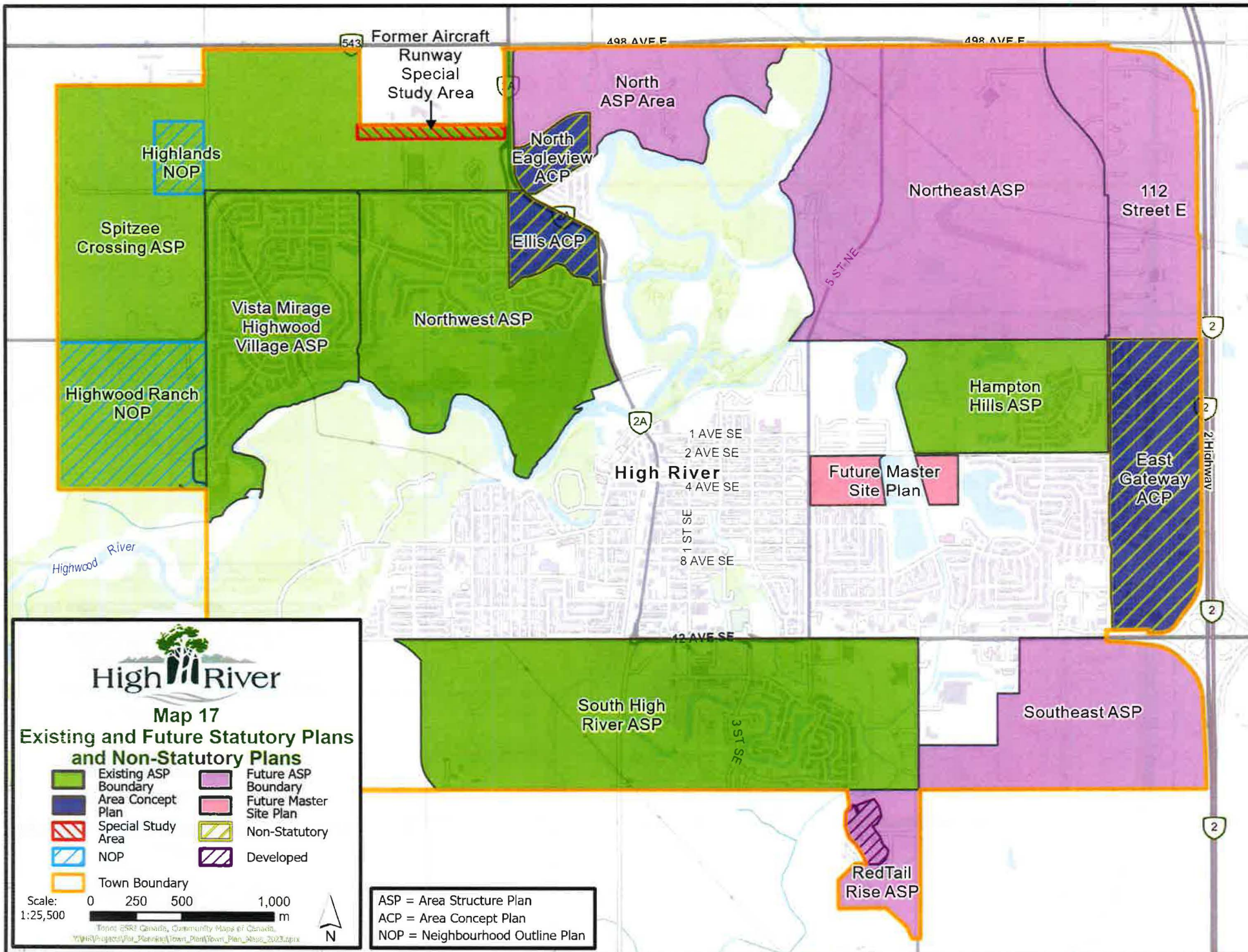
Scale: 0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5
1:30,000 km



Topo: ESRI Canada, Community Maps of Canada.

Wildlife Data Layers: Wildlife Sensitivity Data Sets, Alberta Government, Downloaded March 14, 2023
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Appendix III: Parks, Trails and Open Space Action Plan



Parks, Trails and Open Space Master Plan

ACTION PLAN



1. Introduction

Serving residents and visitors, High River's outdoor green spaces offer opportunities for socializing, recreation, athletics, play, outdoor learning, and especially connecting with nature. As High River continues to grow, it is important that the development and management of park amenities and services align with community values to protect the ecology and history of the area.

The Master Plan is a synthesis of ecology-based research, community stakeholder engagement, and strategic policy development in the form of recommendations. These recommendations are indications of the essential direction for the design, development, and management of green spaces with the understanding that they will be shaped and transformed by the Town Administration and residents over time. The general intent is to regenerate and revitalize these public assets by protecting the community's natural and built conditions while enhancing present and future use.

These recommendations evolved from the community engagement process, and generally summarize what should be done to complete a task, project, initiative, or strategy. From these recommendations, this action plan has been developed to include; a specific group of projects, proposed to be undertaken within different time frames, the primary sponsor, along with potential high-level costing, order of magnitude estimates for the proposed projects. All potential costs require revision based on actual project design and construction.

The proposed Action Plan sets out six (6) major projects and many improvement projects for the next ten (10) years. This Action Plan aims at setting priorities for the Town to provide inclusive programs and facilities, empower community volunteers and service providers, and to connect residents to nature.

2. Areas of focus

The role of the Master Plan in providing for High River's quality of life and livability, along with the changes High River will face over the next 30 years, influence the areas we need to focus on when planning, developing and managing the trails, parks and open spaces network. To create the network of trails, parks and open spaces required to achieve the outcomes identified in the Master Plan, there are five areas we will focus on over the next 10-15 years.

These five (5) areas of focus inform the priorities and actions outlined in this strategic action plan. Aligning our work with these areas of focus will ensure our parks and open spaces enhance High River's liveability while responding to the way the Town may change over the next 30 years. The areas of our focus include:

- Protecting and conserving our parks and open spaces and improving people's ability to understand and appreciate their value and significance;
- Ensuring our parks and open spaces meet the needs of our changing population so that people can experience all they have to offer;
- Enhancing our green network across the Town by physically and visually connecting our parks, open spaces and trails;

- Encouraging residents to take a leadership role in renovating existing open space opportunities, building new facilities, and monitoring their success, in partnership with the Town; and
- Promoting the wide-ranging benefits of parks and open spaces in enhancing quality of life for our communities.

3. Action Plan Themes

Through careful and thorough review of the proposed projects, a few themes have emerged which include:

3.1 Building Relationships

The Town of High River takes pride in building relationships with its citizens and other stakeholders by using a range of tools to engage varied audiences. The Town encourages participation by those who will be affected by a decision. Based on Community Engagement POL-102.00, the Town is committed to creating meaningful opportunities for community engagement. Both Council and Administration recognize that decisions are improved when citizens and other stakeholders are included in the decision-making process. Our community engagement process is designed in a fashion that provides all community members a reasonable opportunity to contribute and to develop a balanced perspective.

In addition, collaboration is essential to achieving the outcomes outlined in the Master Plan through this action plan, as building relationship with community members is an important element of High River's recreation service delivery system. It embodies the philosophy that our community is stronger when it is self-determining and has the tools to develop and deliver recreation and parks opportunities independently, yet in partnership with the Town office. In this regard, to achieve this theme, we will establish a stewardship program to get residents involved in caring for natural areas. This may include undertaking activities that would encourage community members to be involved in making temporary or permanent changes to a portion of the built environment within identified open space opportunities in our community, which would help improve local neighbourhoods and community gathering places.

This action item will help:

- Establish a point of contact within Town Administration to provide guidance for volunteers and neighbourhood groups;
- Ensure creating the recommended communication plan;
- Establish and promote community stewardship program for encouraging local stewardship of neighbourhood and community parks;
- Ensure developing best-practice guidelines and processes for working with community groups, 'friends of parks' and other special interest groups to improve trails, parks and open spaces within our community;
- Ensure investigating partnership opportunities with potential providers of open spaces such as schools, and private sports facilities;
- Build relationship and interest of participation in community members. This would allow community members to undertake responsibilities to manage and maintain our parks and open spaces in the public interest, in accordance with Council policy direction and legislative requirements;
- Formalize partnership and community connection; and
- Evaluate impacts of community stewardship program and outcomes of the implementation of the Master Plan.

3.2 Education and Sharing Knowledge

Public education and support from citizens are key factors to ensuring the successful implementation of any management plan. Public education fosters awareness of, and appreciation for, the recreational, scientific, ecological, and inherent benefits of natural areas. Creating educational opportunities and programs, as well as supporting local conservation and stewardship groups, should be a central component of the Town's approach to conserving and managing natural areas. Public engagement and education can take several forms, including (but not limited to) the following:

- Environmental community champions that could advise, educate, and disseminate information to the general public regarding conservation and management of natural areas;
- Interpretive materials along trail systems, and in park spaces that could provide information about the significant habitats and wildlife that are supported, as well as the ecosystem services that are provided by natural areas to residents within the Town;
- Development of information campaigns that communicate the importance of managing natural areas for sustainable use, that also builds local awareness about the importance of the Town's natural areas in relation to the regional ecological network, and the contribution of natural areas to increasing resilience to climate and flood resilience; and
- Engaging in strategic partnerships with community members to promote voluntary land conservation and management activities can be an effective mechanism for management of natural areas.

Given the large percentage of Natural Environment Parks (NEPs) and other natural areas located on private lands, engagement with private landowners will be critical to preserving the Town's ecological network. Without the support of landowners, significant natural areas may be lost or degraded; thus, working collaboratively with private landowners will be essential to the long-term sustainability of the High River ecological open space network.

Furthermore, as many concerns about the current practice of using any open space as an off-leash area, were raised during the consultation process, education may become more effective than physical barriers or enforcement to getting residents to respect boundaries. Education can serve to change the behaviour of a large group of people who then are likely to self enforce as they understand the reasons behind the rules.

Education is also critical to changing habits and cultivating respect for natural areas and wildlife. Signage and education about the heron rookeries and osprey nest, for example, will promote sensitive appreciation and limit human disturbance. In addition, creating policies that promote the maintenance of wildlife habitats where possible and go with lower-maintenance naturalized areas to save costs and encourage wildlife.

3.3 Renewing Nature

With global warming and the impacts of climate change, we will need to seriously rethink how our community should evolve to become more resilient and resource efficient. In this regard, the Master Plan incorporates Ispitsee Floodway Management Plan, which includes two main goals: to safely convey high water events through the community and secondly, provide passive recreational opportunities and environmental conservation. This is also in alignment with the Town Plan goal: "2.13 *The Natural environment Goal: Protect and enhance the integrity of the natural environment*", while preserving the associated recreation opportunities and respecting the natural constraints. The Highwood River corridor is the natural **Park at the Heart** of High River. Preserving the ecological integrity of the riparian areas brings the benefit of controlling of high-water events as well as providing passive and active recreational opportunities.

When we manage the Highwood River appropriately, we can keep our community safe and enjoy all of the benefits healthy rivers provide. There is a strong and growing case that practical nature connection, as derived from integrated urban greening, will be vital for the long-term wellbeing of the urbanised community.

Moreover, some of the actions that we would need to consider may include steps for enhancing the natural environment and consider natural areas and features part of our municipal asset management program. This step could help raise the natural areas profile and attract special attention including potential volunteering groups and municipal maintenance program.

3.4 Complete and Connecting Communities

The Master Plan encourages that planning for new communities must be designed as complete communities and ensure orderly, vision aligned with development that should provide opportunities for a mix of uses, a range of housing types, parks, places and open spaces, employment options and multi-modal transportation options within walking distance of diverse residential neighbourhoods. New communities should be developed with a supporting street network that connects residents, jobs and commercial services through direct and efficient active transportation routes. They should integrate protected natural areas with an open space and sustainable infrastructure systems.

For existing communities, it is critical to include education about optimizing roadways, and enhancing cycling and walking connections. In addition, review and take advantage of opportunities within existing neighbourhoods for providing recreation for both the younger age groups to engage in outdoor play while still providing multigenerational components at the parks and open space systems, is key to the success of our community.

Under this theme, the proposed Master Plan supports the following:

- Vibrant public spaces;
- Transportation and land use integration, multi-modal integration;
- Enhance connections to the river;
- Preserve the natural environment;
- Improved quality of life;
- Enhance main street features; and
- Design for all ages and abilities.

Through community engagement and these strong relationships, members of our community will be equipped with tools that would encourage them to identify the needs of and develop projects that uniquely serve and improve their neighbourhoods.

3.5 Reclaiming Our Streets

A good public space is one that reflects diversity and encourages people to live together effortlessly, creating the necessary conditions for permanence, which invites people to be on the street. It is the vitality of spaces that attracts people. What guarantees this vitality is the possibility of enjoying urban spaces in various ways.

One of the important and critical components for encouraging people to enjoy open spaces within our community is improving the quality of life within our community by reclaiming our streets. Reclaiming our streets embraces our community vision with safe and quiet neighborhoods, with streets free from the traffic problems of today. This vision calls for "putting people first" in the way we design, build, and use our streets. It calls for making options such as walking, biking, and more affordable and accessible transportation options for all.

Reclaiming our streets is especially about safety on our streets, whether from environmental hazards such as pollution and noise, or from life ending hazards such as speeders and failure to buckle up. On the surface, reclaiming our streets requires taking serious steps in improving the quality and quantity of streets' furniture.

Reclaiming our streets calls for making new and better laws that lead to "humanizing" outdated and unsafe roads, that direct turning boulevards into parks spaces, illustrate commitment to bike lanes design, that promote a new regard for safety and responsibility among all who use those roads and construction of new roads, and getting rid of four-lane road design concepts.

On a deeper level, however, reclaiming our streets invites every resident of our community to make a personal commitment to depend less on the automobile, and to make choices other than the automobile when commuting, running errands, or visiting friends. In addition, when driving, using main traffic routes instead of cutting through a residential neighborhood. It is a community commitment, all together, to care about the quality of life in High River, and if community members believe in it everyone will do something to help reclaim our streets.

3.6 Respect Nature

The Respect nature and its diverse species theme is dedicated to the pursuit of learning to live in balance and harmony with nature. Respecting and protecting nature and living species should be a key community goal. Within a municipal setting, this goal could be achieved through education and an appropriate nature management framework.

In the absence of appropriate planning and management policy framework, together with comprehensive and effective implementation tools, protecting and maintaining our natural areas become a matter of luck. Without these tools, over time, human impacts on many of our natural areas and habitats, along with their diverse species could experience massive amounts of damage. This damage may include habitat destruction by changing the area in which a plant, animal, or other organism lives to the point where the species can no longer survive.

Therefore, as our community is home to a rich natural ecosystem, we should have the appropriate tools in place that are required, not only for protecting natural areas, but also identifying and adopting measures that will help improve our invaluable natural areas and environment.

As the proposed Master Plan identifies and considers natural areas within our community are critical habitat for various species, protecting the integrity of the natural areas and each identified species becomes an obligation upon our community. In this regard, while members of our community are encouraged to get out and enjoy our natural areas, they are also reminded to consider the following:

- To stay on designated trails, as short cuts damage vegetation, habitat and increase erosion.
- To Keep nature clean, by ensuring to take out what they bring in and pick up after their pets.
- To respect wildlife, by observing and watching wildlife from a distance and should not feed them.
- To respect others' experience and be prepared to share the trails.
- To consider and prioritize our natural environment equally to our built environment.
- To value nature and to view it as a draw to the town.
- To ensure that development is planned to protect and encourage continued natural growth in balance with human impact.

Together, as one strong community, we can provide a space for all to enjoy now and for generations to come.

3.7 Invite the World!

In addition to the economic benefits, tourism provides an opportunity to share the Town's distinctive natural assets with visitors and to strengthen the economic and social value of these assets. Developing and promoting these assets not only increases the competitiveness of High River as a visitor destination, but it also contributes to the quality of life and well-being of residents.

It is stated in the Master Plan "Parks and green spaces provide intrinsic environmental, aesthetic, and recreation benefits, and are also a source of positive economic benefits. They enhance property values, increase municipal revenue through tourism and greater tax revenue, bring in home-buyers and workers, and attract retirees".

Accordingly, High River's parks and green spaces, are directly beneficial to the entertainment economy. Natural areas and heritage assets have long been a part of the film and television industry in the region. Further, key wildlife features (e.g., nests, rookeries) or sensitive wildlife habitats (e.g., streambanks, high quality forest stands) provide excellent locations for filming and photography. However, photographers and film and production crews inadvertently put wildlife and their habitats at risk of destruction or disturbance by getting too close, increasing activity and noise in an area, and/or by disturbing habitats by accessing sensitive areas. Therefore, to ensure the Town benefits economically from the filming industry and the tourism opportunities it attracts, the proposed Wildlife Management Plan recommends incorporating steps to help manage media access to wildlife and wildlife habitat in High River:

- Implement a permitting and approvals process for all media activities that have the potential to impact wildlife or wildlife habitat. This could be included as a requirement outlined in the existing Film Production Procedure;

- Ensure that all filming and photography activities, personnel, equipment, and infrastructure adhere to the recommended activity buffers during the breeding season for species of special interest in the Town;
- Protect the osprey nest from disturbance and protects known and future nesting sites from disturbance;
- Enhances ecotourism opportunities by protecting bird habitats; and
- Increases economic opportunities by targeting bird watchers.

A strategic approach to developing unique visitor experiences and repositioning the Town will play a significant role in raising the profile of High River both as a visitor destination and as a thriving and healthy community.

4. Short, Medium and Long-Term Projects

Below is a list of projects that are proposed to be potentially undertaken by Town Administration upon Council support and approval within the specified timeframes. This list has been compiled from the recommendations as outlined in the Master Plan. The list includes the proposed timeline, the department that will be in charge and high-level budget estimates.

These projects are presented in six (6) groups as follows:

- Group 1- Projects for the years 2021- 2022
- Group 2- Projects for the years 2023-2024
- Group 3 - Projects for the years 2025-2026
- Group 4- Projects for the years 2027-2028
- Group 5- Projects for the years 2029-2030
- Group 6- Projects for the year 2031 Plus

5. What are the anticipated costs?

Initiatives in this list must compete with other community funding needs and priorities. The total estimated costs are attached to each projects' group. Therefore, for implementing Group 1 projects of the Action Plan recommends ranging in total (\$33,000-\$43,000), for Group 2 ranging (\$309,000-\$329,000), for Group 3, ranging (\$2,155,000- \$3,810,000), for Group 4, ranging (\$1,070,000- \$1,945,000), Group 5, ranging (\$280,000- \$425,000), and for Group 6 ranging (\$1,275,000-\$2,050,000) to reinvest and revitalize our existing indoor recreation assets. Costing is a high level, order of magnitude estimate. When implementation time comes, all costs require revision based on actual project design and construction.

Town Administration will work diligently in researching and finding grant opportunities for each of the proposed projects prior to presentation to Council at future Council meetings for consideration.

6. Is the community willing to pay?

Based on the best planning practices, and as the costs of undertaking the proposed projects may result in tax increases of varying annual amounts, Town Administration, upon Council support, shall initiate and complete a comprehensive community consultation to ensure community support and buy in. The consultation process will be a great opportunity to gauge community support and willingness to provide financial contribution to assist with the implementation of these projects,

7. Conclusion

The outcomes of the Master Plan will provide residents with a diverse range of outdoor recreational opportunities to address new and evolving recreational, social and environmental needs. Parks, trails, open space and natural areas will be the gathering places of the community. People will connect with their neighbours and participate in organized programs or on their own. Residents of all ages will have access to the types of outdoor activities they desire.

New parks, trails, open spaces and natural areas will continue to be provided throughout the Master Plan lifetime by our development industry partners. This action plan builds on that work and by focusing on revitalizing our existing outdoor assets before building new in the first few years. This will maximize the benefit of our past investment decisions. It will also ensure our outdoor facilities will remain well used and relevant to the community as it ages and our needs evolve. New capacity is proposed in the second and third phases of strategy in the form of a new projects and investments.

The Master Plan upon acceptance and with adoption by Council, will guide and focus our future planning of trails, parks, and open spaces for the next ten years and beyond. It builds upon the direction of the Town's vision and Council Strategic Plan. It has a deliberate focus on expanding the capacity of safe, affordable and accessible opportunities that promote healthy lifestyle choices.

Partnership opportunities will be explored throughout the lifetime of the Master Plan, with school systems, healthcare, other regional municipalities, not-for-profit and for-profit sectors, to develop additional assets in our community. Applicable grant opportunities will be explored and submitted during the appropriate timing.

Ongoing community and stakeholder consultation and communication shall continue in the next steps of the action plan process.

As the Master Plan will guide our actions in the upcoming ten years, when community emerging needs arise, they will be evaluated against those already in the Master Plan and the appropriate action will be taken through consultation with Council and community.

Group 1- Projects for 2021-2022

Name of Project/ Recommendation	Rationale	Estimated Start -up Cost	Estimated Operating Costs	Prime Sponsoring Division	Project Strategic Timeline
1.3 Rename George Lane Memorial Park's campground to Riverside Campground (the full name would be <i>George Lane Memorial Park and Riverside Campground</i>).	-Riverside' has place-based, wayfinding value to visitors looking for camping accommodations with natural amenities. Connects with the community's Network with Nature vision.	\$00	\$00	Planning Council Approval	2022
1.4 Rename from Happy Trails to the Happy Trails Network	-Conveys connection and cohesiveness. Allows for the prioritization of mending trail gaps.	\$00	\$00	Planning Council Approval	2022 Ongoing Process
1.5 Rename the Highwood River corridor to "Ispitsee Natural Area Park".	-Reconnect with Indigenous history. -Establishes a new identity for the floodplain. -Reinforces the idea of reserving room for the river.	\$00	\$00	Planning Council Approval	2021
1.7 Add wildlife corridor as a "use" in all land use districts, or add wildlife corridor as an Essential Public Utility	-Highlights the importance of allowing land to remain in a natural state and provide ecological functions without being considered "unused." Reinforces the concept of Network with Nature.	\$00	\$00	Planning Council Approval	2022
1.8 Amend the Land Use Map in the Land Use Bylaw to include the entire Highwood River corridor as belonging to the Natural District (ND)	-Ensures there can be no future development in the floodway. -Protects the Highwood River corridor natural areas from development encroachment. -Supports a healthy ecological function of riparian areas.	\$00	\$00	Planning Council Approval	2022
1.9 Adopt the new categorization system and design standards for parks, trails, and open space	-Establishes standards for the design of new green spaces and the revitalization of existing outdoor spaces	\$00	\$00	Planning Council Approval	2022
1.12 Adopt the Ispitsee Floodway Management Plan	-The objectives and policies will guide decision making to meet the goals of conveying high water events safely through the town, passive recreation and river access, and environmental conservation.	\$00	\$00	Planning Council Approval	2022
2.6 The design of new neighbourhoods should make sure that all residents are served by a neighbourhood park and playground within a five minute walk (400m radius).	-Residents of new neighbourhoods should be provided outdoor amenities at the service levels described in the standards. A-rear Structure Plans and Neighbourhood Outline Plans should be reviewed to ensure the provision of adequate green spaces for new residents.	\$00	\$00	Planning	2022 Ongoing Process
2.10 Each new neighbourhood development should be formed around a centrally located,	-The central space becomes a neighbourhood place, creating opportunities for gathering and community-building.	\$00	\$00	Planning	2022

universally accessible and connected park or public realm space (plaza).	-Connectedness with Happy Trails emphasizes the Network and the connection with the larger community.				Ongoing Process
2.11 Developers should conduct engagement with adjacent neighbourhoods for identifying amenities to be offered in new neighbourhoods.	-Improves connectivity between neighbourhoods. -Creates innovative place-based ideas based on current realities. -Increases opportunities for shared-use amenities. -Creates a welcoming feel for new community members.	\$00	\$00	Planning	2022 Ongoing Process
2.16 Continue to cooperate through joint use agreements to maximize public use of privately owned sites.	-Enhances the use of existing spaces and amenities. -Efficiently uses existing open space assets.	\$00	\$00	Planning/Parks	2022
2.17 Establish a stewardship program to get residents involved in caring for natural areas	-Supports the development of a partnership society. -Educates the public about the importance of maintaining distance from wildlife. -Youth education programs will foster civic responsibility.	\$15,000	\$10,000	Planning/Parks	2022
2.18 Adopt and Implement the Ecological Open Space Plan	-Lands within the Highwood River corridor reverting back to the Town from the province must be managed appropriately. -Habitat that supports a large range of species is important for the long-term maintenance of biodiversity in the region -Biological diverse habitats perform many ecological functions and provide numerous ecological services. -Highly diverse systems are more resilient to disturbance. -Keeps the Highwood River corridor functioning properly as a storm water management area.	\$00	\$00	Planning Council Approval	2021
2.19 Adopt and Implement the Wildlife Management Plan	-Lands within the Highwood River corridor reverting to the Town from the Province must be managed appropriately. -Habitat loss is one of the main threats to the long-term survival of identified local species of interest; their habitat may require special management considerations.	\$00	\$00	Planning Council Approval	2021
2.20 Adopt and implement the Focal Species Management plans that were prepared for the Town as part of the Wildlife Management Plan	-Protects the osprey nest from disturbance as supported by a majority of survey respondents. -Protects known and future nesting sites from disturbance. -Enhances ecotourism opportunities by protecting bird habitat.	\$00	\$00	Planning Council Approval	2021
2.33 Set up a "cracks in the pavement" exploration in former Beachwood.	-Involves the public in exploring how nature reclaims the urban fabric. -Partnerships could include local schools, Forest School, citizen science through Smart City Alliance, film industry, or universities.	\$15,000-\$25,000	\$5,000-\$10,000	Planning/Parks/Engineering	2021
2.35 The Town should explore FireSmart programs and plans	-The Highwood River corridor brings the wildland/urban interface into the heart of High River. -Increased drought conditions and a lack of forest management will increase fire risk.	\$00	\$00	Fire Services	2022

3.26 Location and alignment of Happy Trails Network in new neighbourhoods should be identified prior to approval of an Area Structure Plan	-Supports active transportation goals. Ensures the connectedness of the Happy Trails Network.	\$00	\$00	Planning	2022 Ongoing Process
3.27 Evaluate the accessibility of the Happy Trails Network on the berms for wheelchair users.	-Ensures all users can access the Happy Trails Network.	\$00	\$00	Engineering/Parks	2022
3.28 Put signs at the Centre Street bridge telling drivers to share the road with trishaws.	-Trishaws currently must move on to the road to cross the bridge because they do not fit on the sidewalk. -Increases safety of trishaw pilots and passengers until a separate crossing is constructed.	\$3,000	\$500	Planning/Parks	2022
3.30 Update the definition of sidewalks and pathways in the Land Use Bylaw	-Prioritize active transportation in new definitions of sidewalks and pathways in order to achieve the Town's evolving active transportation goals.	\$00	\$00	Planning	2022
Total		\$33,000 \$43,000	\$15,500 \$20,500		

Group 2- Projects for 2023-2024

Name of Project/ Recommendation	Rationale	Estimated Start-up Cost	Estimated Operating Costs	Prime Sponsor	Project Strategic Timeline
1.1 Establish a Network with Nature portfolio within Town Administration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Ensures the implementation of the Master Plan recommendations -Establishes a point of contact within the Town to provide guidance for volunteers and neighbourhood groups looking to implement small neighbourhood parks ideas 	\$10,000- \$20,000	\$5,000- \$10,000	Planning/Parks/GI S	2023
1.2 Develop a Network with Nature communications plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Encourages local stewardship of neighbourhood and community parks. -Establish consistency in values, purpose, and the future vision. 	\$10,000	\$5,000	Parks	2023
1.6 Implement a comprehensive, context-inspired strategy for integrating Network with Nature vision into signage that builds on High River's existing brand and enhances the overall experience of parks, trails, and open spaces.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Creates a cohesive sense of place. Provides for visible and safe circulation through the community. -Ensure consistency with Town approved wayfinding signage design and format 	\$40,000	\$00	Planning/Parks	2023
2.2 Establish parks and trails as the backbone of new neighbourhood development plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Ensures the connectedness of the Happy Trails Network. -Highlights the importance of protecting natural areas. -Prioritizes the importance of connected green space and natural areas corridors for the movement of both people and wildlife. 	\$00	\$00	Planning/Parks	2024 Ongoing Process
2.4 Augment the annual program of planting to increase the connectedness of the tree canopy as per Urban Forest Standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Providing ecological corridors through the urban fabric will attract smaller wildlife such as birds, which have been noted as decreasing in number in the town. -Healthy street trees contribute positively to residents' mental health. -Funding could be available from programs like Tree Canada. 	\$15,000- \$25,000	\$00	Parks	2024
2.13 Implement an education and signage program around keeping dogs on-leash in on-leash areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Educates owners about appropriate behaviour and prohibited behaviour as per the Animal Bylaw. -Educates owners about the location of off-leash dog parks 	\$3,000	\$3,000	Planning/Parks	2023
2.14 Implement an education and signage program for off-leash areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Educates owners about appropriate behaviour and prohibited behaviour in off-leash areas as per the Animal Bylaw. 	\$1,000	\$500	Planning/Parks	2023

3.2 Establish a consistent look and materiality for interpretive signs	-Supports the cohesiveness of the interpretive trails program -Interpretive signs should be consistent with the look and materiality of existing signage.	\$30,000	\$10,000	Planning	2024
3.7 Plan and implement wayfinding strategies.	-Creates a cohesive sense of place as one moves through the town. -Involves signage, locations, hierarchy of sizes and information, durable materials and consistent branding. -Clarity of mapping will reduce frustration and encourage increased use of the Happy Trails Network.	\$00	\$00	Planning	2024
3.11 Engage the community to determine the priorities for High River's intersection improvements.	-Builds on the existing Miscellaneous Pedestrian Improvements program. -Promotes the program to residents who may not be familiar with it.	\$00	\$00	Engineering	2024-2030
3.14 Integrate large sculptural artwork or a great landscape structure into the 12 Avenue SE-Centre Street roundabout.	-Creates a gateway to downtown from the south. -Provides a focal point for 12 Avenue.		\$5,000	Planning	2024
3.17 Conduct a gap assessment of the Happy Trails Network.	-Conduct a full assessment of active transportation to determine which parts of the network require upgrading. -Builds connections in Happy Trails Network gaps that will provide the best value for investment. -Makes network more suitable for commuting.	\$00	\$00	Engineering/Parks	2024
Total		\$309,000 - \$329,000	\$28,500- \$33,500		

Group 3- Projects for 2025 - 2026

Name of Project/ Recommendation	Rationale	Estimated Start -up Cost	Estimated Operating Costs	Prime Sponsor	Project Strategic Timeline
1.10 Increase funding for (or Promote) the Community Vitality Fund to support open space improvement ideas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Uses an existing program with administrative supports already in place. -Includes accountability and reporting requirements. -Includes the Innovation Fund (up to \$2,000) and the Enhancement Fund (over \$2,000) that will accommodate a range of improvement ideas. -Promotes community stewardship and responsibility. 	\$30,000- \$50,000	\$5,000	Planning/Parks	2026
1.11 Establish an engagement strategy to check-in with the community regularly regarding Master Plan implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Confirms or modifies priorities to meet the community's needs. 	\$00	\$00	Planning/Parks	2025
2.3 Adopt a policy for maintenance and operations funding that is linked to the amount of municipal reserves within new developments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The Municipal Government Act (MGA) requires up to 10% land allocation to municipal reserves. If the developer wishes to allocate lands in excess of 10%, it must establish a residents' association or an encumbrance to ensure there are sufficient funds for operations and maintenance. 	\$00	\$00	Planning	2025
2.5 In un-mowed boulevards, replace grass with native wildflowers or shrubs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -In places, Parks has already adopted the practice of only mowing a strip of grass beside the road. -Overseeding with a native wildflower mix can increase habitat for pollinators. 	\$5,000- \$10,000	\$3,000- \$5,000	Parks	2025
2.12 Establish an off-leash dog park or a disc golf course at the former Rio Vista golf course.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Creates a natural space for dog walkers that is central. -Creates a community disc gold course 	\$50,000	\$3,000	Parks	2025
2.23 Support the development of a Forest School to provide outdoor learning in the Highwood River corridor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Provides opportunities for residents to immerse themselves in nature. -Encourages the appreciation and stewardship of natural areas. -Forest School will not require infrastructure to be built within the Highwood River corridor. 	\$60,000	\$10,000	Planning/Parks/ Engineering	2026
2.25 Engage with learning institution partners on initiatives to monitor natural area health.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Involves the public in gathering information relevant to the Town's needs. -Promotes active and healthy outdoor activities. -Citizen science initiatives might be eligible for funding programs. 	\$10,000- \$20,000	\$5,000- \$10,000	Parks/Planning	2026

	-Partnerships with local or regional learning institutions could provide additional funding to support management of natural areas.				
2.27 Explore eco-tourism partnership opportunities.	-Increases economic opportunities by targeting birders from nearby Frank lake. -Works with the principles of the Ecological Open Space Management Plan in terms of passive recreation opportunities. -Unique landforms, environments, and biological entities provide important economic contributions, drawing visitors to the region and providing unique experiences to regional populations.	\$00	\$00	Planning	2025
2.28 Maintain and expand the connectivity between natural areas.	-Landscape connectivity allows the maintenance of subpopulation genetics, the re-establishment of extirpated populations in isolated habitats, and the linking of habitat types for species with varied life histories.	\$00	\$00	Parks/Engineering	2026
2.29 Explore cultural-tourism partnership opportunities.	Historic, cultural, or spiritual valuation of unique landscapes and landforms preserve heritage and act as educational opportunities, maintaining the regional identity over time.	\$00	\$00	Planning	2025
3.1 Engage with local storytellers to create narratives for interpretive trails.	-Realizes residents' desires to have looped interpretive trails. -Makes connections with local stories. Establishes community involvement.	\$40,000	\$7,500	Planning	2025
2.34 Increase the width of native vegetation buffers around storm ponds and educate adjacent residents about the importance of the buffers.	-A wider swath of native vegetation will better clean storm water runoff before it reaches the pond. -Increases natural habitat for small amphibians, birds, and beneficial insects. -Education will be required since adjacent neighbours frequently mow the vegetation buffers at present.	\$00	\$00	Engineering/Parks	2026
3.4 Install a large public artwork at the Walking our Stories hub.	-Celebrates local stories for residents and visitors. -Creates a powerful centrepiece for the stacked trail loops. -Enhances the River Link Park gateway experience.	\$80,000- \$150,000	\$5,000- \$10,000	Planning/Parks	2026
3.12 Work with Foothills County to develop interconnected active transportation routes through the region.	-IDP provides existing framework for collaborative work on the development of open space and recreation facilities. -Includes river recreation as well as cycling and walking. -The Happy Trails pedestrian and cycling network could connect with neighbouring towns through Foothills County via the Rail Trail	\$80,000- \$120,000	\$20,000- \$40,000	Planning	2026
3.13 Establish a sequential gateway experience along 12 Avenue SE.	-Creates a sense of arrival as vehicular traffic enters the town.	\$150,000-	\$10,000	Planning/Engineering	2026

	-Establishes a safe and comfortable pedestrian experience.	\$250,000	\$15,000		
3.15 Establish a sequential gateway experience along Centre Street between 12 Avenue SE and the Highwood River.	-Creates a gateway to downtown. -Establishes a safe and comfortable pedestrian experience.	\$600,000- \$1,200,000	\$10,000 \$25,000	Planning/Engineering	2026
3.16 Establish a sequential gateway experience along 2A/Centre Street N.	-Creates a sense of arrival as vehicular traffic enters the town. -Establishes a safe and comfortable pedestrian experience.	\$600,000- \$1,200,000	\$10,000- \$25,000	Planning/Engineering	2026
3.22 Establish a multi-modal trail on the former rail lands as outlined in the "Public Realm Improvement Study on the Former Railway Lands."	-Creates a north-south corridor for pedestrian and active modes of transportation. -Rail Trail will function as the spine of the Happy Trails Network, making the town more walkable. -Connections across the Rail Trail (west- east) should be explored to improve access from the southeast to the downtown. -Opportunities to celebrate cultural roots through railway garden plantings and shelter belt plantings.	\$350,000- \$550,000	\$20,000 \$40,000	Engineering	2026
3.24 Work with the Highwood Golf Club to set cross country ski tracks on the golf course.	-Opportunities for local public-private partnerships. -Provides winter use in an area otherwise unused.	\$00	\$00	Planning/Parks	2025
3.25 Set cross country ski tracks in linear parks and in open spaces.	-Provides opportunities for active winter sports throughout the town	\$00	\$00	Engineering/Parks	2025
3.29 Establish a Happy Trail connection along 5A Street SE between Emerson Park and 5 Street SE.	-Increases connectivity between Hampton area neighbourhoods and downtown.	\$100,000- \$200,000	\$3,000- \$5,000	Engineering	2026
Total		\$2,155,000- \$3,810,000	\$126,500- \$185,000		

Group 4- Projects for 2027 - 2028

Name of Project/ Recommendation	Rationale	Estimated Start -up Cost	Estimated Operating Costs	Prime Sponsor	Project Strategic Timeline
2.1 Create “River Link Park:” a gateway to downtown, the Highwood River and George Lane Park at the Centre Street bridge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Establishes a link between the downtown and the river. -Establishes formal routes to George Lane Park to prevent further erosion on informal trail links. -Provides a gateway experience for people as they cross the river 	\$600,000- \$1,200,000	\$10,000 \$25,000	Engineering/Planning /Parks	2028
2.7 Playgrounds or similar recreational amenities should be built in neighbourhoods currently underserved according to access standards (400m radius walkshed).	-Residents should be able to access a playground within a five minute walk. If residents would prefer a different amenity that provides similar opportunities for outdoor recreation, they should work with the Town to obtain that amenity.	\$00	\$00	Parks/Engineering	2027
2.8 New playgrounds should include equipment for a wide range of users.	-Residents would like the opportunity to play together; toddlers with teens, children with seniors. Including equipment targeted to a variety of age groups will increase attractiveness and level of use.	\$00	\$00	Parks	2027
2.21 Establish river access points for non-motorized boat launching.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Designates safe places for boaters to access the river. -Limits random river access and resulting erosion and vegetation damage. -Controls river use to protect nesting areas during sensitive breeding times. -Keeps the natural areas, natural. 	\$00	\$00	Engineering	2027
2.24 Form a partnership with a film company to tell High River’s “return to nature/room for the river” story.	-Involves the film industry in telling the story of nature reclaiming the Highwood River corridor. Provides an opportunity for the film industry to give back to the community.	\$00	\$00	Planning	2028
2.30 Restore the Little Bow River natural area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Better buffers are needed between the river and adjacent land uses. -Riparian health will increase with additional native vegetation and cat tails. Increasing the water flow will clean 	\$40,000- \$60,000	\$2,000- \$3,000	Engineering/Parks	2027

2.32 Conduct a strategic planning exercise to identify locations of wildlife movement corridors through and within the town.	-Ensures the protection of natural wildlife movement corridors that can remain connected with other natural areas.	\$25,000- \$35,000	\$00	Planning/Parks	2028
3.3 Create a Walking our Stories hub in “River Link Park.”	-Establishes a geographic connection between the stories and where they began at the river crossing. -Provides information about the location and theme of the interpretive loops.	\$75,000- \$150,000	\$5,000- 10,000	Planning/Parks	2028
3.5 Establish an artwalk promenade between “River Link Park” and George Lane Park.	-Creates new connections through the downtown. -Layers present-day culture on the historic legacy of Macleod Trail	\$300,000- \$450,000	\$10,000- \$25,000	Planning/Parks	2028
3.20 Develop a stacked loop trail network, conducive to multi-active transportation opportunities	-Provides increased incentive for active transportation. -Creates an efficient design with many route options.	\$30,000- \$50,000	\$5,000 \$10,000	Engineering	2027
Total		\$1,070,000- \$1,945,000	\$32,000- \$73,000		

Group 5 - Projects for 2029-2030

Name of Project/Recommendation	Rationale	Estimated Start-up Cost	Estimated Operating Costs	Prime Sponsor	Project Strategic Timeline
2.9 Town Administration should provide support to neighbourhood groups through the process of revitalizing their parks and open spaces and implementing ideas through citizen-led approach (tactical urbanism).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Neighbourhood residents should have a say in deciding the amenities available to them. -Resident groups may require assistance with accessing coordination, volunteer and funding support. -Examples of powerful community ideas are listed in the Playbook 	\$30,000-\$50,000	\$10,000-\$15,000	Parks/Planning	2029
2.15 Integrate railway garden history into the public space around Rotary Park and the Museum of the Highwood.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Connects with the historical use as a railway garden. -Creates a connection with the Museum of the Highwood in the former railway station at the other end of the block. -Adds another layer of historical interest. -Meets residents' desire for additional gardens. 	\$250,000-\$375,000	\$15,000-\$30,000	Planning	2029
2.22 Establish trails at the edges of natural areas and close informal trails that bisect natural areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Maintains the larger inner core of the natural area intact and undisturbed. -Provides a designated place to walk to minimize off-trail traffic through natural areas. -Highly intact ecosystems are more resilient to change, and as a result, are more likely to maintain their full range of ecological processes. <p>Intact ecosystems are critical for the persistence of a broad range of flora and fauna than highly impacted habitats.</p>	\$00	\$00	Engineering	2029
2.31 Consider replacing the Little Bow River's culvert under 12 Avenue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Providing a larger culvert or natural crossing under 12 Avenue will minimize the pooling that currently occurs at either side of the culvert. -Maximizing the size of the underpass will allow more wildlife movement along the river corridor. 	\$00	\$00	Engineering	2030
3.6 Establish "seniors' residence amenity zones" within 250m of the retirement communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Supports elderly pedestrians with additional amenities like benches. -Beautifies the areas with additional flower pots and planters to provide enjoyment and attract seniors to be active outdoors. -Planting additional trees to provide bird habitat will provide visual interest to seniors. 	\$00	\$00	Planning	2030

	-Explores partnership opportunities with the retirement communities, e.g., for funding, volunteers, or fundraising.				
Total		\$280,000- \$425,000	\$25,000- \$45,000		

Group 6- Projects for 2031 Plus

Name of Project/ Recommendation	Rationale	Estimated Start -up Cost	Estimated Operating Costs	Prime Sponsor	Project Strategic Timeline
2.26 Consider constructing an elevated walkway through the riparian forest.	-Creates a unique way of experiencing the Highwood River corridor. Incorporates Forest School	\$175,000- \$250,000	\$15,000- \$30,000	Engineering	2031
3.10 When the Centre Street bridge is replaced, include best practices for active transportation enhancements.	-Ensures the prioritization of active modes of transportation. -Limits conflicts between user groups.	\$00	\$00	Planning/ Engineering	2031
3.18 Build a mid-block crossing across 12 Avenue SE at the Little Bow canal.	-Improves connectivity of the Happy Trail Network. -Supports the walkability of the Little Bow Canal Loop.	\$500,000- \$750,000	\$5,000- \$10,000	Engineering	2031
3.21 Explore creating equestrian trails with a staging area and day-use paddock or stalls.	-Creates an opportunity for rural riders to access the town's amenities. -Expands the traditional definition of active transportation to include the local context and needs.	\$00	\$00	Planning	2031
3.23 Work with the Province of Alberta to integrate additional sections of the Little Bow canal into the Happy Trails Network.	-Creates a more comprehensive trail network. -Provides additional trails for pedestrian and active modes of transportation. -Uses an existing amenity in a more robust way. -Provides a continuous corridor for ecological movement.	\$300,000- 450,000	\$10,000 \$15,000	Engineering	2031
3.9 Establish a non-motorized link across the Highwood River immediately to the west of the current Centre Street bridge as part of the Happy Trails Network.	-Trishaws require a safer way to cross the Centre Street bridge: they currently must move on to the road because they do not fit on the sidewalk. -A single sidewalk on the east side of the bridge requires multiple road crossings for those commuting between the northwest and downtown. -Establishes an additional river crossing that prioritizes pedestrian and active modes of transportation. -Provides a better north-south connection.	\$00	\$00	Engineering	2031
3.19 Build a metal grille catwalk across the Nissan storm pond (west-east), for improving pedestrian linkage at the Nissan storm pond (west-east).	-Establishes a direct link between the neighbourhood of Hampton Estates and Holy Spirit Academy. Supports the walkability of the Hampton loop.	\$300,000- \$600,000	\$10,000 \$15,000	Engineering	2031
Total		\$1,275,000- \$2,050,000	\$40,000- \$70,000		

Appendix IV: Concept Design for the Former CP Railway Lands

3. Concept Design

The concept design for the downtown portion of the corridor was developed through an iterative process of analysis, engagement and design. The design strategies and concept evolved with feedback from stakeholders, Town staff, the Planning Renewal and Advisory Committee (PRAC) and the public.

The foundation of the Study — the vision, principles and objectives were translated into design strategies for:

- Program and Development
- Pedestrian and Cyclist Circulation
- Vehicular Circulation, Access and Parking
- Utilities and Easements

The design strategies and concept design are presented on the following pages and include views of individual segments. Rendered plans are supplemented with conceptual perspectives and precedents that convey the overall intent of the concept design.





3.1 Program + Development

Through engagement process, the following objectives, relating to the program of use for the corridor and the supporting development, were determined:

- Create a sense of timelessness, durability and permanence that encourages people to use the space throughout the year.
- Create lively, active and vibrant spaces for all ages and demographics.
- Provide flexibility for future uses as the town evolves.

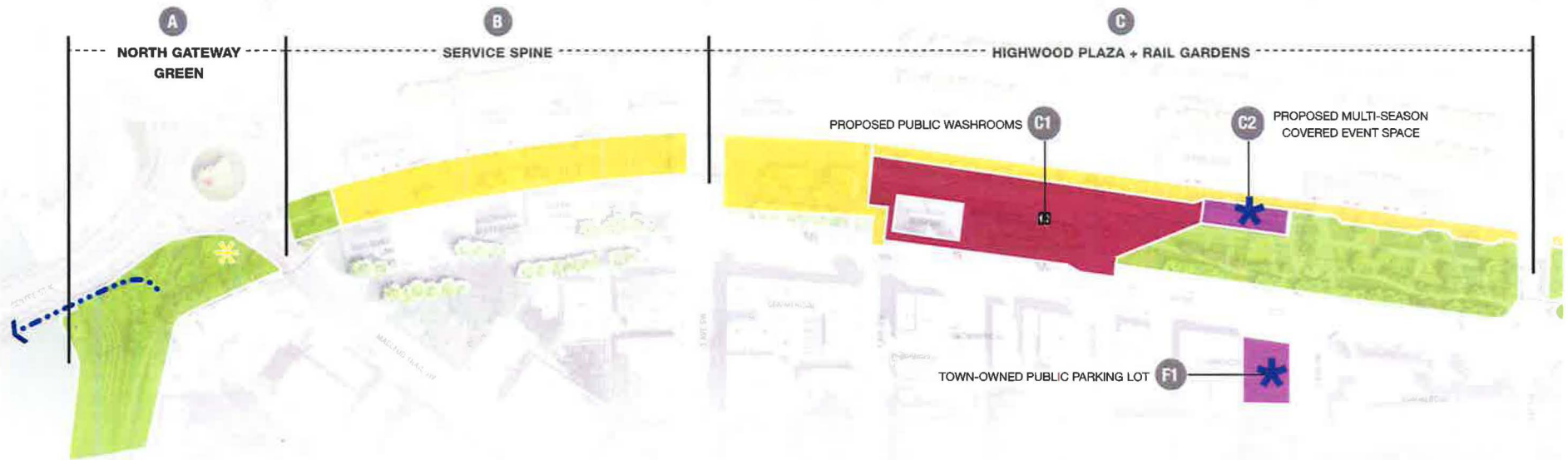
- Encourage private redevelopment along Centre Street that aligns with the vision and guidelines set forward in the Downtown ARP.
- Encourages strategic redevelopment and investment opportunities within the Study Area that benefits the Town and the public as a whole.

Program + Development Strategies

The concept accomplishes these program and development objectives through the following strategies:

1. Create a strong sense of arrival to downtown. In the area referred to as the **North Gateway Green A**, the design includes:
 - 1 A gateway feature that provides an immediate, positive image of downtown.
 - 2 A visual connection to the Highwood River, with rustic public seating constructed within the flood protection berm.
 3. Pedestrian and cyclist connection to the North Shadow Lands.

2. Provide a large public parking lot for short and long-stay users. The area referred to as the **Service Spine B** concentrates parking in areas with the lowest potential for park space or investment in development. The design includes:
 1. Long and short-stay parking to service the historic downtown and other nearby businesses and destinations.
 2. Back-of-house access to adjacent developments for loading and waste collection.
 3. A turn-around for passenger vehicles, garbage trucks and non-trailer delivery vehicles.



3. Build a central civic space, the **Highwood Plaza + Rail Gardens (C), that includes:**

1. Flexible use space for major events.
2. An everyday space for citizens and visitors.
3. Recognition of the historic significance of the train station through interpretive gardens, plaza materials and public artworks.
4. A year-round public washroom with extended opening hours (C1).
5. A flexible pavilion that can hold special events, pop-up retail and public rental events such as weddings (C2).

4. Build a year-round active and passive recreation park, **Rec Park (D), that includes:**

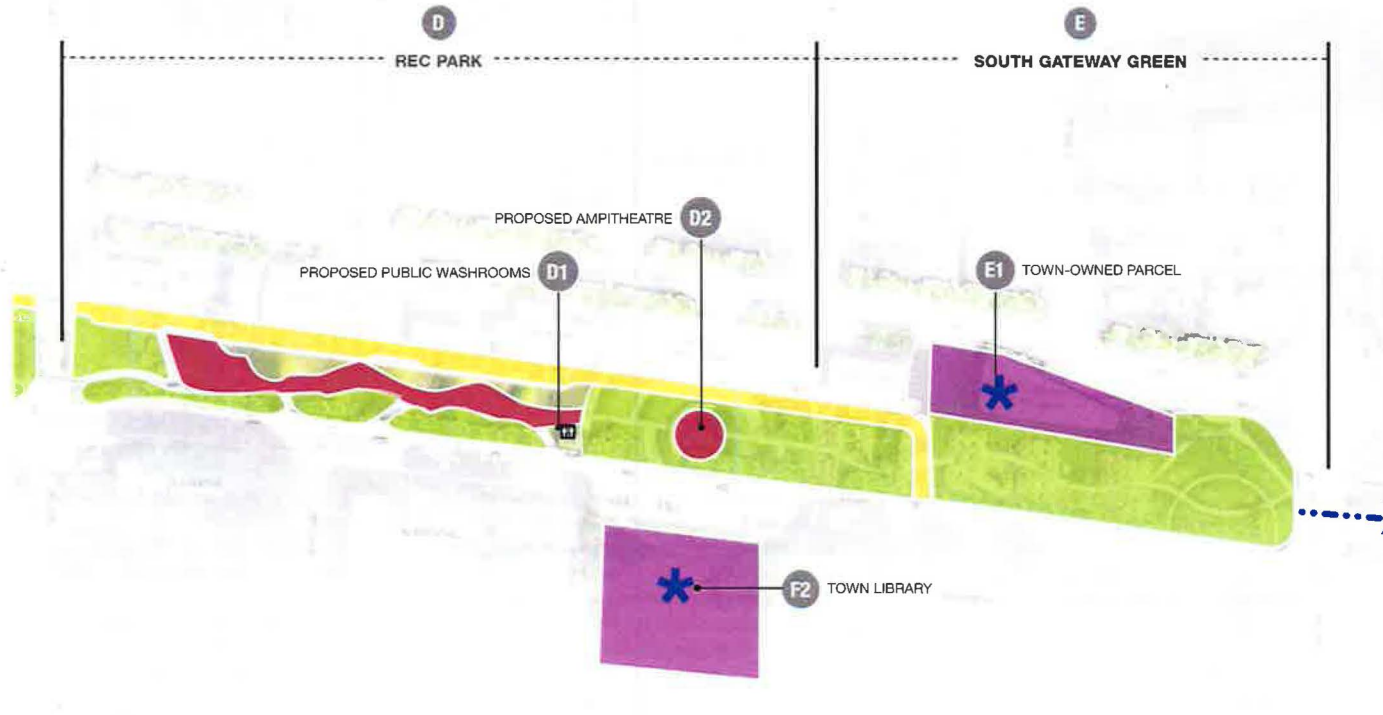
1. A family oriented picnic area and playground
2. A youth-oriented playpath for skateboarding and terrain skills.
3. A civic park space to hold special events across the street from the library.
4. A year-round public washroom (D1).
5. An outdoor amphitheatre with overhead shelter for performances and gatherings (D2).

5. Create a strong sense of arrival to downtown from the **South Gateway Green (E) that provides:**

1. A gateway feature that provides an immediate positive image of downtown.
2. Flexible open space with urban forests and orchard trees.
3. Pedestrian and cyclist connection to the South Shadow Lands.
4. A development opportunity for public or private investment along Centre Street. A potential landmark or iconic building to catalyze development (E1).

6. Additional options for investment through private or public development in public lands adjacent to the study area. This considers that the:

1. Existing parking lot adjacent to the rail lands could be sold and funds reinvested in rail lands improvements (F1).
2. Existing library (F2) could be relocated to (E1) or another suitable location.
3. Proposals for development opportunities within the CP lands or on public lands adjacent to the corridor that will impact the Program and Development Strategies must meet the following guiding principles:
 - » Demonstrate a community need and benefit to the town as a whole
 - » Not obstruct pedestrian and cyclist linkages to adjacent lands, parks and open space including the shadow lands
 - » Meet the architectural guidelines of the RSR.



Map 3 | Program + Development Opportunities

LEGEND

- Parking + Service Mews
- Development Opportunity
- Green Space
- Plaza / Flexible Use Space
- ★ Investment Opportunities
- ★ Downtown Gateway Feature
- Connection to Shadow Lands

3.2 Pedestrian + Cyclist Circulation

Pedestrian and cyclist movement through the public spaces of the Corridor are fundamental to the animation and vitality of the public realm. A successful pedestrian realm is a destination in itself — people will stroll, linger and enjoy the different spaces along the corridor.

Through the process of engagement with stakeholders and the public, the following goals were determined to be critical with respect to pedestrian and cyclist mobility:

- Prioritize spaces for people, not vehicles.
- Provide a linear spine of well-vegetated open spaces, civic facilities and strategic development that makes High River more walkable and easier to navigate for cyclists.
- Connect missing linkages with the Happy Trails network.
- Create a north-south pedestrian and cyclist promenade that spans the entire municipal boundary of High River. Additionally, east-west connectivity within the downtown can be improved.

Pedestrian Circulation Strategies

The concept accomplishes these goals through the following strategies.

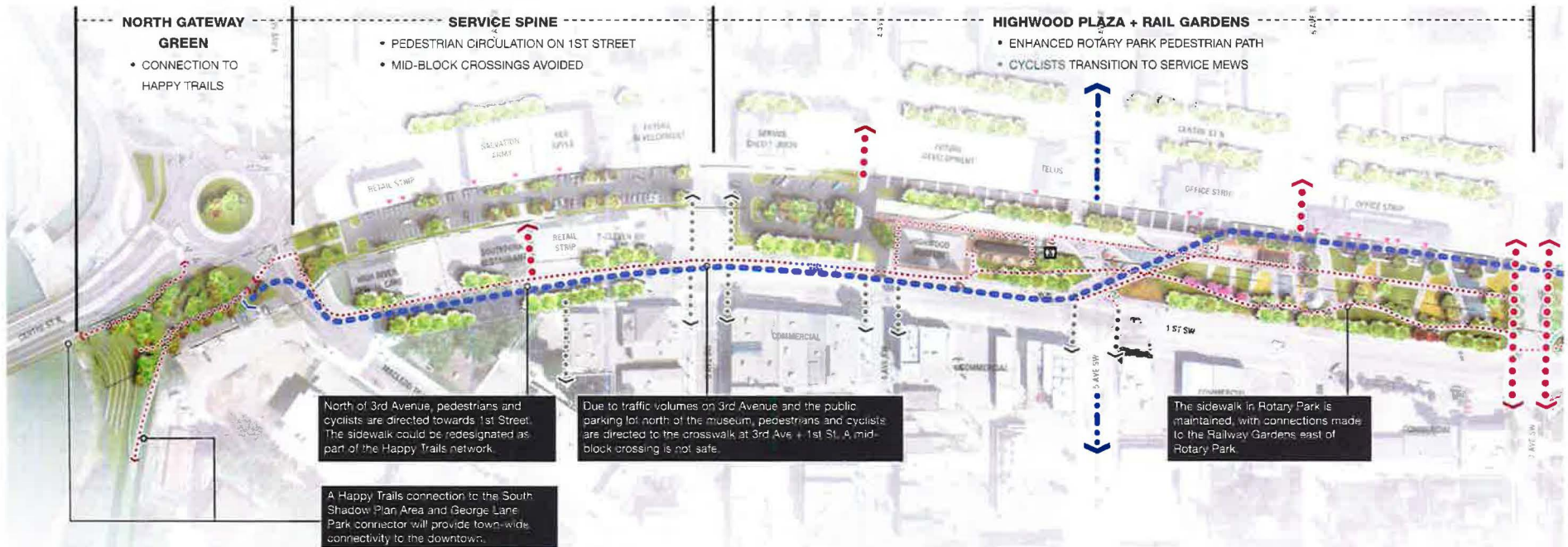
1. Create a comfortable walking environment. This is done by providing a north-south corridor that provides a feeling of safety, separation from traffic, visual charm and access to spaces that enable people to sit, watch and explore.
2. Enhance east-west connections at intersections and strategic mid-block locations. Wherever possible, encourage developers to connect directly with park

and plaza spaces. This will make downtown more fine-grained and easier to navigate on foot.

3. Create a play path through portions of the park that will help increase the level physical activity for youth. The multi-use path includes challenging terrain and park elements that encourage active play.

Cyclist Circulation Strategies

The study recognizes the importance of connecting missing north-south linkages with the Happy Trails network. This will encourage residents to travel by



bicycle more frequently, contributing to reductions in downtown traffic volumes, improved citizen health and more options for navigating the town.

Strategies for enhancing cyclist circulation through the Study Area include:

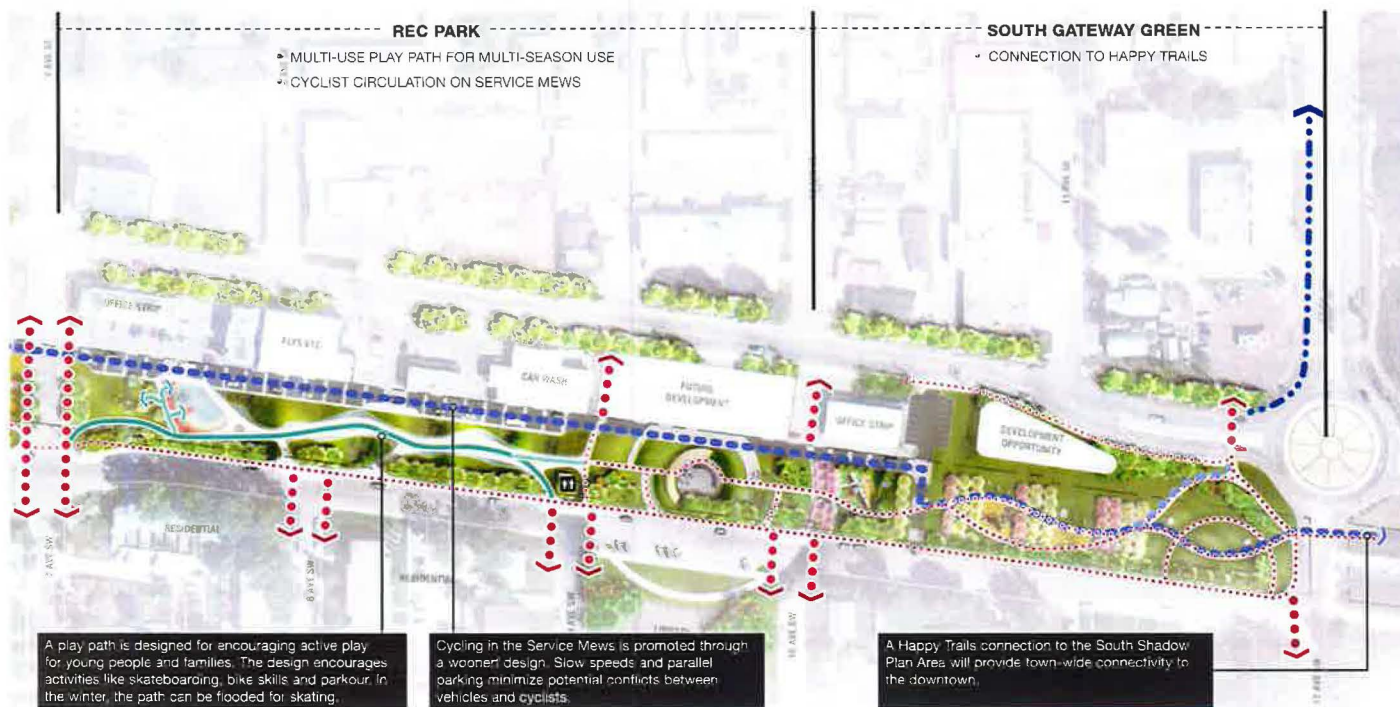
1. Expanding the cycling trail network by establishing key linkages for the Happy Trails network, including the North and South Shadow Plan Areas.

2. Using the Service Mews as a cycling route that is shared with pedestrians and slow-moving vehicles.

3. Routing cyclists away from parking lots, where safety is a concern due to vehicles reversing out of parking stalls, in some areas, sidewalks three metres or greater may be redesignated as Happy Trails pathways and marked accordingly.



Photo credit | A laneway shared with cyclists, pedestrians and slow-moving vehicles.



A play path is designed for encouraging active play for young people and families. The design encourages activities like skateboarding, bike skills and parkour. In the winter, the path can be flooded for skating.

Cycling in the Service Mews is promoted through a woonerf design. Slow speeds and parallel parking minimize potential conflicts between vehicles and cyclists.

A Happy Trails connection to the South Shadow Plan Area will provide town-wide connectivity to the downtown.

Map 10 | Pedestrian + Cyclist Circulation

- LEGEND**
- Pedestrian Circulation
 - - - - - Cyclist Circulation
 - ~~~~~ Multi-use Play Path
 - > Happy Trails Connection
 - Existing Pedestrian East-west Connection
 - Enhanced East-west Connection



3.3 Vehicular Circulation, Access + Parking

Vehicular circulation, access and parking were key issues with the public and stakeholders. The following objectives were determined as key indicators of success for this project:

- Create additional public parking to offset anticipated demand as downtown undergoes transformation through public and private redevelopment over the next 30 years.

- Create a service mews that provides back-of-house amenities for existing and future developments along Centre Street and First Street SW.
- Employ strategic traffic calming measures in areas where pedestrian-vehicular conflicts have been identified on Map 10.

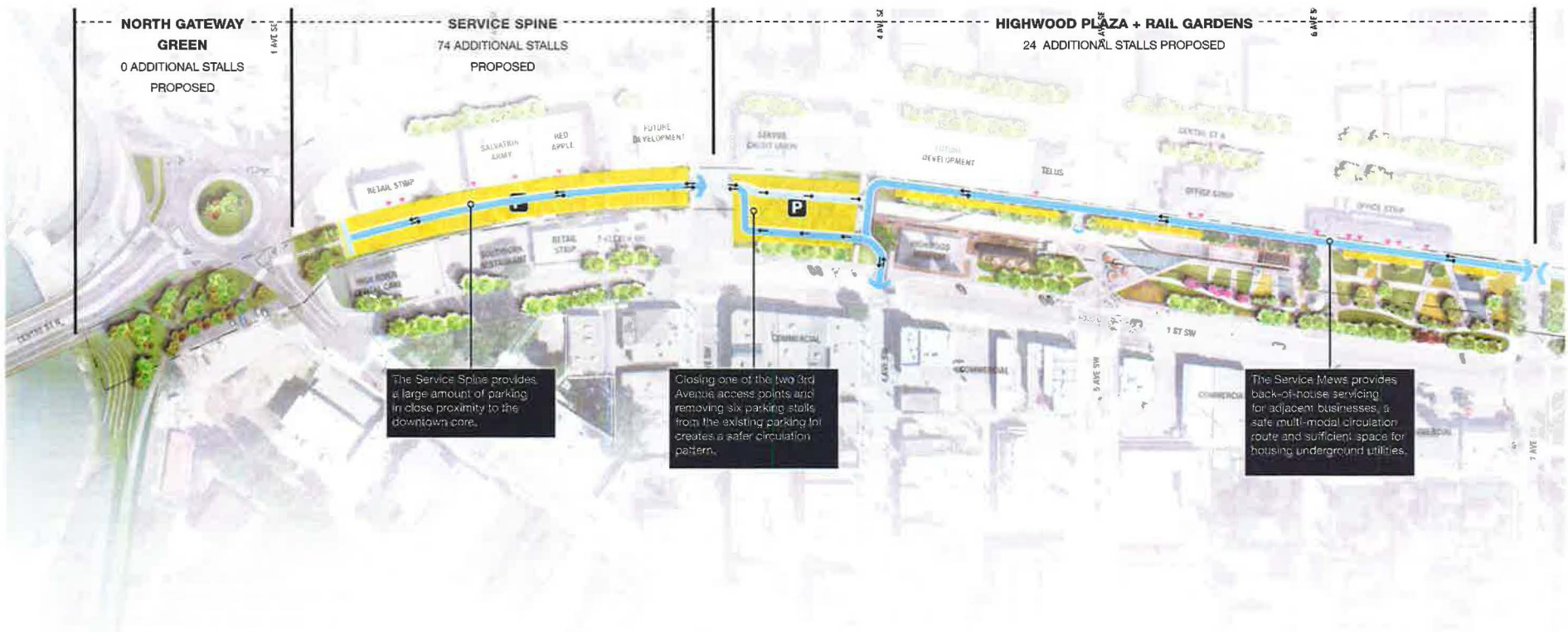
Vehicular Circulation + Access

The design concept accomplishes these goals through the following strategies:

1. Create a Service Spine, between Macleod Trail and 3rd Ave, that provides parking and serves as a laneway for developments along Centre Street and 1st Street SW.
2. Build a Service Mews that provides safe multi-modal north-south connectivity throughout the central part of the study area and back-of-house amenities for existing and future developments along Centre Street. The Service Mews will provide access for business, retail and residential developments for deliveries, waste disposal, recycling and emergency access. The Service Mews should not encourage

direct cut-through connections between 1st Street SW and Centre Street. Constructing a laneway will result in fewer driveways on Centre Street, improved traffic flows and a more vibrant, pedestrian-friendly Centre Street.

3. Improve circulation on the existing public parking lot between 3rd Avenue and the Museum of the Highwood reduces turning conflicts on 3rd Avenue and provides safe vehicular access to the Service Mews.



4. Implement traffic calming measures along 1st Street. These include curb extensions/bulb-outs, raised speed reducers and unique paving where high-pedestrian traffic is anticipated.

Parking

Local residents and businesses have concerns over parking supply downtown. The concept design addresses these concerns through the following interventions:

1. Provide a large concentration of flexible parking within the Service Spine between Macleod Trail and 3rd Avenue. This area is most-suitable for parking as

an end use as its opportunity as open space or development is limited.

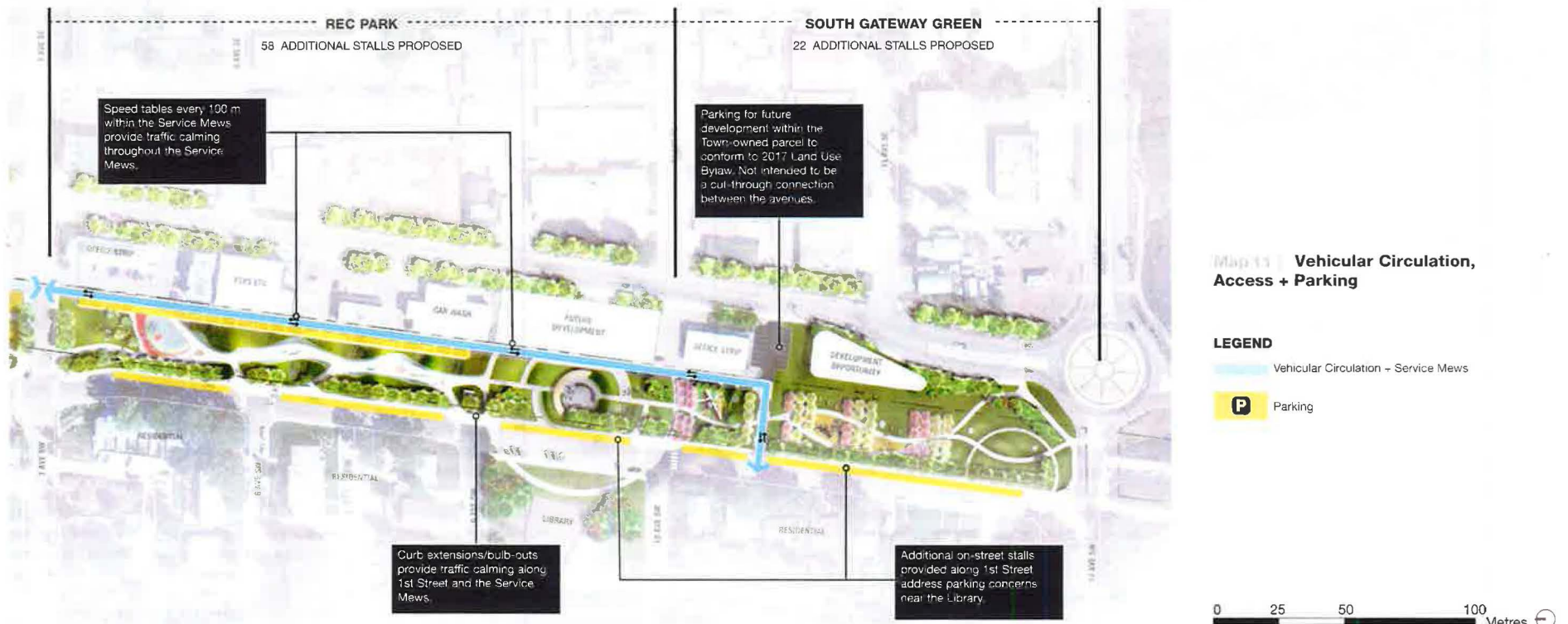
2. Provide additional parallel parking stalls within the Service Mews. This is compatible with the laneway function and the overall concept of a woonerf.
3. Allow on-street parallel parking along 1st Street from 12th to 7th Avenue. This will address concerns of parking shortages near the library during nearby community events such as youth soccer games. It will also provide traffic calming through reduced effective lane widths.

The configuration of parking throughout the Study Area is flexible. Parking can be added in response to development and future demands. Along the Service Mews, parking could be temporarily converted to patio spaces if nearby development would like west-facing open space. This is discussed in greater detail in Section 3.6.

A parking supply comparison is provided on the following table. Note that this Study provides an additional 24 stalls compared to the ARP and a 67% increase above existing parking supply. Additionally, allowing parking on 1st Street would provide an additional 54 stalls to the downtown.

Parking Summary Table

Existing	80
ARP Proposed	110
CP Study Proposed	134
Additional on-street stalls proposed on 1st St from 12th to 7th Avenue	54



Map 11 Vehicular Circulation, Access + Parking

LEGEND

- Vehicular Circulation - Service Mews
- Parking



3.4 Utilities + Easement Agreements

Overhead service feeds are located on the west side of Centre Street. The 2015 ARP proposed the burial of overhead services to accommodate streetscape improvements and tree planting along Centre Street.

There are no existing utilities within the CP lands, with the exception of several east-west utility crossings as shown on Map 4. The Study accommodates Fortis utilities within the Rail Lands, as well as the CP Fibre Optic easement.

1 Options for Fortis Underground Extension
Should Fortis require an extension of the underground right-of-way beyond 3rd Avenue, it can be accommodated below the parking area between 3rd Avenue and Macleod Trail.

2 Revised Relocation of Centre Street Utilities
It should be noted that, according to the CP Easement Agreement, Fortis may be required to pay fees to CP to use the corridor. It may be more cost effective for the Town to provide Fortis with a dedicated utility corridor adjacent to the CP easement. The concept plan has assumed that a dedicated Fortis easement will be

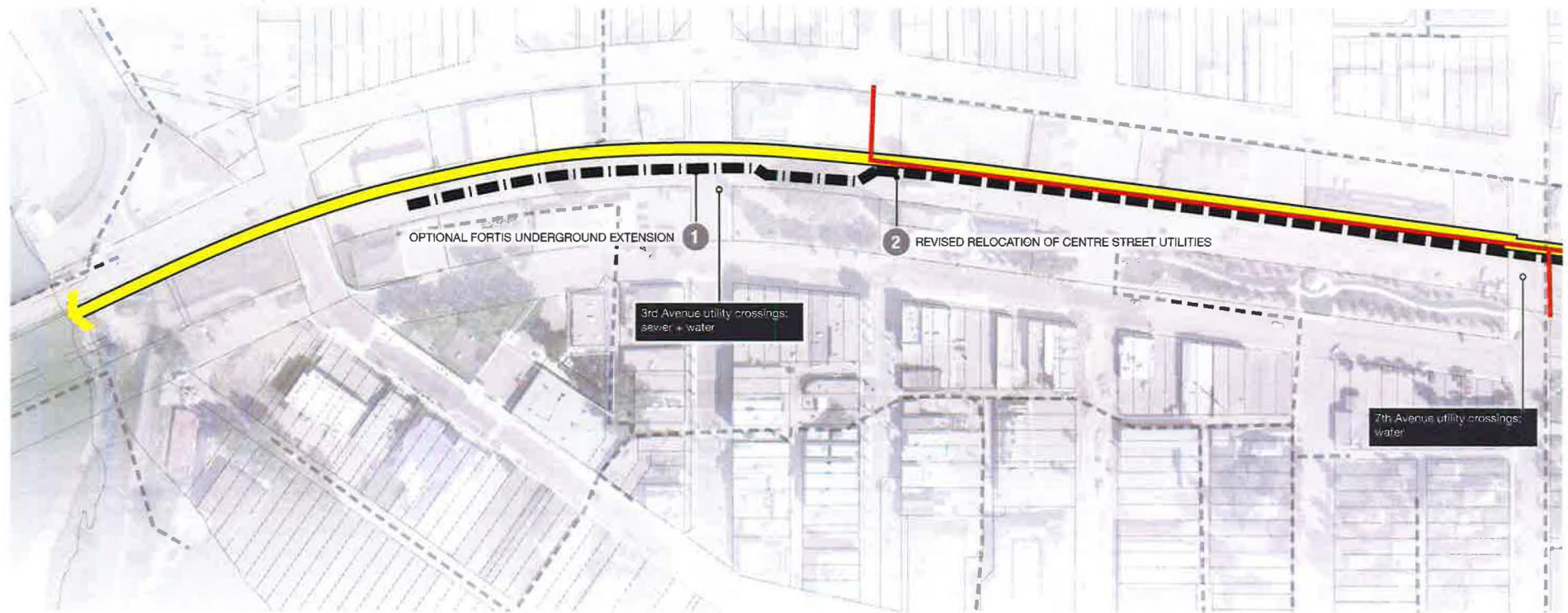
required. No obstructions have been proposed within the alignment shown. Additional design with Fortis will be required, but is beyond the scope of this Study.

3 Relocation of Centre Street Utilities by Fortis Alberta + Design Implications

Fortis Alberta proposed relocating existing Centre Street utility alignment underground within the existing 3.5-m fibre optic easement. Based on these plans¹, utility boxes will be necessary along the length of the corridor.

Where pedestals and transformers are located, the easement will increase from 3.5 m to approximately 6 m. This distance includes an operating clearance from any obstructions. Trees must not be planted within the Utility Right-Of-Way (URW). The setback requirements for trees planted next to utilities vary depending on tree types and at the discretion of the utilities. Fortis Alberta states that existing or planned trees on property or along the URW must have a minimum clearance of 1 m from the centerline of the main trench to the edge of the tree. However, it may require a 3 m separation at the discretion of the utilities.

¹ "The proposed utility trench alignment is shown in the plan view. The trench is 3.5 m wide and is located within the existing fibre optic easement. The trench is shown in yellow and red." (2021, p. 22)



4 CP Right-of-Way Alternate Alignment Option

Should the Town wish to pursue additional development opportunities within the rail lands, there is potential to renegotiate the alignment of the CP easement in key locations in order to provide for a larger contiguous development parcel. Realigning the easement would increase developable lot area and allow for a wider diversity of development opportunities.

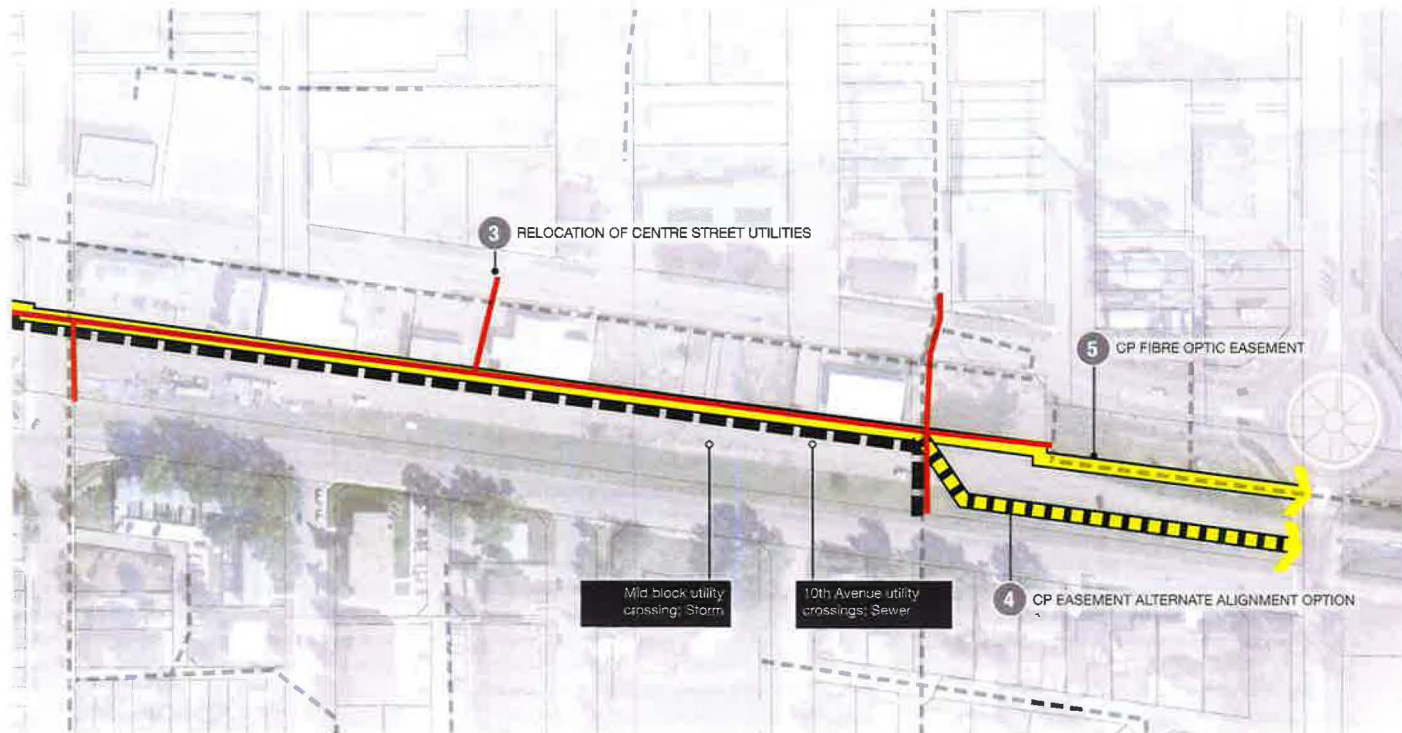
5 CP Fibre Optic Easement

The utility right-of-way, the easement, is a 3.5-m strip of land stretching along the eastern edge of the corridor. It was land set aside by CP for the use of fibre optic systems. The 2015 ARP recommended burying and

relocating the overhead power lines to enliven the public realm with street trees and make Centre Street more beautiful and easy to traverse. Ideas to bury the utilities within the easement have been explored.

The Easement Agreement² between the Town of High River and CP Railway Company (CP) grants CP rights to permit licenses to third parties for the use of fibre optic systems. The agreement restricts construction of underground foundations that may interfere with future

utilities. For instance, trees should not be planted in the right-of-way. Permitted improvements that do not affect the use of the easement include parking lots, fencing, landscaped areas and playgrounds. If any operations are carried out within the easement, CP must restore the damages back the state before their entry or to a better condition if practical to do so.



Map 12 Utilities + Easement Agreements

LEGEND

- - - Existing Overhead Fortis lines
- Proposed 3.5 m CP Fibre Optics Easement
- Proposed Fortis Underground Alignment Within CP Fibre Optics Easement
- Proposed Dedicated Fortis Underground Alignment
- - - Proposed Fortis Underground Extension (if required)



3.5 Concept Plan: Highwood River to 3rd Avenue

Situated between the Highwood River and 3rd Avenue SE, this segment serves as a gateway to the downtown. In addition, the **North Gateway Green** provides an appealing landscape that improves the visual connection to the Highwood River. Enhancements adjacent to the river create a natural contemplative park space with stepped seating areas, trees and native riparian plantings along the river's edge.

The expansion of the existing Centre Street Bridge leads into a proposed traffic circle at Centre Street and Macleod Trail. The traffic circle will create more efficient traffic flows and provide flood protection by building into the Town's dike system. Although both the bridge and north traffic circle are not within the scope of this project, the design concept incorporates the proposed elements.

Between 1st Avenue SE and 3rd Avenue SE, the Service Spine will provide parking and servicing access for Centre Street businesses. Trees and plantings within the Service Spine will enhance the overall aesthetic of the open space, despite its primary use for parking.

The concept for the area between the Highwood River and 3rd Avenue incorporates the following:

- 1 Enhanced landscaping and visual connection to the river**
 - Provide a formal entrance to downtown for southbound traffic.
 - Create a gathering space by the river with a gradual terraced landscape that follows the contours of the existing dike and river bank.
 - Consider building a viewing platform that addresses river safety concerns.
- 2 Bridge widening and flood gate**
 - Not within the scope of this project.
- 3 Traffic Circle**
 - Not within the scope of this project.
- 4 Downtown gateway feature**
 - Anchor the corner of Centre Street North and Macleod Trail with a gateway feature to provide a sense of arrival to the downtown core.
 - Incorporate signage to orient visitors to the points of interest in the area.
- 5 Public parking pods (74 spaces)**
 - Significantly increase the amount of parking within this segment.
 - Consider the interface between parking areas and existing service door access.
 - Provide for space for larger vehicles to turn around e.g. hammerhead or work with adjacent land owners to provide access agreements).
- 6 Seven-metre service mews and utility corridor**
 - The 7-m utility corridor is comprised of CP's 3.5-m easement and another 3.5 m to be potentially leased by Fortis.
 - Using minimal intervention, the Service Mews can double as the utility right-of-way and a service lane for businesses along Centre Street.

- 7 Enhanced landscaping and trees**
 - Break up the large area of hardscape within the parking lot with trees and planting beds.
- 8 Pedestrian traffic along 1st Street**
 - Encourage pedestrians and cyclists to use this route due to limited space and concerns for mid-block crossings over 3rd Avenue.

Image 3 | Pedestrian circulation along 1st Street



Map 13 | Segment from Highwood River to 3rd Avenue

LEGEND

-  Gateway Feature
-  Existing Service Door Access
-  Utility Right-of-Way

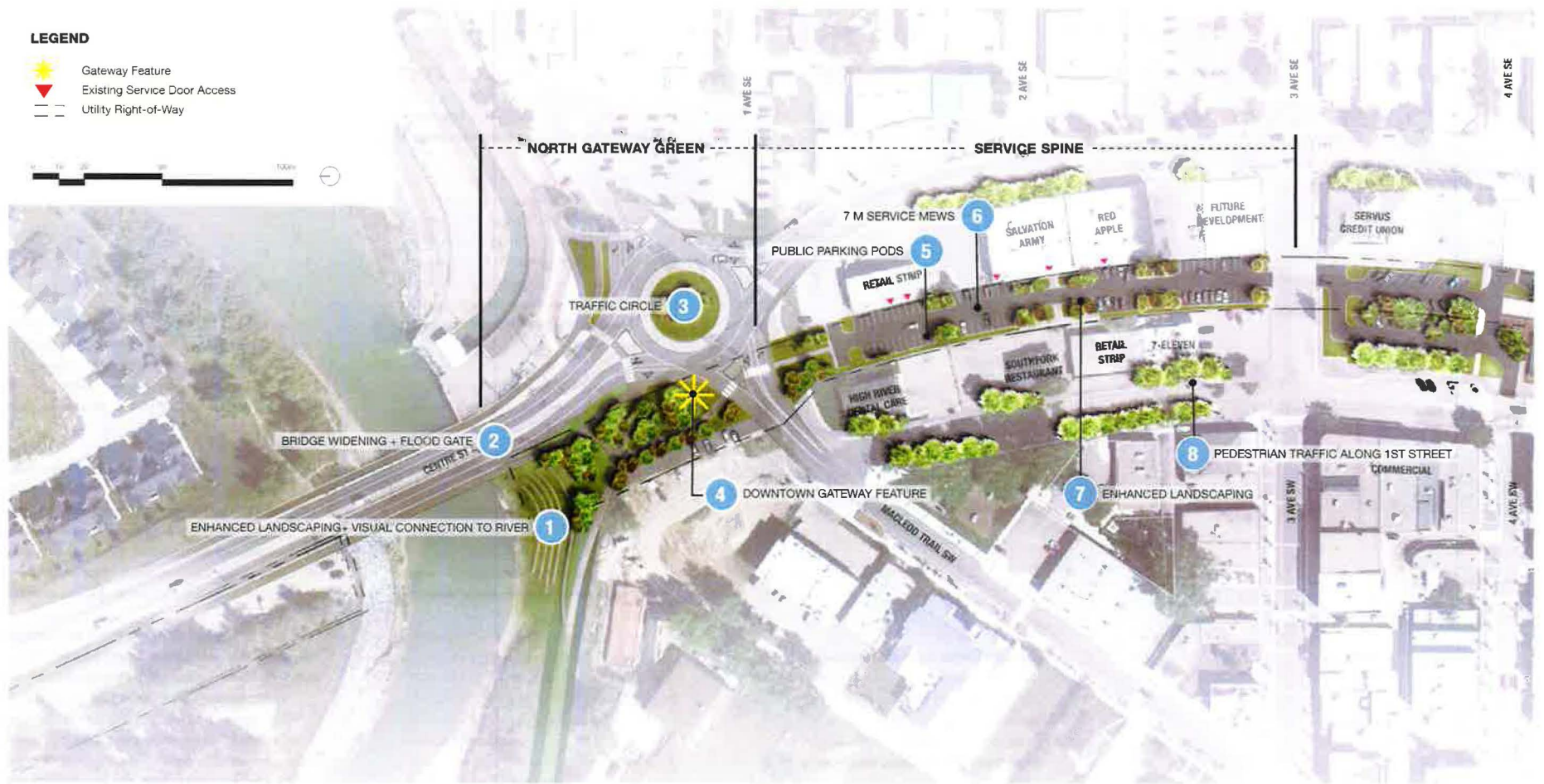


Figure 3-1 View towards the proposed outlook and terraced steps from Happy Trail.

Today, the Highwood River and its riverbanks are not a major component of the downtown experience. Roads and newly built dikes have physically and visually disconnected the town and the river. The Study seeks to re-establish the continuity of open space with new pathways linking to the river and gently terraced landform to the water. People walking or cycling along Happy Trail can descend from the dike towards the pedestrian seat steps to gain a panoramic view of the river. Near the river edge, riparian plantings help stabilize the riverbank while maintaining the natural aesthetic of the park.



Site Photo | The existing flood protection berm and interface with the river is visually unappealing. There are significant opportunities to enhance the quality of the space and provide a lasting first impression as people cross the Highwood River.



Photo/View | Terraced turf steps provide spaces for people to gather, socialize and spend time outdoors. These could be constructed into the terrain of the flood protection berm.

Photo/View | River promenades are popular destinations for residents and visitors. The combination of social space and gateway elements help create a positive and lasting impression of the area.



Photo/View | Gateways can be sculptural elements that encourage people to gather, take photos and share with friends and family. They are destinations in themselves.

3.6 Concept Plan: 3rd to 7th Avenue

The design concept envisions this segment as a cultural and historic centre. The Museum of the Highwood is a major attraction and destination for tourists that also functions as the Town's Visitor Information Centre. As such, the adjacent open space must complement High River's significant historic buildings. **Highwood Plaza** is an extension of the Museum, providing a flexible gathering space for daily use and larger events and festivals.

Rotary Park is integrated into the design and expanded into a larger park space with flexible lawns, ornamental gardens and park amenities for year-round outdoor enjoyment. This renewed space aims to commemorate the multiple narratives of the site and the town, from the stories of Indigenous Peoples to the impact of the CP Railway on High River's development. For instance, the **Rail Gardens** aims to allude to the town's industrial and agricultural history in a contemporary way. The incorporation of Indigenous Peoples' narratives will require further exploration and engagement.

The concept for the portion of the study area between 3rd Ave and 7th Avenue incorporates the following:

9 Reconfigured existing public parking lot circulation

- Re-adjust curbs to accommodate wider turning radii for larger vehicles.
- Consider trailer parking and parking requirements for the Highwood Museum to maintain its status as a Visitor Information Centre.
- Address the potential safety concern of the mid-block crossing for vehicles crossing 3rd Avenue.
- Improve the plantings within the parking lot.

10 Enhanced Whistle Stop Cafe

- Coordinate with the cafe owner regarding proposed improvements around the Whistle Stop.
- Expand the patio space in front of the Whistle Stop.
- Consider the incorporation of a facility for storage, disposal and shared public washrooms for the Highwood Museum and Whistle Stop.

11 Seven-metre service mews / utility corridor and separate "railway switchyard" pedestrian paths

- Establish a continuous paving pattern that aids in traffic calming and gives a cohesive look throughout the corridor.
- Unique to this segment, the railway switchyard aesthetic helps to delineate the pathways and planting beds.
- Use bulb outs and distinctively textured, raised crossings where necessary to calm traffic. Intersperse vegetation throughout the Service Mews.
- Give thought to the laneway interface with future development and existing service door access.

12 Enhanced landscaping + flexible pedestrian-oriented plaza and station platform integrated with historic train station

- Create a pedestrian-oriented plaza around the George Emerson statue.
- Establish unique lighting treatment to highlight key features and provide sufficient lighting for evening use.
- Incorporate water features and other design elements to provide visual interest across the seasons.

13 No east-west corridor on 5th Avenue

- Previous external and internal engagements revealed that the 5th Avenue connection was not favoured over having an integrated plaza/park/event space.

14 Water Feature

- Accent the plaza with a dynamic water feature such as water jet streams that provide a cooling effect during summer months, while adding a playful element at the heart of the space.
- Integrate lighting to illuminate the water feature at night.

15 Multi-season covered event space

- Anchor the south end of this segment.
- Host year-round public and private events, such as weddings, concerts, etc.
- Provide an area that is fully enclosed for security reasons and partially covered areas to shelter from the elements.

16 Public parking pods (37 spaces)

- Provide parallel parking along the length of the service mews.

17 Enhanced Rotary Park / Perennial Show Gardens + expansion to accommodate flexible use

- Expand Rotary Park to accommodate a wider range of uses.
- Use pathways to divide the open space into smaller outdoor "rooms" that contain open lawn, lounge chairs, large tables, seating, public art displays, etc.

Image 12 | Service Mews for day-to-day parking



Image 13 | Service Mews with extended patio space



Image 14 | Service Mews during a large event



Alternative Configurations of the Service Mews can accommodate a variety of uses from large scale events to patio extensions.

Map 14 | Segment from 3rd to 7th Avenue



Figure 12 View down the Service Mews and enhanced landscaping at Highwood Museum during a major event.

This segment seeks to reveal the culture and history of the town through a mix of salvaged and contemporary materials. Weaving rail lines etched into the plaza carve out planting beds and guide park users to the next point of interest. This currently underutilized space is envisioned as a whimsical space where railway tracks intertwine and take visitors through a self-guided journey of High River's past and current activities.





Precedent | Top Left and Centre: Paving materials and planting can refer to the historic CP uses for the site.



Precedent | Top Right: In-ground water features can animate the space and create visual interest. When the water is off, the space becomes an extension of the surrounding plaza.

Precedent | Bottom Left: A flexible pavilion can be used for major town events and celebrations, pop-up retail or rented to the public for special events such as weddings.



Precedent | Bottom Centre: The flexible use Highwood Plaza can be used for outdoor movies, special events, pop-up retail and other celebrations.



Precedent | Below: The Service Mews is a shared street that can serve as a loading area, provide parallel parking and is shared by pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.

3.7 Concept Plan: 7th to 12th Avenue

Sited within a residential area, the segment between 7th to 12th Avenue strives to attract and engage visitors of all ages. **Rec Park** integrates play into the landscape and is designed as an active recreation space. The proposed undulating terrain not only evokes images of the southern Alberta Foothills, but the rise and fall of topography creates an immersive and skateable pathway. The hilly terrain generates diverse microclimates with a mix of vegetation adapted to varying moisture levels and sun exposure on its slopes. At the centre of Rec Park, a bowl-shaped landform provides seating and views towards the amphitheatre.

At the southern end of the corridor, the **South Gateway Green** marks the south entrance into downtown for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles. This area is characterized by an orchard and sweeping pathways that define smaller-scale rooms among the row-planted fruit trees, including picnic and play areas and a sculpture garden. This open space serves the needs of locals and visitors alike.

The concept for the portion of the study area between the Highwood River and 3rd Avenue incorporates the following:

- 18 Enhanced 7th Avenue streetscape**
 - Enhance streetscape to encourage the east-west connection for pedestrians and cyclists.
- 19 Tree-lined street**
 - Create a park aesthetic along the street interface.
- 20 Picnic lawn**
 - Provide a flexible lawn to support tree play, pick-up sports and everyday leisure activities.

- Add groupings of picnic tables that can double as ping pong tables.
- 21 Multi-use court**
 - Line markings within the active court area facilitate different types of court games.
- 22 Multi-use pathway**
 - Integrate pockets of play spaces and seating from the entry at 7 Avenue SW to the new lawn plaza.
 - The skateable path can be flooded and transition into a winter skating circuit.
- 23 Civic Plaza space across from library**
 - Build a band stand to shelter from the elements.
 - Plaza as a potential performance area, with benches around its perimeter to provide informal seating.
 - Accommodate accessibility needs, such as incorporating arm rests and backing along the long curving bench.
 - Find ways to integrate water feature on site.
 - Frame the plaza with plantings around the perimeter.
- 24 Landforms**
 - Provide seating with views of the natural amphitheatre space.
- 25 Seven-metre service mews / utility corridor**
 - Establish a continuous paving pattern that aids in traffic calming and gives a cohesive look throughout the corridor.
- 26 Family Playground + Orchard**
 - Program a series of small-scale play areas along the pathway, interspersed and framed between orchard trees.

- 27 Natural playground + picnic + orchard**
 - Program a series of small-scale natural play elements and picnic spaces interspersed and framed between orchard trees.
- 28 Development opportunity**
 - The design concept illustrates a flat-iron inspired building within the triangular Town-owned parcel.
 - Multiple development opportunities that may or may not require re-alignment of easements can be explored as shown below.

Image 19 | Development Scenario A: Develop Town-owned parcel (as-shown)



Image 20 | Development Scenario B: Relocate library to Town-owned parcel and develop library site (requires utility easement re-alignment)



- 29 Gateway feature / public art**
 - Curate artwork along the two main pathways.

Map 15 | Segment from 7th to 12 Ave

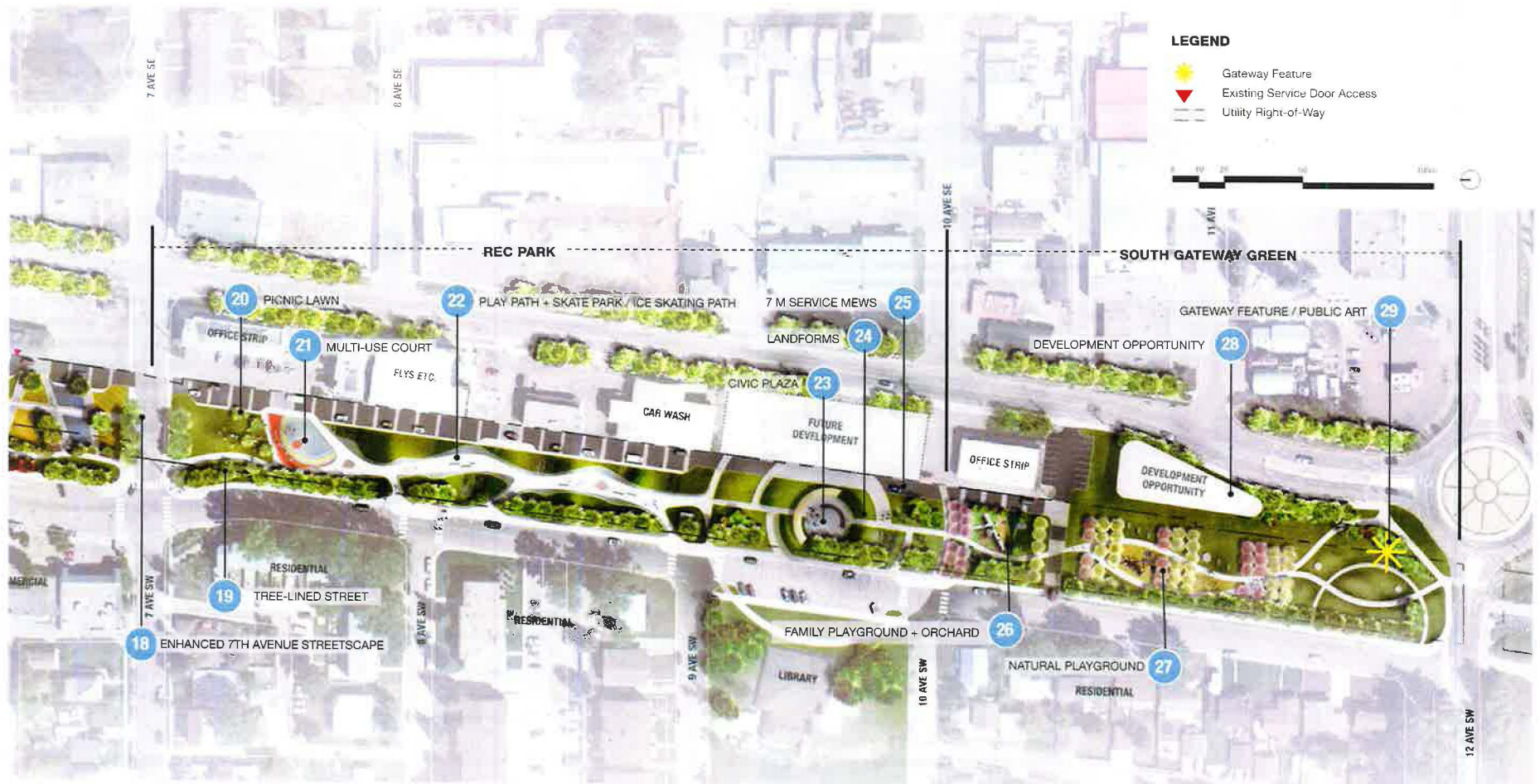


Image 14 | Winter scene of the band stand and activated civic plaza across from the current High River Library.

The civic plaza provides a gathering space that can be programmed throughout the year. A dramatic terrain creates an informal amphitheatre that looks towards the performance area beneath the bandstand/pergola. Plantings around the plaza will help create an intimate and attractive open space for park users to gather, sit and relax.



Appendix V: Valid Policies from the Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan

Valid Policies from the Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan

Public Street

3.1.1 General Policies

- a. pedestrian safety shall be prioritized in all aspects of public realm design and implementation.
- b. traffic-calming measures shall be employed to improve pedestrian safety.
- c. new roundabouts at the following location should be considered to improve traffic flow, address dangerous safety conditions, and demarcate entrances into Downtown:
 - Centre Street and Macleod Trail / 1 Avenue SE
- f. on street cycling shall be encouraged within the downtown by:
 - Installing adequate signage and/or pavement markings to promote sharing the road, and improve safety and awareness for cyclists and motorists, and
 - Providing a dedicated on-street bike lane on 5 Avenue between Macleod Trail and 2nd Street SE to connect Happy Trails in George Lane Park to the Happy Trails in Little Bow Park.

3.1.2.2 Centre Street Bridge Widening

To improve access to downtown, the Centre Street bridge spanning the Highwood River should be widened to accommodate pedestrian and vehicular traffic flow (Figure 3-3). This measure is currently under consideration for a new structure. The alignment and location of the bridge must be given careful consideration to:

- Minimize negative impacts to vehicular, pedestrian and cyclist mobility, and place high importance on public safety.
- Minimize negative impacts to open space and parks adjacent to the bridge.

Policies:

- a. the bridge alignment should accommodate the proposed roundabout at Centre Street and Macleod Trail.
- b. the bridge alignment should maintain sufficient green space to connect downtown to the Highwood River and George Lane Park to the west of the bridge.
- c. the bridge alignment should not interfere with the irrigation canal headworks east of the bridge.
- d. the bridge alignment shall provide for sufficient space to construct a pedestrian and cyclist bridge over Centre Street, as described in section 3.3.2.4. a. The bridge design should incorporate a strong, distinctive architectural character to highlight its role as a gateway into downtown.

3.1.2.5 Industrial Street

Within the Industrial Arts Precinct, streets are designed primarily for vehicular traffic, including a higher proportion of large vehicles.

Policies:

- c. new developments should have a single access point to the facing street. Two access points may be permitted if a single point of access is deemed unfeasible by the development authority.
- d. for new developments, maximum driveway width shall not exceed 12 metres.

3.2.1 Laneway Typology

The following section provides a breakdown of laneway typology within the downtown ARP boundary. Refer to Map 3-4: Laneway Typology for recommended locations, as well as the Downtown Landscape Design Guidelines for recommended landscape standards.

3.2.1.1 Conventional Laneway*

Conventional Laneways refer to those laneways that are primarily used for access to back of house activities for residences and businesses.

Policies:

- a. where feasible, new developments shall access parking lots by means of adjacent laneways.
- b. private waste and recycling storage facilities located within laneway rights-of-ways are prohibited.
- c. private parking within laneway rights-of-ways is prohibited.

3.2.1.2 Pedestrian Mews

Mews are the pedestrian laneways that thread between and behind buildings and are one of the unique characteristics of High River's Downtown (Figure 3-6). They improve pedestrian connectivity and serve as public spaces, providing opportunities for pedestrian access points into adjacent buildings and activities.

Policies:

- a. existing mews shall be preserved as pedestrian oriented laneways.
- b. mews shall have clear legible public access from streets and provide sufficient lighting throughout.
- c. the development of a mews is recommended in the block between 4 and 5 Avenue as indicated on the location shown on Map 3-4: Laneway Typology.
- d. the surface treatment within mews should integrate with the sidewalks to which the mews are connected, providing clear legibility for pedestrians.
- e. planting of trees, shrubs and other vegetation within the mews system, in accordance with the Downtown Landscape Design Guidelines, is strongly encouraged.
- f. where a mews intersects a conventional laneway, the presence of the pedestrian mews shall be clearly articulated to ensure safe pedestrian passage across the conventional laneway.
- g. new developments should incorporate active frontage and building entrances onto all facades abutting pedestrian mews.
- h. where compatible uses exist, spill-out activities between at-grade retail and hospitality services abutting mews is encouraged.

3.2.1.3 Garden Laneway

Within the existing CPR lands between Macleod Trail and 9th Avenue S, a new laneway type is proposed that serves the following purposes:

- A new laneway will act as a service lane to parcels along Centre Street for the purposes of parking access, loading, and waste and recycling collection;
- New public parking spaces within the downtown will be incorporated into the Garden Laneway to offset parking decreases associated with the removal of angle parking within the historic downtown; and
- The laneway shall be designed to accommodate vehicular, pedestrian, and cyclist circulation.

Policies:

- a. the design of the laneway shall facilitate multiple transportation modes by providing an equal balance between vehicular, pedestrian, and cyclist circulation.
- b. the landscape of the laneway shall be designed in accordance with the Downtown Landscape Design Guidelines to ensure that the laneway is seamlessly incorporated with the surrounding open space abutting the laneway.

Public sidewalks

Public pathways differ from sidewalks in that they are generally not located immediately adjacent to roadways, but rather through parks or in public rights of way abutting private properties. It is recommended that pathways are designed for multiple uses, including walking and cycling.

3.3.1 General Policies

- a. all sidewalks shall be designed in accordance with the recommendations of the American Disabilities Association Guidelines (ADA Guidelines), including wheelchair letdowns at all pedestrian crossings.

- b. where feasible, sidewalks should be a minimum of 2.0 metres in unobstructed width.
- c. sidewalks shall be adequately illuminated to ensure a high level of pedestrian safety and comfort.
- d. sidewalks should be provided on both sides of the streets throughout the ARP boundary.
- e. obstructions to sidewalks, including driveway aisles and above-ground utilities should be minimized to maximize pedestrian safety.
- f. new developments should design public sidewalks as per these policies

3.3.2.4 Happy Trails Pathway

Happy Trails is the primary multi-modal regional pathway network throughout the Town of High River. Within the ARP boundary, there are opportunities for enhancement along the Happy Trails network by linking disconnected portions of the Happy Trails Pathways, creating linkages to the downtown, and improving public safety where the pathway network interfaces with roadways.

Policies

- a. as part of future bridge widening, Happy Trails sections should be provided on both sides of the future Highwood River Bridge.
- b. where dedicated pathways cannot be accommodated, on-street and laneway bike routes are recommended to interconnect trail networks.
- c. the Happy Trails Pathways should be incorporated into the George Lane Promenade

3.3.2.5 George Lane Promenade

The George Lane Promenade is a proposed extension of the Happy Trails Pathway network and borders the eastern boundary of George Lane Park (Figure 3-8). The objectives of the promenade are:

- To provide a direct, active interface between buildings in the Historical Downtown Precinct adjacent to George Lane Park.
- To encourage business owners to participate in the public enjoyment of George Lane Park by offering the public opportunities for outdoor dining and entertainment in a picturesque setting.

Policies:

- a. a public promenade be constructed along the eastern edge of George Lane Park.
- b. the promenade should extend from the 5th Avenue park entrance to the public parking lot adjacent to City Hall and terminate at the existing Happy Trails Pathway. The proposed alignment is shown on Map 3-4: Sidewalk + Pathway Typology.
- c. if feasible, establish public rights-of-ways to construct pathways through existing privately owned parcels between the boundary of George Lane Park and Macleod Trail.
- d. encourage new developments along the promenade through the construction of active building frontage, outdoor terraces, and patios, building entrances, and gardens.

Public Space

Open spaces are those lands within the ARP boundary that are owned by the Town of High River and intended for public uses such as social gatherings, public events, and active and passive recreation. Open space typology includes parks and plazas as illustrated on Map 3-6: Open Space.

3.4.1 General Policies

- a. public spaces should have clear legible public access, be flexible in terms of use, and consider solar access and year-round cultural activities in their design.
- b. design of public spaces should adhere to Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.

3.4.2.1 George Lane Park

Policies

- a. enhance the existing George Lane Park entrance at 5 Avenue SW by establishing a prominent gateway feature to invite the public to enter the park from Downtown.
- c. explore year-round programming opportunities for recreation and cultural activities within George Lane Park that complement and expand the existing program of events and festivals that take place downtown, as recommended in Appendix D, Cultural Plan.
- d. create a gateway park space at the north end of downtown, west of the Centre Street bridge. The space should include the Happy Trails cyclist and pedestrian bridge recommended in Section 3.1.2.2 and serve as a connection point between George Lane Park, the downtown, and the Public Service Precinct that runs north-south through the plan area. The park space may be a suitable location for the construction of public art installations that memorialize the 2013 flood and educate the public about flooding in High River.

3.4.2.2 Rotary Park

Rotary Park is the largest open space within High River's downtown. It is a linear park that borders the former CPR right of way along its eastern boundary where the Garden Laneway is recommended.

Policies

- a. maintain Rotary Park in its current condition as a linear park.
- b. explore year-round programming opportunities for recreation and cultural activities within Rotary Park that complement and expand the existing program of events and festivals that take place downtown.
- c. when the Garden Laneway is constructed, Rotary Park should be expanded eastward and interfaced with the laneway and public parking stalls; planting should be used to screen parking stalls from the park.
- d. if 5 Avenue SW is extended through Rotary Park between 1 Street SW and Centre Street (as shown in Map 3-1), the park should be modified to ensure safe pedestrian flow, and 5 Avenue SW will require pedestrian calming measures to ensure safe vehicular speeds. The existing sculpture within the proposed road alignment should remain in its current location by splitting the roadway around the sculpture.

3.4.2.3 New Park at 1st Street and 9th Avenue SW

There is an opportunity to create a new public park across 1 Street SW from the existing Charles Clark Park and the public library. Within the public realm concept plan, this is a strategic location for a park as it would demarcate the presence of the adjacent civic institutions cluster (the public library, Culture Centre, and Charles Clark Health Centre).

Policies

- a. creation of a new park east of 1st Street SW between 9th Avenue and 10th Avenue SW is recommended.
- b. a pedestrian crossing signal across 1 St SW adjacent to the library is recommended to facilitate easy and safe crossing for pedestrians.
- c. to create an environment suitable for a new public park, traffic calming features, including pedestrian bulb-outs and narrowed drive aisles, are recommended to reduce vehicular speeds along 1st Street SW.

3.4.2.4 New Urban Agriculture Park at 1st Street between 9th - 12th Avenue

The lands between 1st Street SW and Centre Street SW, between 9 Avenue and 12th Avenue SW, and within the CPR right of way, are envisioned for use by nonprofit groups, community-oriented urban agriculture, community gardens, and/or public orchards. These uses reinforce the agricultural identity of the Town and region and will act as a catalyst to help the community build strong internal relationships, as well as partnerships with local charities.

Policies

3.4.3 Existing + New Public Plazas

Public plazas refer to areas of land that are largely landscaped with hard surface materials, and generally oriented for public gathering rather than active recreation. They are typically programmed with enough flexibility to allow for a wide variety of events.

3.4.3.1 Pioneer Square

Pioneer Square is the largest existing public plaza in the downtown and is used for a wide variety of public events. The creation of active pedestrian frontages on developments abutting Pioneer Square is strongly encouraged to ensure that the land is fully utilized as a public amenity.

Policies

- a. encourage active frontage, building entrances, and temporary spill-out activities, including café seating, patios, retail displays, and non-permanent signage in the square. Private use of the plaza will be subject to approval through an established protocol (see Chapter 5: Implementation, High River Downtown Sidewalk + Woonerf Program).
- b. renovations to the existing plaza are recommended to facilitate a wider range of activities than the area currently allows.

3.4.3.2 Museum of the Highwood Plaza

The Museum of the Highwood is one of the largest cultural attractions in the downtown and is strategically located nearby Rotary Park and the proposed Garden Laneway. There is currently a small plaza paved with concrete unit pavers north of the museum along 1st Street.

Policies

- a. maintain the existing use of the land at the corner of 1st Street SW and 3rd Avenue as a plaza.
- b. use of the plaza for any private function shall be subject to approval through an established protocol.
- c. expand the existing plaza to include new pedestrian areas constructed as part of traffic calming measures along 1st St SW.
- d. when the Garden Laneway is constructed, it is recommended to expand the plaza to include the lands adjacent to the laneway surrounding the Museum of the Highwood.
- e. work with the Museum of the Highwood to construct educational and/or public art installations that coincide with the programming of the museum, as well as to use the plaza for special events and outdoor programming on a year-round basis.

Historical Downtown Precinct

4.2.3 Land Use and Urban Design Policies

- a. the conservation and adaptive re-use of existing heritage buildings is strongly encouraged to assist in retaining the character of the downtown.

4.3.2 Land Use

- a. new development should incorporate a mix of uses into individual buildings, versus a mix of uses spread throughout the area in general. Retail or commercial uses should be provided on the ground floor of any new development and encouraged for existing buildings.
- b. in keeping with the traditional pattern and scale of development, small-scale retail/commercial uses should be the predominant form at the ground level of buildings in the area.
- c. the adaptive re-use of existing heritage buildings (as identified in the Town of High River Downtown Heritage Inventory report) is strongly encouraged.
- d. a diversity of street-oriented retail and commercial uses should be encouraged to enhance the pedestrian environment in this Precinct.
- e. commercial establishments with a restaurant or food service focus are encouraged to provide informal cultural venues, such as performance spaces.
- f. residential uses may be included on the upper floors of buildings in the area; however, retail or commercial uses must be provided on the ground level of buildings with residential uses.
- g. live-work units are encouraged as part of mixed-use developments.
- h. new stand-alone, single-use retail buildings are prohibited for the area.
- i. the maximum floor area per ground floor use is limited to 1,000 square metres to maintain the historical small-scale development pattern.

4.3.3 Built Form

4.3.3.1 Height

- a. development shall be limited to a minimum of two storeys and a maximum height of five storeys (not to exceed 16 metres) throughout the Precinct.
- b. building design elements, including step-backs of upper floors, should be utilized for buildings immediately adjacent to low-density residential uses to ensure an appropriate transition in built form.

4.3.3.2 Frontage

- a. buildings should be built to the front property line, in order to maintain an active interface for pedestrians. Front setbacks up to three metres may be considered to provide outdoor amenity space (e.g. patios, plazas) or to accommodate accessibility features (e.g., ramps).
- b. entrances to buildings should be provided facing the adjacent street and should be clearly visible to create an identity and sense of arrival. Entrances should be universally accessible, and utilize elements such as detailing, paving materials, lighting, signage, and canopies to be welcoming and provide weather protection.
- c. buildings on corner lots should front both adjacent streets to give prominence to the intersection and feature enhanced design to reflect their highly visible locations and create opportunities for landmarks and corner entrance features.
- d. buildings with frontage exceeding 15 metres in length should be avoided, where possible, to maintain a pedestrian scale of building rhythm, in keeping with the traditional pattern and scale of development. Where buildings with frontage exceeding 15 metres are unavoidable, the façade should be vertically articulated to offer visual interest to pedestrians and reduce the aesthetic impact to the adjacent street.
- e. Opportunities for art installations along building frontages should be considered, as a means of providing interest, civic identity, and community pride. These could be implemented as public installations through a Town agreement negotiated with the landowner or could be independently provided by the landowner.
- f. new development adjacent to the existing mews system shall provide an active pedestrian entrance from the mews; likewise, new development adjacent to or backing onto George Lane Park shall provide active frontage onto the park and the proposed pedestrian promenade (see Chapter 3:

Public Realm). g. Frontages of ground floor retail or commercial space should be limited in terms of width to maintain the historical small-scale development pattern.

h. commercial uses that do not generate significant pedestrian activity may locate on the ground floor of buildings provided that store frontages do not exceed 15 metres.

i. lobbies for residential or office components of mixed-use buildings may be accommodated at the ground floor, provided their street frontage does not exceed 10 metres.

4.3.3.3 Articulation

a. the character of the Downtown should be defined as a high-quality environment that is distinguished by its organized, but varied facades with superior detailing and signage.

b. building façades along streets that are mainly commercial and/or retail in nature should be highly transparent and articulated at street level to actively engage pedestrians and create amenity and visual interest.

c. architectural components shall be used to differentiate one face of a building from another. The design of structures should be architecturally compatible with other structures through the use of similar and complementary forms, materials and scale.

d. the façades of multi-tenant buildings shall be organized to provide a strong and consistent rhythm to the streetscape. Flat, undifferentiated building faces should be avoided.

e. a minimum of 60% glazing at grade should be used to facilitate interaction with pedestrians and promote safety.

f. all visible building façades should feature architectural detailing to create a unified exterior.

g. building design should include modern forms of architectural detailing or features that complement the historic character of the area, including elements such as cornices, parapets, pilasters, window fenestration, window features, and entrances.

h. architectural details such as recesses, overhangs, signage, lighting, planters, banners, friezes, and canopies can also be utilized to create articulation and visual interest on building façades.

i. individual tenancies should be defined clearly with articulated entrances and consistent sign treatment.

j. overhead elements may be provided on building façades over portions of the adjacent sidewalk for weather protection for pedestrians. These should be individualized for specific developments.

k. all blank walls (e.g. those walls without fenestration) are to be treated, either with cladding that is complementary to the cladding of the building and adds interest to the look and texture of the wall and building, or with a painted mural or other artwork approved by the development authority.

4.3.3.4 Step-backs and Projections

a. buildings shall provide step-backs of upper storeys on the building face adjacent to the front property line above the 2nd storey to enhance sunlight penetration to street level. The step-back distance for buildings shall be determined as follows:

1. Where a building overshadows a public street (e.g., a building located on the south side of a street), the step-back distance shall be set such that the building will not overshadow the sidewalk on the opposite side of the street between the hours of 10 am and 2 pm, during the days between the Spring and Fall equinoxes.

2. In all other instances the minimum step-back distance shall be two (2) meters.

b. for all buildings adjacent to existing low density residential development, floors above the 2nd storey shall be stepped back a minimum of two (2) meters to ensure an appropriate transition in height and massing, and to limit overshadowing.

c. in all cases, step-backs should be integral to the overall form and design of the development.

d. step-backs may be utilized for private outdoor terraces to serve building tenants.

e. step-backs may be utilized for green roof areas to aid in sustainable development practices.

- f. mixed-use buildings with a residential component should provide balconies for all residential units. In all cases, balconies should be integral to the overall form and design of the development.
- g. balcony projections should not project beyond the front property line and should not project more than one (1) metre from the façade.

4.3.3.6 Materiality

- a. the heritage materiality found in brick, wood, and stone architectural elements in the Downtown can be used in concert with modern materials, such as aluminum, zinc, and steel.
- b. building design should utilize a variety of superior materials and finishes used in combination to articulate the building components and create high-quality elevations.
- c. richer materials, such as brick, glass, stone, and steel should be predominantly used on the lower level of buildings, particularly at street level.
- d. vinyl siding is not acceptable cladding material.
- e. building materials and colour schemes should be compatible with their context, including adjacent structures and the surrounding landscape. Materials that might unnecessarily date the overall development, or materials used in a non-contextual novelty fashion will be discouraged.
- f. building trim and accent areas may feature brighter colours, including primary colours.
- g. accent colours should identify public entrances to buildings.
- h. exterior building materials should not include smooth faced concrete block (triple score acceptable), smooth-faced tilt up concrete panels, or smooth concrete.
- i. exposed concrete (except for normal foundation projection above grade) should be heavily ribbed, textured, coloured, or bush hammered.

4.3.4 On-Site Parking and Servicing Interface

- b. front-yard parking is prohibited.
- c. surface parking areas are only permitted at the rear of buildings.
- d. vehicular access to individual sites shall be taken from the rear wherever possible, in order to maintain a continuous pedestrian environment along storefronts.
- e. vehicle access points to underground or aboveground parking structures shall be taken from the rear of sites wherever possible.
- f. where vehicular access to a site is only possible from the adjacent street, the access point must be integrated into the building in a manner that minimizes its impact on the adjacent pedestrian environment.
- g. where possible, vehicular access points shall be consolidated to serve multiple buildings within a block, in order to reduce interruptions to the pedestrian environment along the adjacent street.
- h. In all instances, surface parking areas shall be screened from view of adjacent pedestrian areas.
- i. vehicle access points to underground or aboveground parking structures should feature design elements such as screening, high-quality materials, lighting, enclosure, and landscaping to reduce visual impact.
- j. loading and waste storage areas should be located at the rear of buildings and should be screened from view from adjacent properties and pedestrian areas.

Centre Street Precinct

4.4.2 Land Use

- a. new development should incorporate a mix of uses into individual buildings, versus a mix of uses spread throughout the area in general. Retail or commercial uses should be provided on the ground floor of any new development and encouraged for existing buildings.
- b. residential uses may be included on the upper floors of buildings in the area; however, retail, or commercial uses must be provided on the ground level of buildings with residential uses.
- d. new stand-alone, single-use retail/commercial buildings are permitted, provided they do not exceed 2,500 square metres in floor area.

4.4.3.3 Articulation

- a. the façades of multi-tenant buildings shall be organized to provide a strong and consistent rhythm to the streetscape. Flat, undifferentiated building faces should be avoided.
- b. long buildings, generally those over 40 metres in length, shall break up the visual impact of their mass using vertical recesses or other architectural articulation and/or changes in material.
- c. a minimum of 60% glazing at grade should be used to facilitate visual permeability, interaction with pedestrians, and to promote safety (“eyes on the street”).
- d. all visible building façades should feature architectural detailing to create a unified exterior.

4.4.3.2 Frontage

- a. buildings should be constructed to the ultimate front property line; setbacks from the front property line may be permitted up to 4 metres to provide outdoor amenity space (e.g., patios, plazas).
- b. entrances to buildings should be provided facing the adjacent street and should be clearly visible to create an identity and sense of arrival. Main floor entrances should be universally accessible and utilize elements such as detailing, paving materials, lighting, signage and canopies to be welcoming and provide weather protection.
- c. buildings on corner lots should front both adjacent streets to give prominence to the intersection, feature enhanced design to reflect their highly visible locations, and create opportunities for landmarks and corner entrance features.
- d. individual business frontages that are greater than 30 metres in width should provide for multiple entrances at the street level.
- e. architectural details such as recesses, overhangs, signage, lighting, planters, banners, friezes, and canopies can be utilized to create articulation and visual interest on building façades.
- g. overhead elements should be provided on building façades over portions of the adjacent sidewalk for weather protection for pedestrians. These should be individualized for specific developments.
- h. all blank walls (e.g. those walls without fenestration) are to be treated, either with cladding that is complementary to the cladding of the building and adds interest to the look

4.4.3.4 Step-backs and Projections

- a. buildings shall provide step-backs of upper storeys on the building face adjacent to the front above the 3rd storey in order to enhance sunlight penetration to street level. The stepback distance for buildings shall be determined as follows:
 1. Where a building overshadows a public street (e.g., a building located on the south side of a street), the step-back distance shall be set such that the building will not over-shadow of the sidewalk on the opposite side of the street between the hours of 10 am and 2 pm, on days falling between the Spring and Fall equinoxes.
 2. In all other instances the minimum stepback distance shall be two metres.
- b. where a new development shares a rear lane, rear property line, or side property line with an existing low-density residential district, the building shall step-back at a maximum height of 10 metres a distance that will minimize overshadowing and allow for a transition in building elevation, as follows:
 1. a minimum of 4.5 metres along the building face adjacent to a rear property line or laneway, except where it is necessary to increase the step-back distance in order to avoid overshadowing the yard and primary building on the adjacent parcel between the hours of 10 am and 2 pm, on days falling between the Spring and Fall equinoxes.
 2. a minimum of 4.5 meters along the building face adjacent to the side property line.
- c. rear and sidestep-backs are only required for new development adjacent to existing low density residential zoning districts.
- d. in all cases, step-backs should be integral to the overall form and design of the development.

4.4.4 On-Site Parking and Servicing Interface

- b. front-yard parking is prohibited in this precinct.
- c. parking (either surface or structured) is permitted at either the rear or side of buildings, and/or may be internalized.
- d. parking shall not be located in the front of buildings adjacent to streets or major intersections.
- e. vehicular access to individual sites should be taken from the rear wherever possible: where a laneway is present, parking shall be accessed from the laneway; access from the street is permitted otherwise.
- f. vehicle access points to internal parking structures (underground or above-ground parking structures) should be taken from the rear.
- h. surface parking areas should be screened from view of adjacent pedestrian areas. Large parking lots shall be enhanced with landscaping on edges and within medians.

Industrial Arts Precinct

4.6.2 Land Use

- a. live-work arrangements shall be the only residential uses considered within the Precinct. Where a live-work arrangement is provided, the residential component of the building must be provided above the ground floor. Stand-alone residential projects shall not be permitted.
- b. public art galleries or studios are encouraged to develop in this area to create a hub of shared uses and services.
- c. small-scale light manufacturing and other light industrial operations are encouraged to develop in this area to help strengthen the community's economic diversity.

4.6.3.2 Frontage

- a. buildings shall be oriented towards and have their main entrance on a street.
- b. buildings should be built to the front property line, in order to support creation of an active street edge.
- c. active commercial uses associated within industrial buildings should be located at prominent positions in the building relative to the block face, such as at corners or adjacent to commercial frontages in neighbouring buildings.
- d. buildings or corner lots should front both adjacent streets to give prominence to the intersection and feature enhanced design to reflect their highly visible locations.

4.6.3.3 Articulation

- a. for portions of industrial buildings with inactive frontages or blank facades, articulation through subtle façade offsets and material changes should be applied to create visual interest and a pedestrian-scaled rhythm.
- b. live-work units should be clearly differentiated from one another using vertical architectural elements and material differentiation.

Public Realm Plan.

- a. any redevelopment of existing open spaces and plans for new open spaces should be undertaken with regard to Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.
- b. the existing pedestrian pathway along the east side of 1 Street SW should be extended to the south to 12 Avenue SW to provide additional connections for those living, visiting, and working in the Downtown. Seating and amenity areas should be included as part of the corridor improvements.

Attached Maps:

Map 1: Planning Area and Planning Precincts

Map 2: Sidewalk and Pathway Typology

Map 3: Laneway Typology

Map 4: Street Typology

Map 5: Public Service Precinct

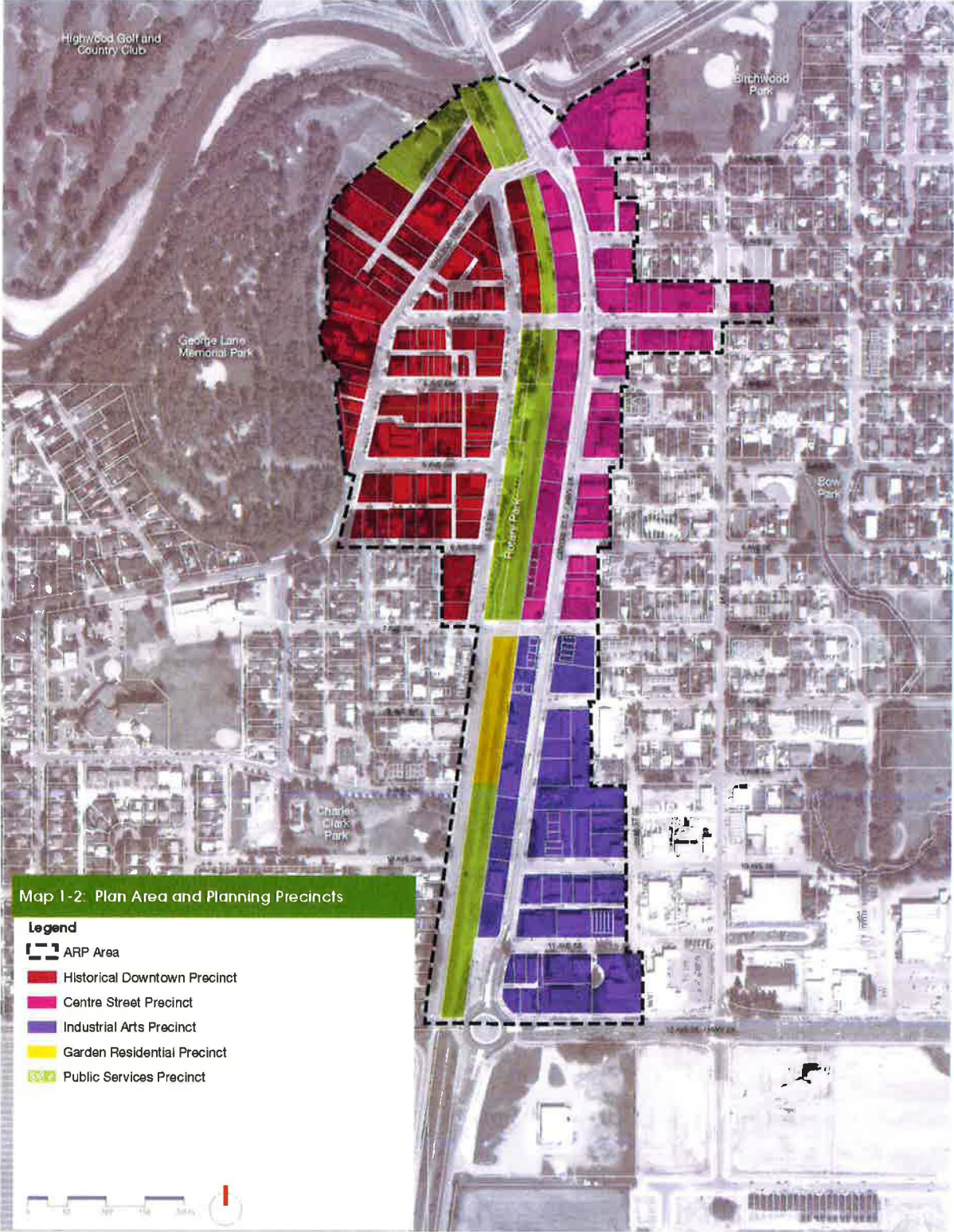
Map 6: Centre Street Precinct

Map 7: Historical Downtown Precinct

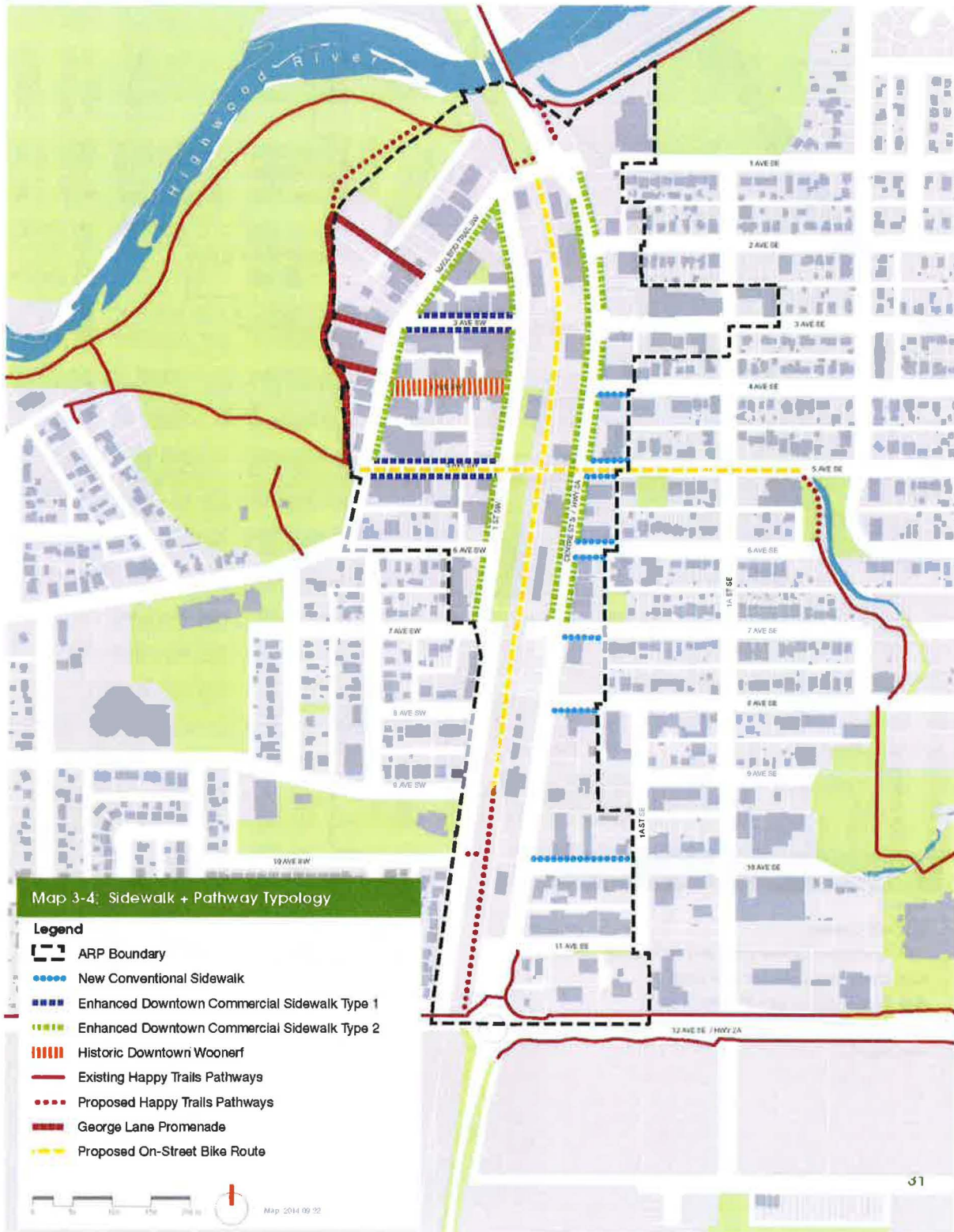
Map 8: Open Space

Map 9: Industrial Precinct

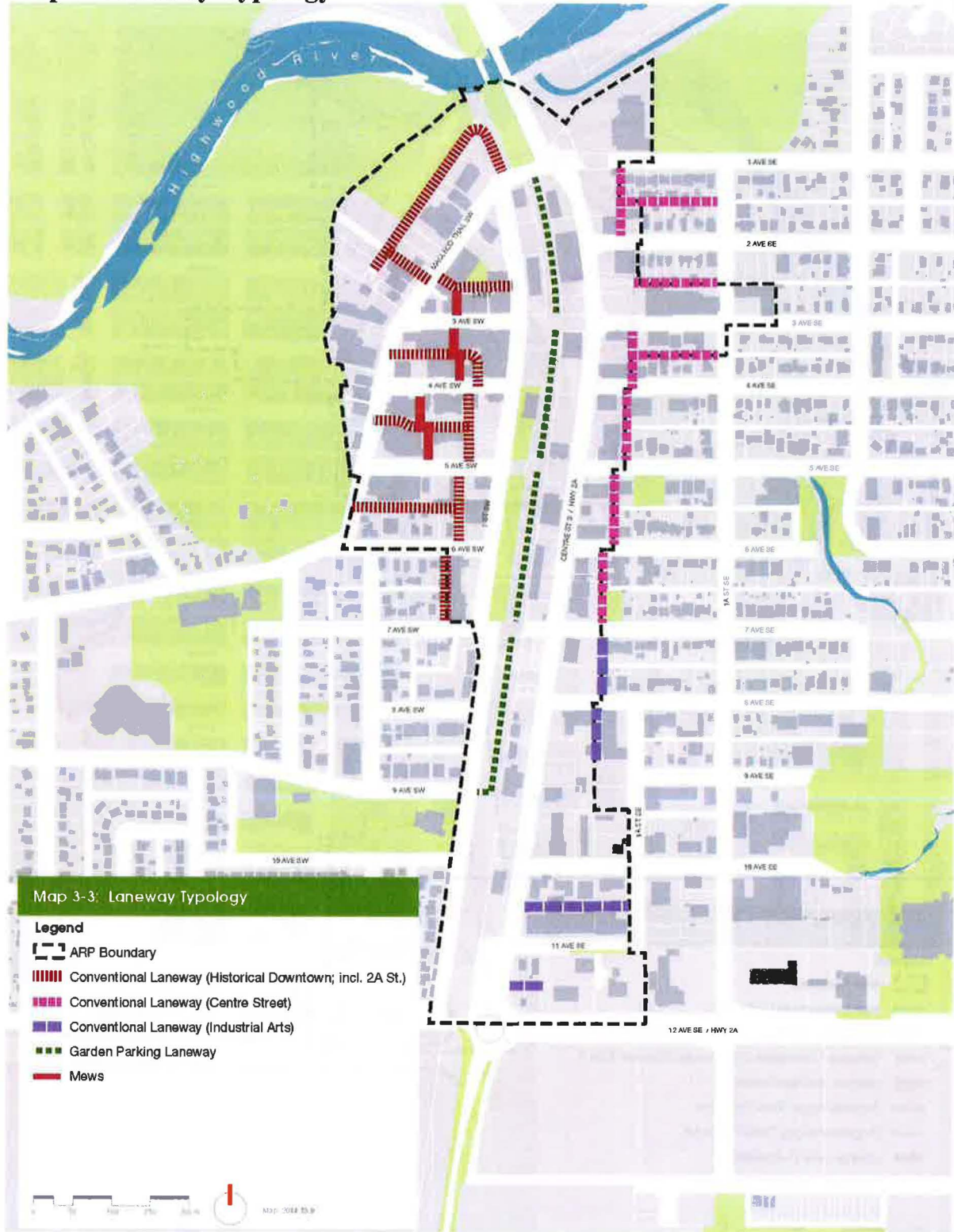
Map 1: Planning Area and Planning Precincts



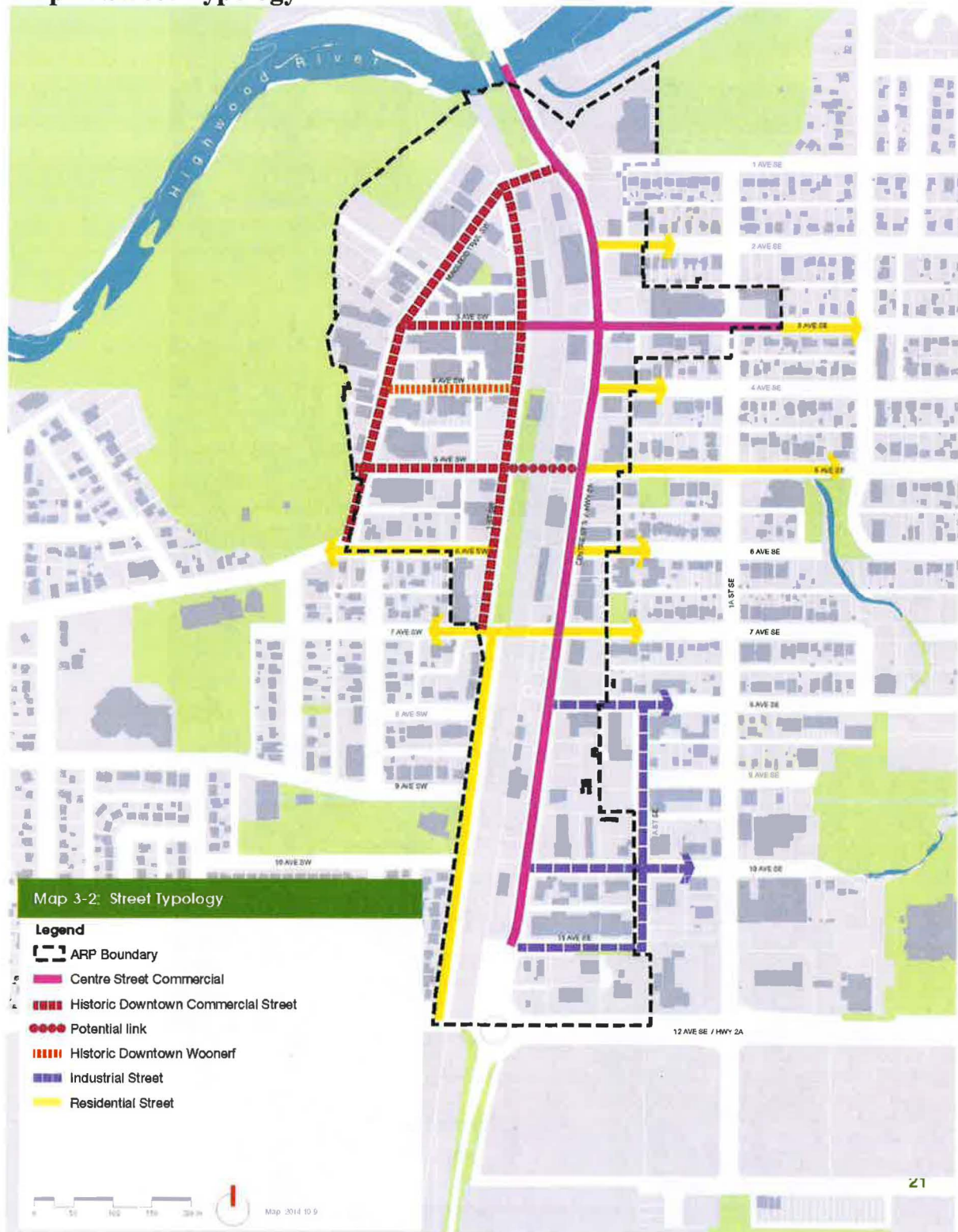
Map 2: Sidewalk and Pathway Typology



Map 3: Laneway Typology



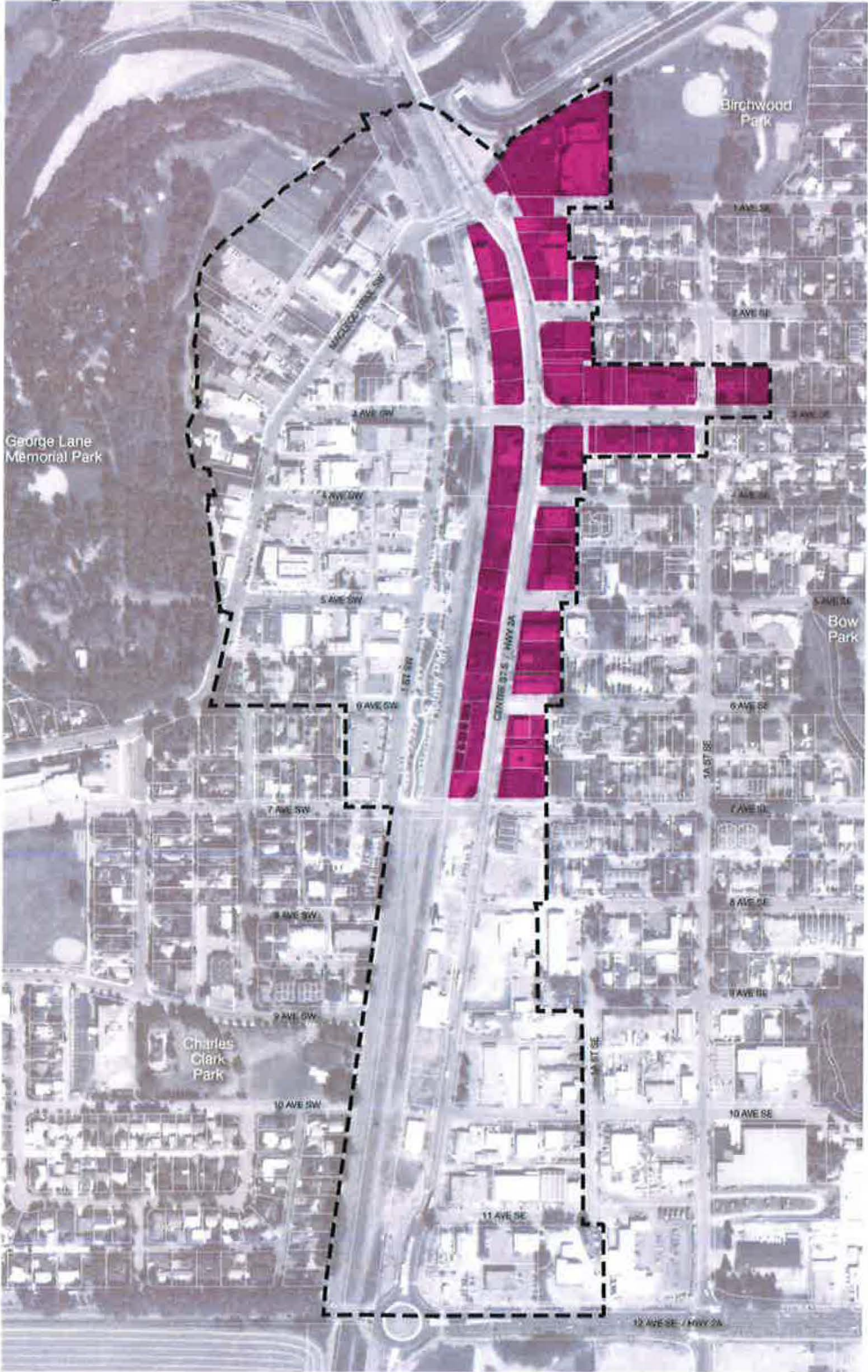
Map 4: Street Typology



Map 5: Public Services Precinct



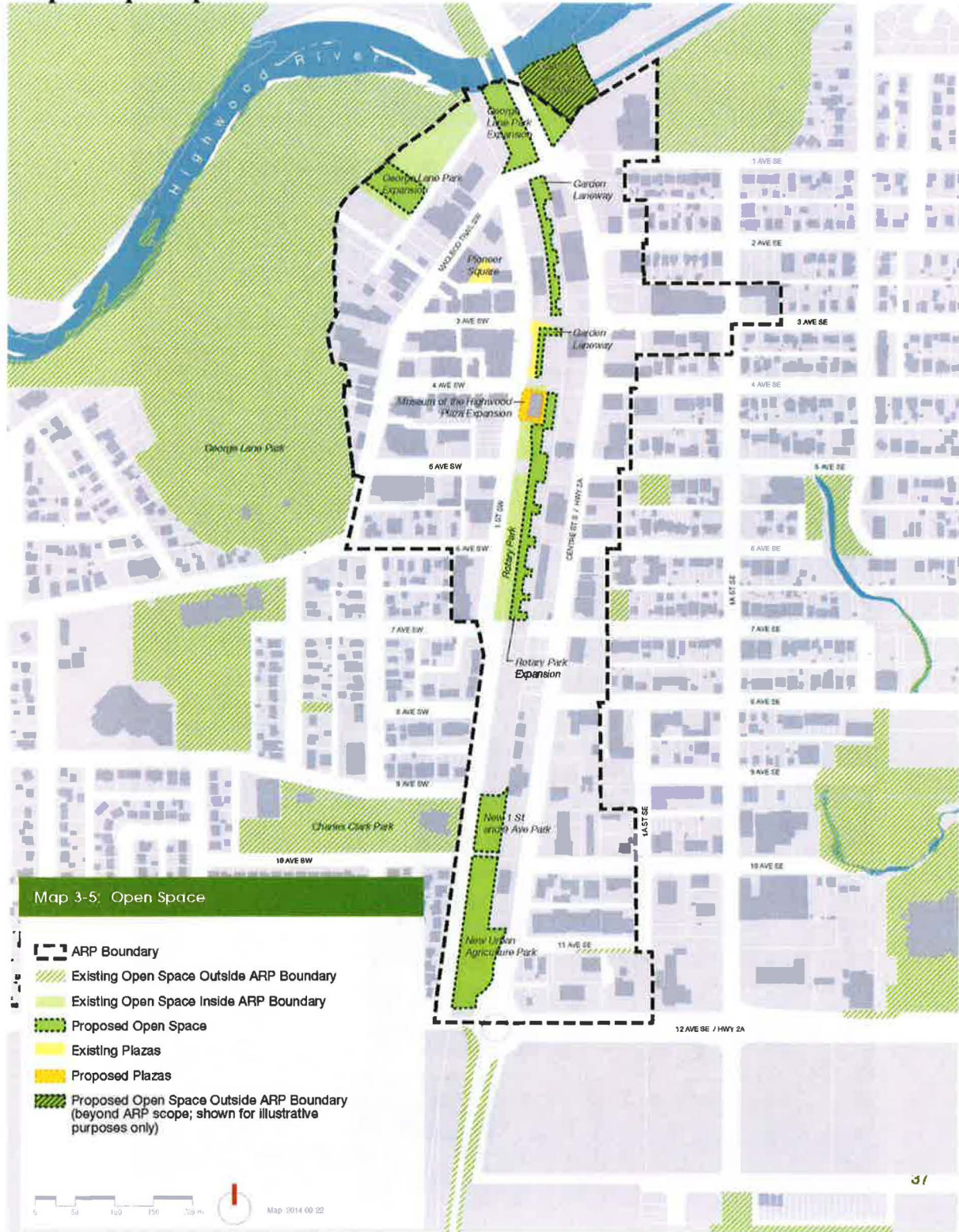
Map 6: Centre Street Precinct



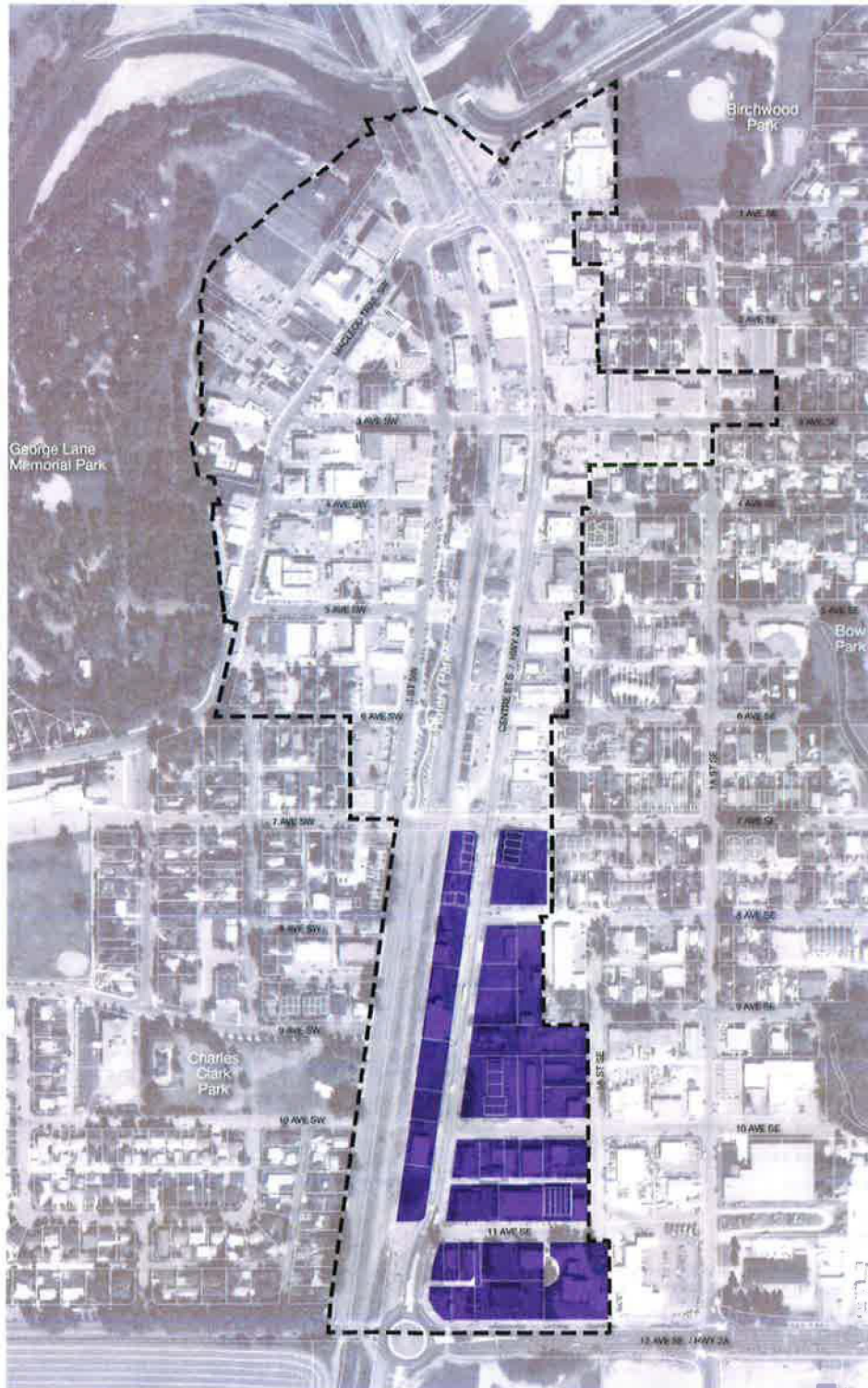
Map 7: Historical Downtown Precinct



Map 8: Open Space



Map 9: Industrial Precinct



Appendix VI: Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan Executive Summary

Executive Summary

CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION ACTION PLAN



About the Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan

Climate change can be characterized by rising temperatures, changing precipitation patterns and increased frequency of extreme events. As temperatures climb, we anticipate seeing an increase in the frequency and severity of climate hazards in our region. In High River, we plan to take proactive actions to minimize the impacts of climate hazards on our community.

Our region is exposed to climate hazards that include high water events, wildfire, drought, heat waves, and intense storms. The latest climate science indicates that we can expect an increase in the frequency and intensity of these events¹². While we have policies, programs, and infrastructure in place to address climate hazards, our desire is to further enhance our resilience and implement additional proactive measures. Adaptation efforts are critical to reduce both the long- and short-term impacts of climate hazards. According to the Global Commission on Adaptation, every one (1) dollar invested in climate adaptation will return nearly six (6) dollars on investment.

We intend to incrementally improve the resilience of our community through strategic prioritization and implementation of actions that address our highest risks. This begins with the development of the Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan (CCAAP). The CCAAP was developed with input from community open houses, youth engagement events and the project Task Force. The Task Force was composed of a diverse group of community members including residents, Town staff, and members of Council.

The CCAAP identifies adaptation measures that the Town will take in order to increase its resilience to climate change hazards. The measures are categorized under either Foundational or under one of the four (4) specific climate hazards (drought, high water events, wildfire, and extreme heat). The CCAAP identifies 55 different adaptation measures and identifies their implementation timelines as either short-, medium-, or long-term.

The CCAAP will serve as a plan to guide the Town towards a path of greater resilience in the face of climate change.

Climate Change in High River

Local climate change data for the Town of High River was reviewed from several publicly available climate change tools^{34,5}, and the City of Calgary's detailed projections report¹. From this analysis, six climate hazards were identified that pose a risk to the Town.



Drought

Changes to our water cycle due to increasing year-round temperatures, reduced snowpack and less summer precipitation will create conditions that increase the likelihood and severity of droughts.



High water events

As precipitation patterns and types (rain instead of snow) shift, the timing of winter melt, and seasonal run-off will change resulting in earlier flood seasons and the potential for more severe high-water events.



Wildfires

Hotter, drier summers will result in conditions more conducive to wildfires.



Extreme heat

During the summer months, days over 30°C will occur more frequently.



Short duration high intensity rainfall

(often known as cloud bursts or atmospheric rivers) Based on intensity, duration, frequency (IDF) curve projections, extreme storm events are expected to become more frequent and severe.



Heavy snowfall

Projections indicate an increase in precipitation in the winter with less precipitation falling as snow and more as rain. However, heavy snowfalls are still expected to occur when the increased precipitation occurs when temperatures are below zero.



Severe storms (hail and tornadoes)

Destructive storm events will become more common as the available energy and increased temperatures create favorable conditions for hail and tornadoes.

Town Themes

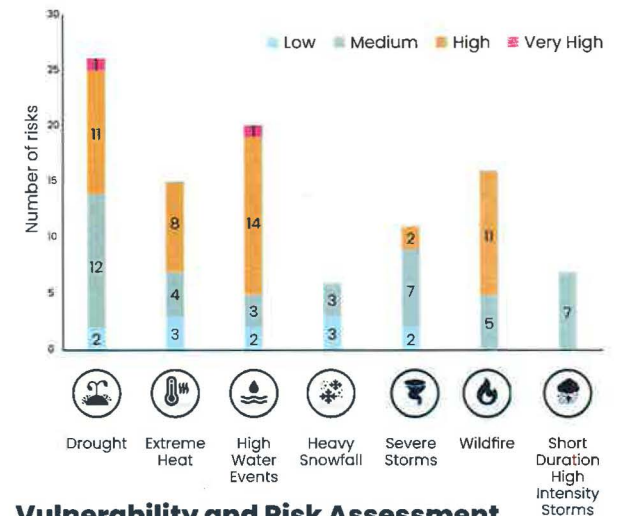
In order to connect this work to the Town Plan, impacts from climate hazards were considered through the lens of the Town themes.

The Town themes include the following:

- Small-town feel
- Vibrant parks, trails, and recreation
- Health and well-being
- Strong economy
- Interconnected community
- Environmental stewardship
- Infrastructure and level of service

Using this lens helped identify impacts and adaptation actions that are connected to maintaining the Town's vision and values.

Impact statements were generated through community engagement and Task Force meetings and considered each combination of climate hazard and Town theme. An impact statement includes the climate hazard (e.g., extreme heat) and the effect it may have (e.g., health impacts).



Vulnerability and Risk Assessment

A vulnerability and risk assessment were conducted on the impact statements, with the goal of understanding the priority risks to the community. The results indicate that the climate hazards that pose the greatest risk to High River are high water events, drought, wildfire and extreme heat. These 4 hazards were prioritized for identifying adaptation strategies.

¹Climate_projections_for_Calgary_2022.pdf (hdp-co-prod-app-cgy-engage-hies-s3-co-central-1.amazonaws.com)
³⁴IPCC_AR5_SPM.pdf
⁵Home | Climate Data Canada
¹²Climate Change in Canada | Climate Atlas of Canada
¹³Computerized IDF CC Tool for the Development of Intensity-Duration-Frequency Curves under a Changing Climate (idfcc-uwcep)

Foundational Measures

	Communicate to the community that the siren system is used for various emergencies throughout the community to enhance public safety.	Communications
	Develop trust-building initiatives to improve the relationship between residents and RCMP, fire department, and bylaw services.	Emergency Management
	Support vulnerable populations by providing them with regular information about climate hazards throughout the community.	FCSS
	Include Town owned natural assets (e.g., trees, wetlands) in the Town's ongoing asset management work to reduce potential damage during a climate event.	Parks
	Proactively account for the homeless populations when identifying evacuation shelter needs and capacities.	Emergency Management
	Ensure outdoor assets (e.g., playground equipment) are well designed to be able to withstand the impacts of mild to moderate climate events.	Parks
	Continue offering emergency preparedness materials (e.g., training, and information sessions) to support community members.	Communications
	Distribute current mapping of common homeless population camps with all emergency responders to support evacuation and outreach.	Emergency Management

Drought

	Update the Town's water conservation program to minimize the load on the water supply during drought conditions.	Utilities
	Require developers to address native drought tolerant landscaping in Area Structure Plan's (ASP's) and Developer Permits.	Planning
	Initiate conversations with Foothills County about cost sharing initiatives to support farmers seeking support services (e.g., FCSS, food banks) in High River.	SLT
	Review and update the Towns urban forest bylaws and standards through the lens of creating more shade to reduce heat island effects.	Parks
	Identify places where community members can gather and socialize that are less dependent on the availability of water.	Parks
	Assess water utility financial plan to account for decreased water utility revenues during times of prolonged drought.	Finance
	Consider alternate landscaping options to reduce irrigation demands.	Parks
	Consult the community about expanding the tree removal bylaw to account for trees on private property.	Planning
	Lobby Alberta Parks and Environment to update water reuse legislation.	SLT
	Implement water conservation and rainwater catchment programs.	Utilities
	Conduct a source water assessment and water system capacity assessment to understand the vulnerability to drought and develop proactive measures (e.g., additional water supply).	Engineering

Foundational Measures

	Develop a plan to make free access to Town owned recreational facilities and recreation amenities.	SLT
	Investigate water utility rate structures as it relates to climate hazards.	Utilities
	Refine evacuation plans, including clarity about secondary evacuation routes for each neighbourhood.	Emergency Management
	Develop public education materials with our partners to increase knowledge regarding signs of climate change mental health impacts.	Communications
	Proactively meet with the Province and Federal governments to understand their ability to provide financial supports (e.g., grants/funding programs) to implement proactive resilience measures to climate hazards.	SLT
	Create public information materials to inform residents and businesses about the anticipated impacts of climate hazards.	Communications
	Work with local wildlife partners to conduct regular biodiversity monitoring.	SLT
	Conduct a public lands condition assessment and develop measures to address climate change impact risks (e.g., drought, extreme heat, wildfire).	Parks
	Introduce nature-based solutions to address the impacts of the climate hazards.	Parks

High Water Events

	Continue identifying funding opportunities to support the construction of flood mitigation infrastructure.	Finance
	Complete regular evaluations of our evacuation plan to better understand the barriers and to adapt to changes within the community relating to evacuations.	Emergency Management
	Enforce appropriate bylaws for protected areas on private Town lands (e.g., pruning shrubs, mowing lawns etc.).	Parks
	Integrate all flood mitigation infrastructure into the Towns asset management work.	Asset Management
	Provide basic communication training to all employees about how best to speak with concerned residents about high water events using a trauma-informed approach.	FCSS
	Identify third-party resources (e.g., Family & Community Support Services) to help residents address their fear/ anxiety/ PTSD surrounding high water events.	FCSS
	Continue to assess the need and construct flood mitigation measures to protect residents and Town assets.	SLT
	Advocate for partnerships with upstream river users (mining, forestry, forestry management, etc.) to understand water quality risks if high water events occur.	SLT
	Investigate potable water trailer that is owned and operated by the Town for water main breaks/ repairs and for water accessibility for vulnerable populations.	Emergency Management
	Develop planting practices for the natural and urban environments to integrate plant materials that can withstand overland high water events.	Parks

Foundational Measures

	Investigate options to implement more pervious surfaces throughout the community.	Parks
	Develop financial plans that reflect the effort to maintain Town assets impacted by climate change.	Finance
	Identify, establish, and maintain an ongoing energy efficiency retrofit program to update town buildings and their heating, ventilation, and air conditioning.	Facilities

Extreme Heat

	Develop a plan to make free access to Town owned recreational facilities and recreation amenities.*	SLT
	Research how other municipalities have integrated cooling design principles into buildings that house vulnerable populations.	Facilities
	Identify, establish, and maintain an ongoing energy efficiency retrofit program to update town buildings and their heating, ventilation, and air conditioning.*	Facilities

	Short-term (2025-2026)		Medium-term (2026 - 2027)		Long-term (2027 - 2030)
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Wildfire

	Seek partners to assist in air quality monitoring to address the impacts from wildfire smoke and to support communicating to residents when to limit outdoor activity.	SLT
	Communicate the risk of smoking in parks to help prevent human caused wildfire events.	Bylaw
	Determine the feasibility of a naturalized slope stabilization program as an immediate response to implement post-wildfire incidents.	Emergency Management
	Research comparable communities to identify ways to proactively protect our parks and trail system.	Emergency Management
	Complete mapping to identify slopes and erodible areas that may be at risk of failure in the event of a major wildfire and tree loss.	Emergency Management
	Distribute masks at Town buildings and community nodes, to reduce the health impacts of smoke on residents.	Emergency Management
	Finalize and implement the Towns FireSmart Plan.	Emergency Man.
	Research and develop a wildfire recovery and secondary hazard impact approach.	Emergency Management
	Develop air quality guidelines to close parks and outdoor recreation facilities to protect residents from wildfire smoke.	Emergency Management
	Adopt FireSmart landscaping practices in outdoor spaces.	Parks
	Develop guidelines to manage wildfire fuel within high-use parks and natural green spaces.	Emergency Management
	Investigate options to prevent wildfire spread through our parks and trail system.	Emergency Management
	Develop policies that support the creation, use, and maintenance of fire breaks around the perimeter of the community.	Emergency Management

Appendix VII: Active Transportation Plan - Executive Summary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE OF THE ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The Town of High River (the Town) has developed an active transportation plan (ATP) to guide the development and implementation of future walking and cycling facilities. This plan prioritizes a list of projects to help promote active transportation infrastructure and provide the community with more options to commute and recreate through human-powered modes of transport. The ATP was developed over a 12-month period starting in October 2022. The Plan is based on Canadian best practices, local expertise, and public input.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The project included three rounds of engagement with both in-person and online options available. These opportunities included:

- In-person Open House: Sharing information about the ATP and getting input on the existing issues and opportunities of the active transportation network.
- Online Survey #1: Collecting feedback on the ATP's Vision Statement and corresponding Guiding Principles and Goals, the proposed active transportation network map, and preferred short-term priority projects.
- Online Survey #2: Collecting feedback on the draft ATP to ensure it accurately reflects the collective vision of the community before the Plan is finalized.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The existing active transportation network consists of sidewalks, multi-use paths (known as Happy Trails) and unpaved walking paths. The town has a total of 76.6 km of sidewalks and 30.0 km of Happy Trails. The town does not have any on-street bicycle facilities, with cyclists required to share the road with motor vehicles where Happy Trails are unavailable. High River has a relatively connected network of sidewalks throughout most of town. However, several gaps exist, with some neighbourhoods lacking sidewalks on one or both sides of the streets as well as sections of higher-volume roadways with discontinuous sidewalks on one or both sides of the street. Further, there are limited pathways in the central business district and residential neighborhoods in the southeast and southwest.

In addition to the existing physical conditions of the active transportation network in High River, existing planning documents and guidelines were reviewed to gain a full understanding of the Town's values, priorities, as well as previous and ongoing work related to active transportation.

KEY ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

Key issues and opportunities for active transportation in High River were identified through the community engagement process and are summarized below.

Issues

- There are gaps in the Happy Trails and sidewalk network that do not allow continuous circular routes.
- There is a lack of maintenance of walking, rolling, and bicycle infrastructure, especially during winter months.
- The Highwood River creates a barrier separating the northwest community from the downtown/town center in the southwest and southeast.

Opportunities

- The wide roadways allow for easy implementation of on-street bicycle infrastructure.
- The extensive existing network of Happy Trails across the town makes it easy to connect to new developments and fill gaps in the network.
- The extensive existing sidewalk network provides the opportunity to easily fill missing links in the network.
- The former CP rail corridor along Centre St S gives the opportunity to add a direct north-south connection through the center of town.
- The Town's snow and ice control policy is well developed and can be enhanced to better maintain the sidewalks, pathways and other AT infrastructure during winter months.

VISION AND GOALS

The **Vision Statement** describes the Town's aspirations for the future of its ATP.

High River's active transportation network is built upon the Town's foundation of a "people first" community and connects people to neighborhoods, businesses, and nature. It supports the Town's road network by promoting universal access to the community with alternate modes of transportation like walking and bicycling, reducing reliance on vehicles. It provides direct connections for commuters and a multitude of continuous routes for recreational users during any time of the year. It is accessible to everyone, regardless of ability, age, or income.

The Vision is supported by a set of **Guiding Principles and Goals** to evaluate and determine priorities for AT projects and make the Vision a reality.



Guiding Principles



Goals

- Ensure livability and pedestrian safety by expanding and improving connections within the active transportation network.
- Ensure “people first” is our key Guiding Principle to provide a barrier-free active transportation network that provides a convenient and reliable transportation option for everyone for all seasons regardless of age, ability, and income.
- Promote a culture for active transportation within High River through education and support.
- Promote a shift to active transportation to encourage a healthy lifestyle while reducing our impact on climate change at a local level.
- Improve access to the community’s natural, recreational, and tourism amenities so that the network not only provides direct routes for commuters but also supports visitors and more casual uses.
- Make strategic investments by considering active transportation in all infrastructure projects.

PROPOSED NETWORK

The proposed network was developed through a review of Town documents to identify previously planned network connections and to provide connections to key destinations that typically generate trips made by active modes. It was further refined through discussions with town staff, and through community input provided during public engagement. The final proposed active transportation network consists of 94 projects that will expand and enhance the existing network. The proposed active transportation network map is illustrated in **Figure ES-1**. The long-term proposed network will not be realized until sometime into the future, potentially well beyond the lifespan of this ATP. Importantly though, the long-term network provides a “roadmap” for how incremental network improvements may be made in a coordinated manner, working toward the longer-term vision.

PRIORITIZATION

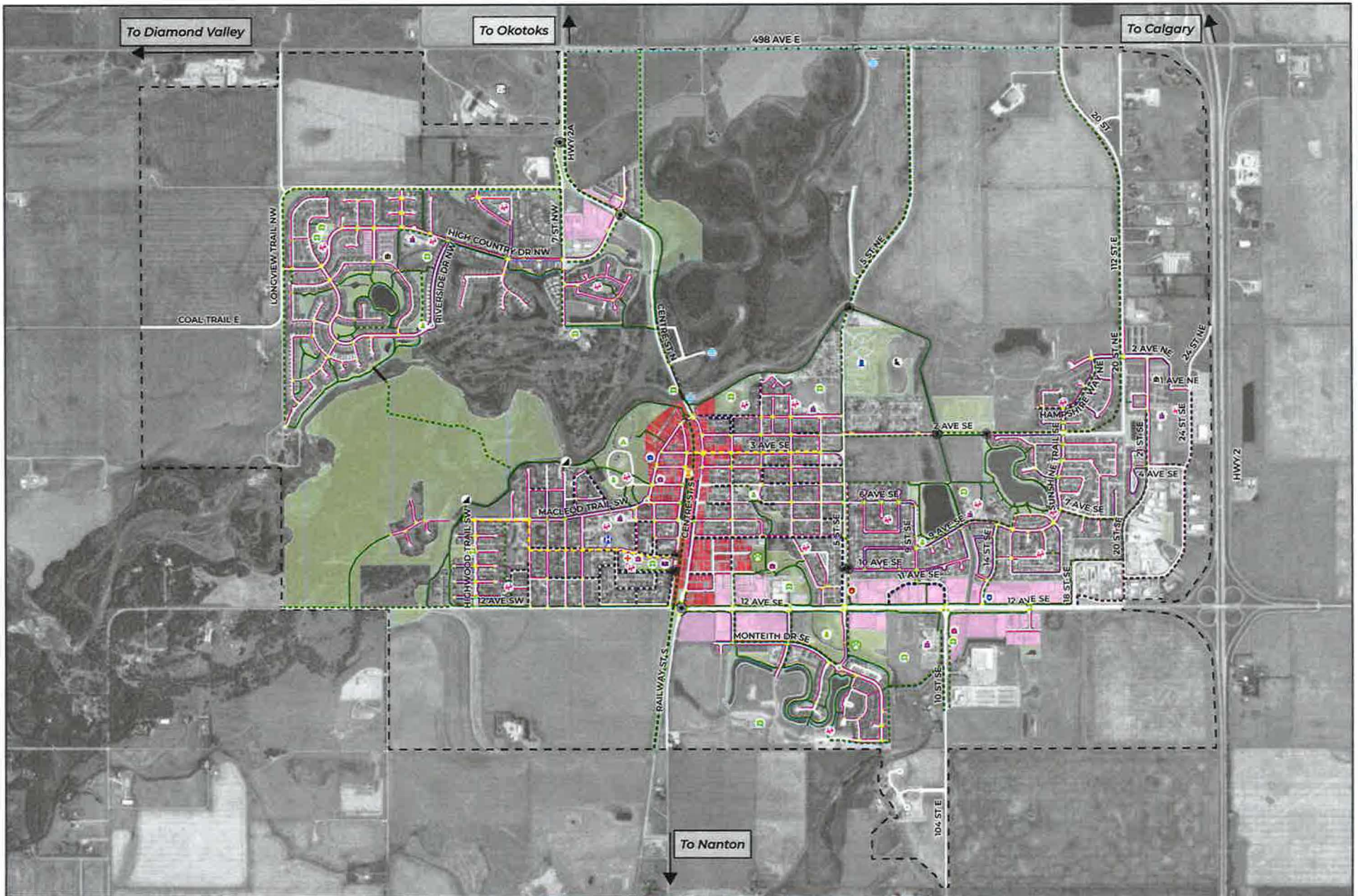
A high-level evaluation of the 94 proposed network projects was conducted to assist the Town with understanding the priority areas for implementation. Each project was rated based on several criteria including the ATP's Guiding Principles (People First, Connections, and culture) and three feasibility criteria: acceptability, ease of implementation / constructability / level of risk. The scores from each project helped to sort them into prioritization categories: high priority projects (to be implemented prior to 2029), medium-priority projects (to be implemented between 2029-2039), and low priority projects (to be implemented after 2039).

Additionally, one of the projects highlighted includes the Northwest Pedestrian Bridge. While the Town appreciates that this is a priority for the community, it comes with significant cost and will largely depend on external funding and approvals. As such, it is shown as a separate high-priority category.

Policy and Program Actions

A list of 41 policy and program actions to support the development of the active transportation network was established. These actions were categorized based on the ATP Guiding Principle they support most. Carrying out these actions will streamline the development of the network and help to encourage more users of the active transportation network. These actions are detailed in **Section 4.3** and summarized in **Appendix D**.

THE TOWN OF HIGH RIVER WOULD LIKE TO THANK ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS FOR THE VALUABLE INPUT PROVIDED DURING THE ATP PLANNING PROCESS.



		Scale: 1:30,000 (When plotted at 8.5"x11")		Legend		
	Project #: 2933.0012.01 Author: SDF Checked: KR Status: Review Revision: A Date: 2023/9/19	Coordinate System: NAD 1983 3TM 114 Data Sources: - Data provided by the Town of High River		RCMP Fire Hall Greenspaces Dog Park Recreation Campground Playground Wildlife Preserve Rodeo Grounds	River Valley Access River Access Central Business District Neighbourhood Centre District Parks & Greenspace Town of High River Existing Active Transportation Crosswalk Sidewalk	Happy Trails Roads Proposed Active Transportation Crosswalk - New/Improvement Bridge Crosswalk Bike Lane Sidewalk Happy Trails Happy Trail Connection (outside of Town boundary)
Notes: * Town does not maintain river accesses - use at own risk				Active Transportation Plan Proposed Active Transportation Network FIGURE ES-1		

Appendix VIII: Foundation Report

Town Plan

Foundation Report

January 2024



The logo for High River features a stylized green tree on the left, a dark green mountain range in the background, and a dark green river with white waterfalls in the center. The text "High River" is written in a dark green, serif font, with the "H" and "R" being significantly larger than the other letters. The "H" and "R" are positioned behind the mountain range and the river respectively.

High River

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Maps

Map 1- B5: Growth Priority Areas

Map 2- B6: Developable Land



1. Background

It has been 13 years since the Town of High River updated the Town Plan (officially referred to as a Municipal Development Plan or MDP) and much has changed in that time. Many of these changes either directly, or indirectly have an impact on the effectiveness of the Town Plan.

Report Structure

This report is organized into five chapters. Each chapter provides a summary of the data collected for High River, Foothills County, the province (Alberta), or both. At the end of each chapter, a summary is provided regarding the data and potential implications and directions concerning the Town Plan Implications. The five sections include:

- **Section 1: Purpose of Report**- includes a summary of consultation and drivers of change.
- **Section 2: Demographic Profile** – past and current (2016) population, age, and household characteristic data.
- **Section 3: Housing Profile** – past and current data on dwellings, housing types and tenure, and age of housing stock.
- **Section 4: Labour Force and Employment** – past and current data on employment rates and employment by industry.
- **Section 5: Growth and Development Snapshot** – past and current data on housing within the Town of High River.
- **Section 6: Potential Growth Options** – high-level potential growth options for the Town of High River.

Data

To better understand the data presented in this report, the following background information and considerations regarding the data are provided.

Census Year – The Census is conducted every five years by Statistics Canada in years ending in “1” and “6” (i.e., 2016, 2021).

Data compilation takes time to complete, and data is released by topic areas for the year following the Census.

Census Data – Two forms were used in the 2016 and 2021 Census, a “short-form”, A sample of 25% of Canadian households received a long-form questionnaire, and 75% the short-form. Short-form questions included, date of birth, sex, relationship of household members, and languages spoken. In addition to the questions on the short form, the long form included questions regarding housing and labour force activity.

2. Purpose

This report is a background document that provides an information baseline of demographic, socio-economic, and housing data. The report will inform the Town Plan process moving forward including providing historical context and important background information that will assist in the development of Town Plan policies.

The Town Plan is a comprehensive long-term plan for future growth, development, and change within the community. The Town Plan must include policies and maps in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Government Act. Section 632(3) of the Municipal Government Act indicates the following:

A Municipal Development Plan must address:

- i. The future land use within the municipality,
- ii. The manner of and proposals for future development in the municipality,
- iii. The coordination of land use, future growth patterns, and other infrastructure with adjacent municipalities if there is no intermunicipal development plan concerning those matters in those municipalities,
- iv. The provision of the required transportation systems either generally or specifically within the municipality and about the adjacent municipalities, and
- v. The provision of municipal services and facilities either generally or specifically.

A Municipal Development Plan may address:

- i. Proposals for the financing and programming of municipal infrastructure,
- ii. The co-ordination of municipal programs relating to the physical, social, and economic development of the municipality,
- iii. Environmental matters within the municipality,
- iv. The economic development of the municipality, and
- v. Policies respecting the provision of conservation reserves following later sections of the Municipal Government Act.

Additionally, Municipal Development Plan must contain:

- o Must contain policies respecting the provision of municipal, school, or municipal and school reserves, including but not limited to the need for, amount of and allocation of those reserves and the identification of school requirements in consultation with affected school boards,
- o Must contain policies respecting the protection of agricultural operations, and

Municipal Development Plan may also contain:

- o Statements regarding the municipality's development constraints, including the results of any development studies and impact analysis, and goals, objectives, targets, planning policies, and corporate strategies; and

- Policies respecting the provision of conservation reserve in accordance with Section 664.2(1)(a) to (d).

Prior to developing these policies and maps, it is important to determine and understand the historical context for growth in a community and its current and potential growth including any changes to the demographic profile, housing, and labour force, while also looking at drivers of change within the community since the current Town Plan was adopted.

2.1 Summary of Public Consultation (once the consultation process has been completed, this section will be reviewed and adjusted)

The Town's Community Engagement Policies are centered on the principles of clear intention and proactive communication, collaboration, inclusive participation, innovative and continuous improvement, and open evaluation of feedback.

The project team's engagement approach implemented the abovementioned policy and included a broad range of tools and techniques to foster meaningful conversation with the members of our community, that captures the entire community's vision and goals. Therefore, the project team provided strategically focused engagement opportunities consistent with the Town's Community Engagement Policies and the project's Engagement Plan.

To collect comprehensive and meaningful community feedback, the following tactics were used:

- Community idea boards,
- Staff engagement workshops,
- Stakeholder workshops,
- Pop-up dialogue booths,
- Formal open houses
- Photo contest,
- Youth engagement sessions, and
- Seniors' engagement sessions at seniors' housings.

In addition, a special project website and a webpage were established to assist in reaching a wider range of people. The project website and webpage serve as a hub for all updates and information on the project. The website included a unique crowdsourcing map that allowed respondents the opportunity to add icons and comments to specific locations in High River, providing for an interactive engagement experience and helping to portray feedback received.

Project Kick-Off Meeting

The project's kicked-off meeting was held in April 2021, led by the established project's Task Force, whose mandate was to help ensure that a community-driven process is undertaken for the duration of the project. Further, the Task Force's integral involvement was intended to guide public engagement methods and assist the Project Team in creating a document that can be used by the entire community to reach shared goals and objectives.

The project team has involved the community in five different phases of the engagement process. These stages include:

- Phase 1: Pre-consultation Process
- Phase 2: Identification of Key Themes
- Phase 3: Preparation of Draft Policy Framework and Confirmation of Direction
- Phase 4: Preparation of Draft Plan
- Phase 5: Council Review and Approval Process

Phase 1: Pre-consultation Process.

The goal of Phase 1 engagement was to introduce and inform internal and external stakeholders regarding the project and raise awareness about future engagement opportunities. Audiences were educated on what the Town Plan is and which topics the Town is seeking input on so that all audiences can understand the purpose of engagement and the impact their input may have on the final policy framework.

During this phase, engagement, handouts, and comment cards were distributed across the community and collected initial feedback from the public and stakeholders that contributed towards shaping Phase 2 of the project.

The groups that participated in the various engagement events included the Task Force, Town staff, the public at the Library, the Highwood Museum, the Recreation Centre, schools, seniors' housing complexes, open spaces and trails, stores, coffee shops, and restaurants.

Phase Two: Identification of Key Themes

During this Phase of the engagement, the activities focused on gathering input on the following 4 topic areas: 1. Parks, Open Space, Recreation and Environment 2. Business and Services 3. Growth 4. Opportunities and Constraints.

Following the completion of Phase 2 engagement events, the project team reviewed the feedback received and noted the following key emerging themes.

The community expressed strong support for:

- Maintaining the 'small town feel'.
- Mixed-use development, especially in existing areas.
- Protection of natural areas, parks, and green spaces is necessary.
- Additional sidewalk connections to improve safety and increase mobility.
- Policy to make it difficult for undesirable developments to be constructed.
- Enforcement of the Good Neighbour Bylaw.
- Maintaining balanced and slow growth and development that should never interfere with the character of the community.

There was also a desire for:

- An effective local and affordable transit system in the community.
- Increasing the retail and commercial opportunities in the community.
- Expansion of the leisure trail network (increased connectivity of green spaces & other destinations) would make them more usable.
- More recreational opportunities in the community including skate parks, pickleball courts, basketball courts and soccer fields, etc.

Engagement Participation

Phase 1 and 2 public engagement was fulsome and included several opportunities for members of the community, stakeholder groups, and Town Staff to provide their feedback on the future of vision for High River. Public Engagement Key Numbers have been included below.

Number of Attendees During Phase 1 & 2

Events	Number of Events	Number of Participants in Phase -1	Number of Participants in Phase -2
Engagement Events	43	494	619

Media Reach During Phase 1 & 2

Media Method	Number of People Engaged	*Percentage of Town's Population Engaged
Website Visits	1,939	13.5%
Social Media Reach	9,866	69%
Email Read Receipts	1,319	9.2%

* this is assuming that all these people are residents of High River

Phase 3: Confirmation of Vision, Guiding Principle, and Goals Identified & Objectives,

As the project progressed to Phase 3, the project team reviewed the received community feedback from Phase 2 and identified the following themes for the new Town Plan.

1. Growth and Infrastructure
2. Parks and Recreation
3. Community Amenities and Services
4. Community and Economic Growth
5. Environment

Over the summer of 2022, the Task Force reviewed the 5 themes that emerged from Phase 2 and met with numerous external stakeholders and groups across the community. From the input, they developed the key objectives of the new Town Plan including a Vision statement, Guiding Principle, six (6) Goals, and a few objectives to support each goal.

During the fall of 2022, the project team shared this summary with the public and targeted stakeholders at several events to review and provide comments on the draft vision, guiding principles, goals, and objectives.

Engagement Participation

There was a total of twelve (12) events, held during this Phase, and engaged various residents and stakeholders in the community. The events were broken down into the following categories:

- Open House
- Pop-up Events
- School Events
- Seniors Housing Events
- Targeted Stakeholder Events

The events ensured that various demographics in the Town were engaged and that there was easy access to these events. Social media and other forms of advertisement were used to increase awareness and provide easy accessibility for online engagement.

Approximately 400 participants were engaged and a total of 93 surveys and 44 coloring contest surveys were submitted.

Phase 4: Preparation and Presentation of the Draft Policy Framework and Draft Town Plan

The engagement sessions held during Phase 3, were successful and the responses from the community allowed the project team to gather considerable input and valuable information. The feedback received from Phase 3 of engagement has been analyzed and incorporated into the draft Plan accordingly, to ensure that the new Town Plan reflects High River residents' vision for the next 20 years.

As the project moved into this Phase, the Town hosted one last public open house and presented the draft policy framework and draft plan to the public. Participants had the opportunity to review and provide their final comments and feedback on the proposed policy framework and draft plan.

Overall, there was general support for the new policy direction and draft Town Plan that has been pursued. Most of the participants seemed comfortable with the proposed Vision, Guiding Principles, Goals, and Objectives, and the Town Plan in its entirety.

Phase 5: Review and Approval Process

During this phase of the project, the project team reviewed and analyzed the feedback it had received during the previous phase, adjusted, and finalized the draft policy framework and draft Town Plan. The project team ensured that the draft Town Plan conforms to the requirements of the Municipal Government Act, the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan, and the Calgary Metropolitan Region Growth Plan.

The project team then moved forward with the final review and approval process, and circulated the draft Plan to Foothills County for review and comments, and to CMRB for review and approval.

Consultation Implications

The response rate from the community to most of the meetings was high. The participation was beyond the expected turnout. The engagement activities completed within the five Phases of the project were successful and allowed the project team to gather considerable input from the public and various stakeholders.

Most of the verbal comments received were similar to the comments recorded on the surveys. There were concerns mentioned and recorded regarding stench from the feedlot and potential growth restrictions. These concerns, for the most part, were single comments from individuals and were not reflected by most of the participants. The Town recognizes these concerns but remains mindful of the fact that the feedlot development is located within Foothills County's jurisdiction and authority. Therefore, the Town will continue to work and collaborate with the County and Alberta Environment to reach a reasonable solution.

The comments received were generally favorable and supportive of the new Town Plan, its process, and the new policy direction. Participants gave the draft Town Plan a high rating and many of them were excited and supportive of the new policy direction for supporting sustainable development in High River, by focusing on accommodating 75% of future growth within existing communities and 25% of future growth within greenfield areas during the lifetime of this Plan.

3. Drivers of Change

Since January 2009, a significant change has occurred in High River, Canada, and the world. The drivers listed in this section are some of the most important considerations High River faces today and will continue to face in the future. They are wide-ranging in nature and affect all aspects of how the Town will grow and change over time.

3.1 2013 High River Water Event

In June 2013, 59% of High River land was affected by the 2013 High Water Event. In addition, approximately 70% of the buildings were damaged and 13,000 people were evacuated. This resulted in large damage to houses, and public infrastructure, and social disruption. Since 2013, a significant amount of flood protection infrastructure has been constructed throughout the Town. The new Town Plan needs to be updated to include the constructed flood infrastructure and integrate how growth is managed in proximity to the new infrastructure.

3.2 Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan

The Town of High River adopted the Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan in 2016. The ARP was prepared to achieve the goal of High River's 2009 Town Plan (official Municipal Development Plan). The Downtown ARP is a roadmap for future growth over the next 30 years. It includes short-, medium- and long-term investment plans and policies that will help development stakeholders and residents to collectively build a vibrant and



resilient downtown. The new Town Plan will consider the Downtown ARP and ensure that the plans and policies are reflected in the document. The Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan received a national award in 2017 - Canadian Institute of Planners Award for Planning Excellence Merit in Rural/Small Town Planning. The existing Downtown Area Redevelopment has many relevant policies that have yet to be implemented and therefore, have been appended to this Plan for further review and implementation.

3.3 Land Use Bylaw

In April 2017, Town Council approved the award-winning Land Use Bylaw, Bylaw 4510/2017. The Land Use Bylaw is a form-based code approach to land use planning, based on the transect model, and represents a significant departure from traditional land use bylaws. The Bylaw integrated the Town's progressive Smart Growth principles to promote urban design and a more walkable environment, it also provided new districts (zones) for the town based on a mixed-use philosophy. Once the Town Plan review and approval process has been completed, a minor review will be required to ensure alignment of the Bylaw with the new policy direction.

The Transect model provides a visual concept that describes how the scale of built environments can vary from place to place. It is divided into zones based on the intensity of the built environment and physical and social interaction.



3.4 Open Space Master Plan

This plan focuses on the development and renovation of parks and open spaces and that aligns with the values of High River's community. The planning approach integrated in the plan integrates three key environmental components parks, open space, and trails. The first two components include the Ecological Open Space and the Wildlife management plan which embraces the protection of natural areas and

wildlife in the riparian zone of Highwood and Little Bow rivers. The third component Ispitzee Floodway Management Plan focuses on flood mitigation and recreational opportunities in the Highwood River Corridor.

In 2021, the Town completed its Parks, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan, which is a living document and is intended to provide a ten-year master plan that thoughtfully considers how the Town can manage and improve the green spaces across the community. The Master Plan includes several recommendations that summarize proposed projects and what should be done to complete a task, project, initiative, or strategy.

The Action Plan, attached to this Plan includes a specific group of projects, implementation timeframe, and sponsor together with high-level costing.

3.5 CP Land

The Town's Public Realm Improvement Study on the Former Railway Lands (CP Lands) was prepared in 2017 for the redevelopment of the underutilized CP Lands corridor into a vibrant and interconnected open green space. The plan facilitates the ongoing transformation of High River's downtown into an inclusive pedestrian-oriented development that is attractive and memorable for visitors.

Figure 1-CP Land Design Concept



It includes short-, medium- and long-term strategies focusing on the development of a green corridor that connects different parts of the town, provides space for public enjoyment, and fosters economic growth. Most Town-owned CP lands fall under brownfield sites. 7.38 acres out of 7.95 acres of Town-owned brownfield sites make up the former CP Railway lands downtown.

The Plan includes a Concept Design for the downtown portion of the corridor with a vision translated into design strategies for program and development, pedestrian and cyclist circulation, vehicular circulation, and utilities and easements. The proposed Design Concept has been appended to this Plan and shall be used as a reference for all future developments within the CP Lands corridor.

3.6 Annexation

The former Town Plan contained a policy (2.15.1.5) which required that the Town, in conjunction with Foothills County and landowners, prepare a strategy for annexing lands to the town to accommodate future growth. Accordingly, on January 1, 2012, 716 ha (1,769 acres) of land was annexed to the Town, of which 575 ha (1,422 acres) were deemed potentially developable. In addition, on January 1, 2021, the Town-annexed 101.2 ha (252 acres) of land to the Town. These annexed lands are considered sufficient to provide the Town with the required land for supporting growth over the next 30 years or so.

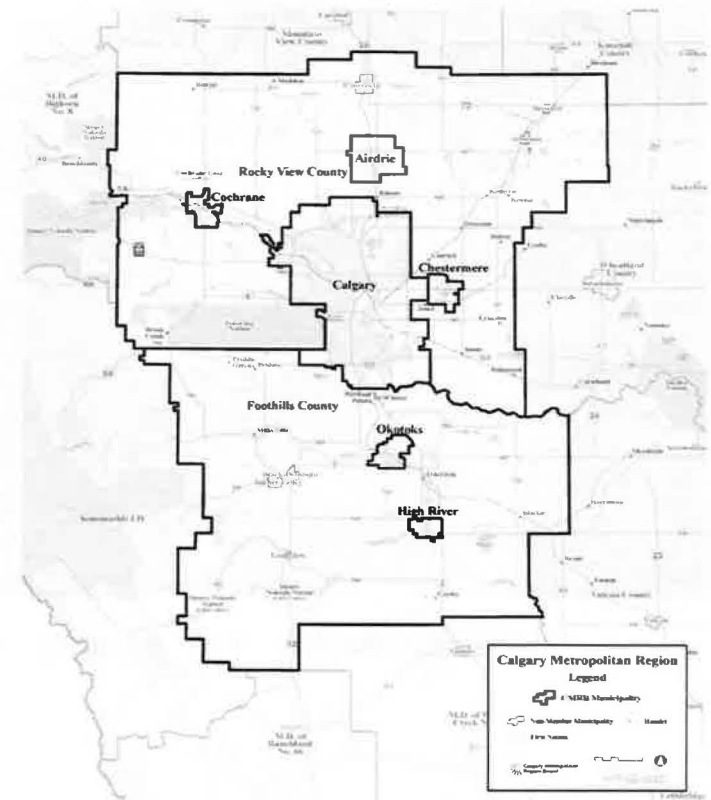
3.7 Calgary Metropolitan Region Growth Board (CMRB)

In 2018 the Calgary Metropolitan Growth Board (CMRB) was established in accordance with section 708.02(1.1) of the Municipal Government Act. The CMRB is a not-for-profit government corporation made up of elected officials from the Calgary Metropolitan Region's 8 member municipalities, including the Town of High River.

The role of CMRB is to support the long-term social, environmental, and economic wellbeing of the Calgary Metropolitan Region. On August 15, 2022, the Government of Alberta approved the CMRB's Growth Plan, a new strategy for sustainable growth for the Calgary Metropolitan Region. The Growth and Servicing Plans set a new path forward to manage growth in the Calgary Metropolitan Region differently than we have in the past:

- Supporting compact and contiguous growth with a focus on transit-oriented development at the regional scale;
- Reinforcing the role of core urban areas as economic, cultural, and social centres;
- Making efficient and cost-effective use of existing and planned infrastructure;
- Recognizing the Calgary Metropolitan Region is water-constrained, and that growth must be managed accordingly; and,
- Supporting growth in rural municipalities, while also conserving agricultural land and resources.

Figure 2: CMRB Regional Area



The new Town Plan will be drafted to ensure alignment with the Growth Plan while ensuring the community maintains the ability to grow in a resilient nature.

3.8 Truth and Reconciliation

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada examined the traumatic impact of residential schools on generations of Indigenous families and explored ways for Canadians to support the healing process. As part of its mandate, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada identified actions that municipalities may take to further the work of reconciliation. Reconciliation refers to the efforts we take to increase understanding and restore balanced relationships among Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. At the municipal level, by providing a connection between people, land, and government. As part of High River's reconciliation journey, planning policies and processes can help support healing.

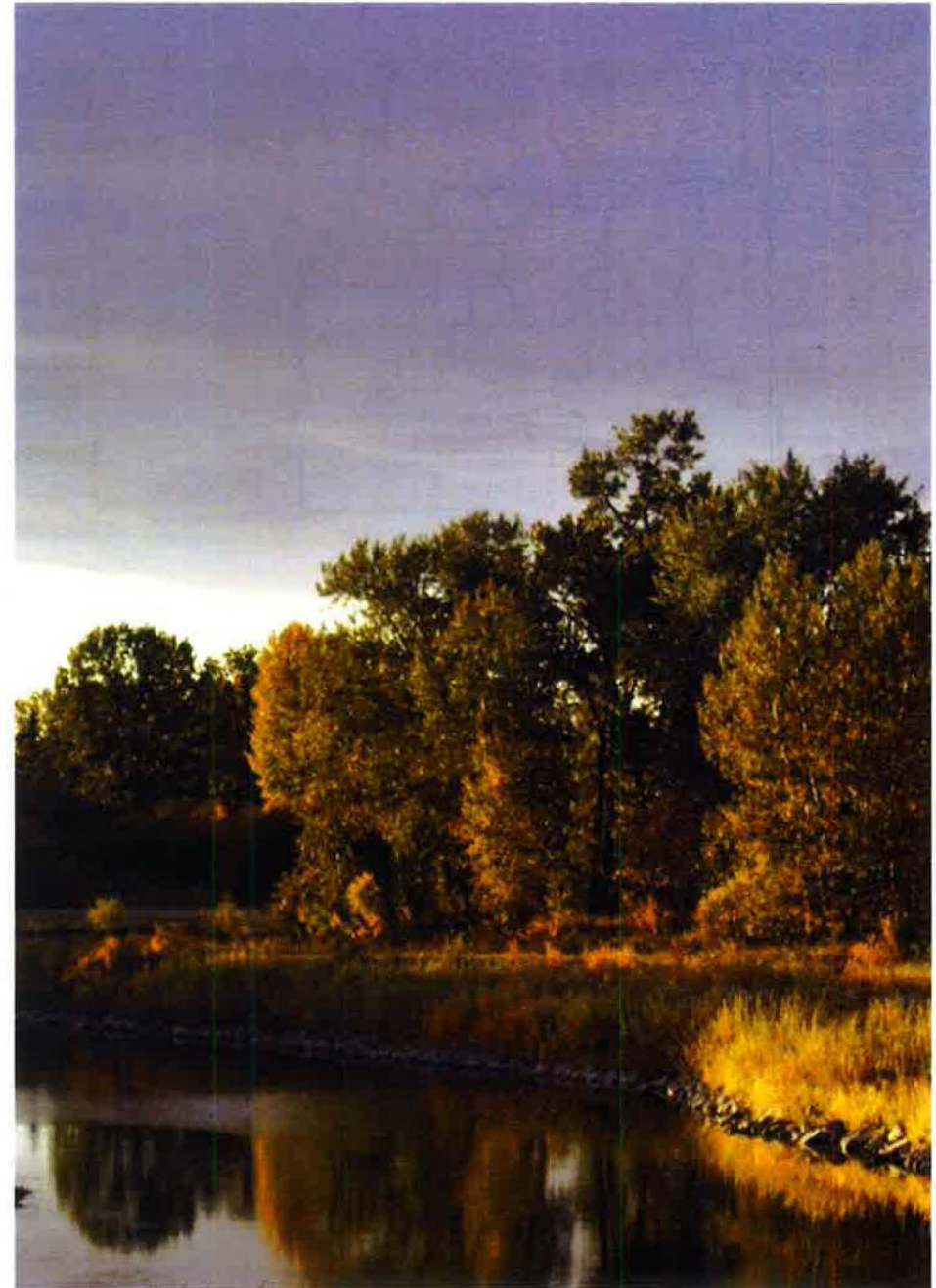
3.9 Climate Change

It's likely that dynamic climate conditions will have a significant effect on High River within a short period. Research indicates that the annual number of +30 degrees Celsius days in the High River region could be more than double, from 7.6 days (1976-2005) to 19.5 days (2021-2050) *. This translates to warmer summers and water becomes increasingly scarce.

Increased temperatures will result in impacts on agriculture, soil conditions, and the duration of time people can spend outdoors. Municipalities and their residents will likely need to adapt, by conserving water, adopting renewable energy resources, constructing energy-efficient buildings and infrastructure, and embracing low impact development practices and reducing reliance on private vehicles.

In 2023, the Town has completed a "Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan, which provides strategic prioritization and implementation of actions that could address our highest risks.

**Source: Prairie Climate Centre, University of Winnipeg, 2019.*





3.10 Emerging Technologies

Technological advancements can produce long-term benefits but can cause short-term challenges for communities and their residents. While it is difficult to predict sudden changes, technological or otherwise, municipalities should strive to stay diversified, resilient, and adaptable.

Over time, autonomous vehicles are expected to fundamentally change how people move around, reducing the need for private vehicles and transforming public transit. The emergence of autonomous vehicles is advancing quickly, potentially requiring changes to roadway designs and traffic laws.

Additionally, robotics and artificial intelligence will change how we work in the future. More workers will need to learn new skills, so the provision of education and training facilities is an important consideration in how the community grows.

3.11 COVID -19

In 2019, the COVID-19 global pandemic began resulting in a significant shift in the way people work and live their lives. As a result, considerations in how we live, work, and grow post COVID-19 needs to be contemplated. Policies in this Plan will be developed to ensure it reflects the 'new normal' of the community.

3.12 Active Transportation Plan (ATP)

The ATP provides a course of action that reflects the community's priorities and available resources. It presents a framework for a comprehensive, safe, and efficient multi-modal transportation system that meets both the present and future needs of residents, businesses, and visitors. The recommendations outlined in the ATP focus on the Happy Trails network in High River, as well as sidewalks and potential on-street bicycle facilities. It also provides recommendations for making the Town more comfortable for people walking and rolling.

4. Demographic Profile

4.1 Population Growth

Historical population information for High River, Foothills County, and Alberta are provided in Table 2 with the percentage change between 2016 and 2021.

As indicated in the tables below, over the last 20 years period (2001-2021), High River’s population has experienced steady growth.

High River, Foothills County, and Alberta have been growing at a moderate rate. The historical population for High River between 2001 and 2021 is provided in Figure 1 and High River’s population has increased from 9,345 to 14,324, a 36% increase “over time”.

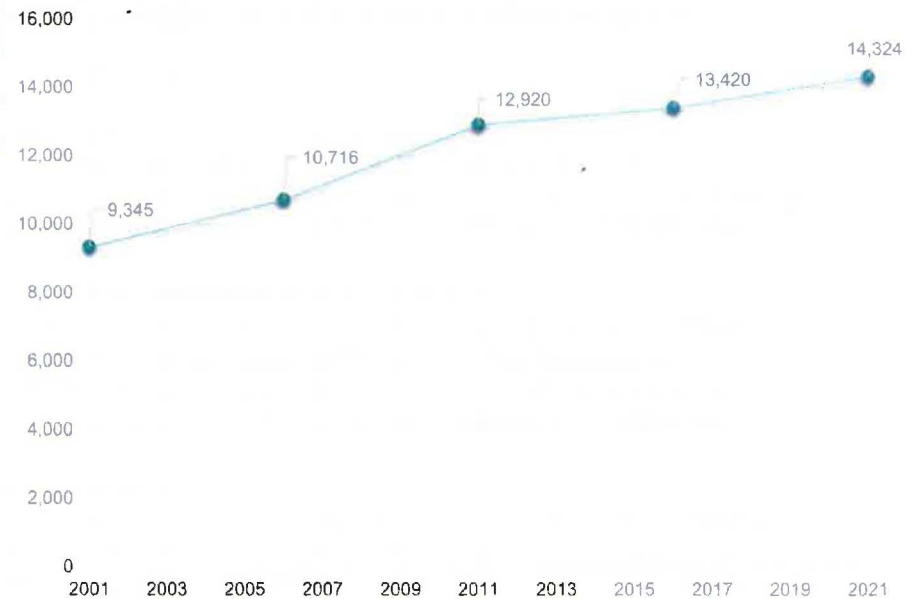
Table 1 -Historical Population Growth

Year	Population
1996	7,359
2001	9,345
2006	10,716
2011	12,920
2016	13,420
2021	14,324

Table 2: Historical Population 2013-2021

Location	2016	2021	% Change
High River	13,594	14,324	5.4
Foothills County	22,616	23,199	2.6
Alberta	4,067,175	4,262,635	4.8

Figure 3- High River’s Historical Population 2001-2021



Source: Statistics Canada, Census Data 2001-2021

4.2 CMRB Population Growth Projection for High River

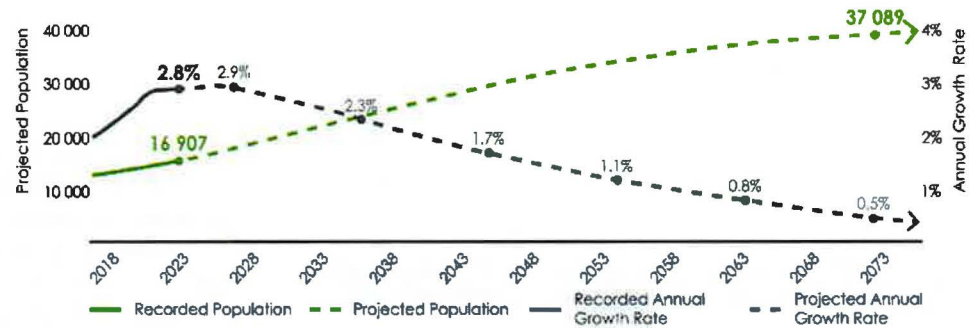
Based on the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board’s Population Projection of 2018, as depicted in (table 4) and the chart below, our community is expected to maintain that steady growth pattern throughout and beyond the lifetime of this plan. The Population Projection illustrates an increasing population rate in a diminishing pattern but is expected to reach 26,833 people by 2042.

Table 3- CMRB HR Population Projection

Year	Projection	Annual Rate of Change
2022	14,448	2.8%
2032	21,616	2.6%
2042	26,833	1.9%
2052	31,244	1.3%
2062	31,619	0.8%
2072	36,919	0.5%

Source: CMRB Population Projection (2018)

Figure 4: CMRB HR Population Projection



High River’s growing population requires new places for community members to live, work, gather, and socialize.

4.3 Age Characteristics

The average age of communities across Canada and Alberta is increasing; High River is no exception. According to Statistics Canada Census data, the median age of High River has increased from 42.6 in 2016 to 44.6 in 2021 (Table 2). Approximately, 25% of the population of High River is over the age of 65 and 24% are under the age of 20. The largest proportions of residents are between 20- 44 years at 27% (Figure 2).

Table 4: Median Age, 2016-2021

Location	2016	2021
High River	42.6	44.8
Foothills County	46.8	48.4
Alberta	36.7	38.4

Source: Statistics Canada, Census Data 2016 & 2021

This age distribution slightly differs when compared to the Alberta age distribution of 35% between the ages of 20-44 years (Figure 5).

Source: Statistics Canada, Census Data 2021

4.4 Household Characteristics

Household characteristics data contains information about residents living within dwellings and includes a number of people and household incomes. Households refer to a person or group of persons who occupy the same dwelling and do not have a usual place of residence elsewhere.

4.4.1 Average Household Size

Average household sizes (persons per household) have been decreasing over the decades at all geographic levels. This trend is typical for aging populations that contain households without children, or spouses. High River household size has been averaging just above two persons over the past ten years, and as of the 2021 Census, is 2.4 persons per household (Table 6). This is similar to Foothills County and Alberta, which are 2.7 and 2.6 respectively.

Figure 5- Present Population by Age Group-2021

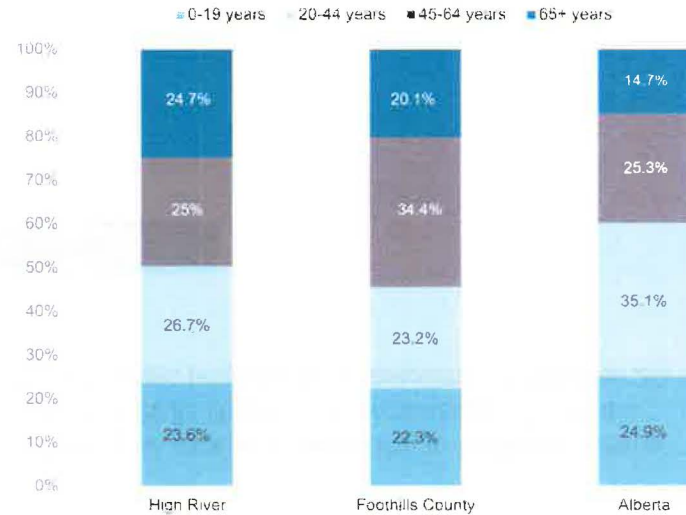


Table 6: Average Number of Persons per Household, 2016, 2021

Location	2016	2021
High River	2.5	2.4
Foothills County	2.7	2.7
Alberta	2.6	2.6

Source: Statistics Canada, Census Data 2011-2021

4.4.2 Household by Household Size

Further details on household size are provided by the Census regarding the number of households relative to the number of persons living within.

Within High River, the number of one (1) person households increased from 1,280 in 2016 to 1,545 in 2021. As with the number of all other household sizes. (Table 7)

Table 7: High River Total Households by Household Size-2016-2021

Household Size	2016	% of HHs	2021	% of HHs
1 person	1,265	24%	1,545	27%
2 persons	2,195	41%	2,270	39%
3 persons	685	13%	730	13%
4 persons	650	12%	700	12%
5 or more persons	500	9%	540	9%
Total private households	5,290	100%	5,790	100%
Number of persons in private households	13,150	n/a	14,110	n/a

Source: Statistics Canada, Census Data 2011-2021

4.4.3 Average Household Income

Household income includes salaries, wages, retirement income, and government transfers of all persons residing within a household. The average household income in High River after-tax is \$43,240 (Table 5). For context, Foothills County has an average household income (after tax) of \$70,800.

Table 8: Average Household Income (after tax), 2021

Location	2021
High River	\$43,240
Foothills County	\$70,800
Alberta	\$50,200

Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2021

Table 9: Ethnic and Cultural Origin for 2016 and 2021

Ethnic or Cultural Origin	Counts 2016	Counts 2021
North American Aboriginal Indigenous	665	680
Other North American Origin	3,845	6,875
European origins	10,080	14,790
Caribbean origins	45	75
Latin; Central and South American origins	195	380
African origins	160	200
Asian origins	1,320	2,265
Oceania origins	80	50

4.5 Ethnic and Cultural Origin

‘Ethnic origin’ refers to the ethnic or cultural origins of the person’s ancestors. An ancestor is usually considered to be more distant than a grandparent.

For additional information on the collection and dissemination of ethnic origin data, refer to the Ethnic Origin Reference Guide, Census of Population, 2021.

The data indicates that the number of all ethnic groups is increasing in our community, which may require a holistic planning process to ensure the cultural background of these communities is reflected in the future growth of our community.

4.6 Town Plan Implications

Household characteristics data contains information about residents living within dwellings and includes a number of people and household incomes. Households refer to a person or group of persons who occupy the same dwelling and do not have a usual place of residence elsewhere.

Household characteristic data indicates household size has remained relatively unchanged with a slight decrease in the household size in High River from 2.5 in 2016 to 2.4 in 2021. The increase in the number of one (1) person households affirms the need to provide social and community services that prevent social isolation and continue to support a strong sense of community.

Ethnic origin information indicates that there is a diverse representation of ethnic and cultural origins in High River. Encouraging cultural development throughout High River will increase residents’ respect for different cultures, leading to greater peace and harmony among communities while helping to attract more diverse residents. When a community is living in harmony, art can flourish, and people tend to respect each other more. Considerations to include policies grounded in reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples is also necessary to assist in bringing healing to community members.

5. Housing Profile

5.1 Dwellings

The Census defines “dwelling” as meeting conditions for year-round occupancy. There are three major dwelling groups:

1. Occupied dwellings which are occupied by usual (year-round) residents,
2. Dwellings occupied by temporary residents, and
3. Unoccupied dwellings.

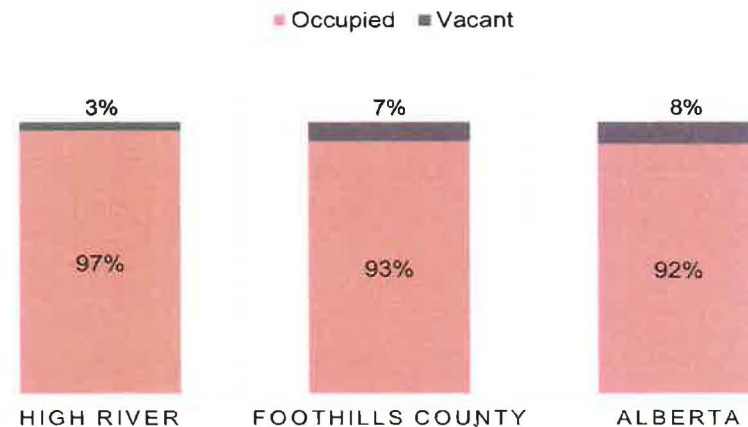
5.1.1 Dwellings and Dwelling Occupancy

Total dwellings and occupied dwelling data for High River for the 2011- 2021 Censuses are identified in Table 10. Occupancy rates for dwellings are derived between total dwellings and occupied dwellings. The total number of dwellings have occupancy rates has increased over the past ten years, along with occupancy rates. High River’s occupancy rates are compared to Foothills County and the province of Alberta (table 11).

5.1.2 Housing Types

The majority (50%) of High Rivers dwellings are single-detached dwellings. Single-detached dwellings are the dominant housing type in the CMR. Except for Calgary and High River, CMR municipalities have a higher proportion of detached dwellings than the rest of Canada. Table 8 shows dwellings by structure type in High River (table 12).

Figure 10: HR Dwelling and Full-time Occupancy Rates 2011-2021



Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2021 for 2021 in Figure 11.

Table 11: HR Dwelling and Full-Time Occupancy Rates, 2011- 2021

Dwelling Occupancy	2011	2016	2021
Total Dwellings	5,473	5,659	5,950
Total Occupied Dwellings	5,261	5,371	5,787
Full-Time Occupancy Rates	96%	95%	97%

Source: Statistics Canada, Census Data 2011, 2016 and 2021

Table 12: High River's Occupied Dwellings by Structural Type – 2016, 2021

Structural (Dwelling) Type	2016	%	2021	%
Single-detached house	2,745	51%	2,910	61%
Apartment in a building that has five or more storeys	0	0%	0	0%
Apartment in a building that has fewer than five storeys	590	18%	730	15%
Row House	730	14%	105	2%
Semi-Detached House	985	1%	725	15%
Apartment of flat in a duplex	55	11%	0	0%
Other single-attached house	5	0.1%	5	0.1%
Moveable Dwelling	255	5%	275	6%
Total	5,365	100%	4,750	100%

Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2016-2021

Table 13: Period of Construction – Percent (%) of Housing Stock, 2021

Time Period	High River	2021
1960 or before	7%	8%
1961-1980	17%	19%
1981-1990	13%	9%
1991-2000	20%	23%
2001-2005	13%	13%
2006-2010	16%	13%
2011-2015	10%	9%
2016-2021	4%	6%
Total	100%	100%

Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2021

5.1.3 Age of Housing Stock

The majority (57%) of High River’s housing was built prior to 2000. In comparison, 59% of Foothills County housing stock was built prior to 2000.

5.1.4 Housing Values

Housing value refers to the amount an owner expects if the asset is sold and includes land and all structures located on it for single-detached dwellings. For multiple dwellings within a structure (i.e., apartments, rowhouses), it includes only the individual dwelling. Average values for a dwelling is provided in Table 12. Also noted in the table, is the average value of dwellings from the 2016 Census.

Table 14: Housing Value-Average Value of Dwellings, 2016-2021

	High River 2016	High River 2021
Average Value of Dwellings	\$340,399	\$341,200

Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2016-2021

5.2 Housing Tenure

Tenure refers to whether persons living within the dwelling own or rent it. In High River 75% of dwellings are owner-occupied. This is slightly lower than Foothills County which is 90% of occupied dwellings (Table 13).

Table 15: Housing Tenure 2021

Location	% Owner Occupied	% Renter Occupied	% Band Housing
High River	75%	25%	0
Foothills County	90%	10%	0

Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2021

High ownership rates are often an indicator of housing affordability in a municipality, it also indicates that there is limited supply for individuals looking to rent within a community. Another housing indicator available from the Census is ‘housing suitability’. In High River, 97% of housing is considered suitable for persons occupying the housing, meaning the dwelling has enough bedrooms for the size and composition of the household.

5.2.1 Housing Maintainers

Household maintainers refers to the primary person, whether or not, they are residing in the household, who pays rent, mortgage, taxes, and utilities. In High River 45% of the household are between the ages of 15-54, while 20% of household maintainers are between the ages of 65-74 (Table 14).

Table 16: Total Households by Age of Primary Household Maintainers, 2021

Age Group	High River	%
15 to 24 years	95	2%
25 to 34 years	550	10%
35 to 44 years	985	17%
45 to 54 years	905	16%
55 to 64 years	1,110	19%
65 to 74 years	1,180	20%
75 to 84 years	705	12%
85 years and over	250	4%
Total	5,790	100%

Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2021

5.3 Housing Needs and Gaps

Housing needs come in a variety of different forms. The need for more housing diversification in Alberta and High River has become an increasing concern for the past several years. On June 6, 2022, the High River Housing Needs Assessment was released. The information below has been derived from the Housing Needs Assessment indicating needs and gaps regarding housing in High River.

5.3.1 Housing Needs

The Housing Needs Assessment included information synthesized from both qualitative analysis and quantitative data analysis. The needs that were identified have been outlined below.

- a. Housing is not responding to needs, and is causing stress:
 - o More variety in housing types, tenure, and size is needed.
 - o People feel isolated due to lack of housing choice.
 - o Lack of access to adequate, suitable, and affordable housing is impacting mental health, separating families, and holding people back.
 - o There is a lack of pet-friendly housing.
 - o Need to think outside the box and provide unique housing opportunities.

- b. Affordability isn't just about housing:
 - Costs are rising.
 - Access to reliable and affordable transportation is a barrier.
 - Costs of childcare need to be addressed.
 - Advocate to utility rates regarding reconnection rates.
- c. More support is needed across the board:
 - Specific supporting programs including:
 - Support for mental health and substance use challenges
 - Better programs for those receiving income support
 - Transportation support for seniors
 - Medication reminders for seniors
 - Programs for renters need
 - Youth have specific needs including both short-term and long-term support programs.
 - Perception of who renters are needs to change.
- d. There are opportunities to collaborate and coordinate between agencies.
- e. Innovation, creativity, and risk-takers are needed:
 - Development mindset needs to shift:
 - Developers need to be willing to take on more risk and demonstrate social responsibility.
 - Municipalities have a leadership role to play:
 - Municipalities have a role to help build capacity in and support partnerships with the non-profit sector.
 - Advocate for more funding from higher levels of government.
 - Municipal processes and priorities need to meet needs.

5.3.2 Summary of Housing Gaps

The Housing Needs Assessment suggests a split between non-market, market rental, and market ownership and was calculated based on the percentage of people struggling with affordability. There is a greater proportional need for renters (especially non-market units) than for owners.

The suggested split for new units in High River is:

- Market Ownership: 65%
- Market Rental: 17.5%
- Non-Market Rental: 17.5%

Non-market rental means rental housing provided for low and moderate-income groups not traditionally served by the private market. It is typically made affordable through public and/or non-profit ownership of housing units or through rent supplements that allow low-income households to access housing in the private market.

5.3.3 Homelessness

Homelessness is defined as the situation of an individual or family not having a permanent address or residence. Homelessness is an increasing concern across Alberta and even impacts the Town of High River. As per the Town of High River Housing Needs Assessment 2022, Youth are the invisible homeless, some are currently experiencing homelessness in the community and are temporarily couch surfing with friends and family. Additionally, respondents to surveys indicated, “If rent increases like it has been, within the next three years, I will be homeless.” One couple even indicated that they are technically homeless and living with family while they wait for a senior unit to become available.

5.3.4 Town Plan Implications

As noted, most of the housing is owner-occupied, single detached dwellings built before 2000. While housing values have slightly increased from 2016, the overall suitability for year-round habitation has been maintained. The ability to “age in place” is an important consideration as the age of primary household maintainers will continue to increase, much like the average age of residents in High River. The need for programs and housing to support lone-parent households, youth, single-older men, low-income housing, and indigenous peoples is continually increasing.



6. Labour Force and Employment

6.1 Employment Rates

Labour force employment rates include all persons aged 15 and over who are participating in the labour force. High River showed an employment rate of 59% in 2016 and decreased to 54.4% in 2021. The percentage of the population employed in High River 55.4% is lower than that in the province and Foothills County (Table 17).

As presented in Table 16, the overall participation rate (relative to full-time residents) for High River was 64.4% in 2016 and decreased to 60.3% in 2021. In comparison, the provincial participation rate was 71.8% in 2016 and decreased to 68.0% in 2021. Participation rates are affected by several factors, including population age (retired vs. non-retired residents) and employment demand.

Table 17: Labour Force Employment Rates, 2021

	High River	Foothills County	AB
Employed	54.4%	60.8 %	60.2%
Unemployed	9.9%	8.7%	11.5%

Statistics Canada, Census 2021

Table 18: HR Labour Force Participation Rates 2001, 2006, 2016, 2021

	2001	2006	2016	2021
High River	68.1%	64%	64.4%	60.3%
AB	73.2%	74%	71.8%	68.0

Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2001, 2006, 2016 and 2021

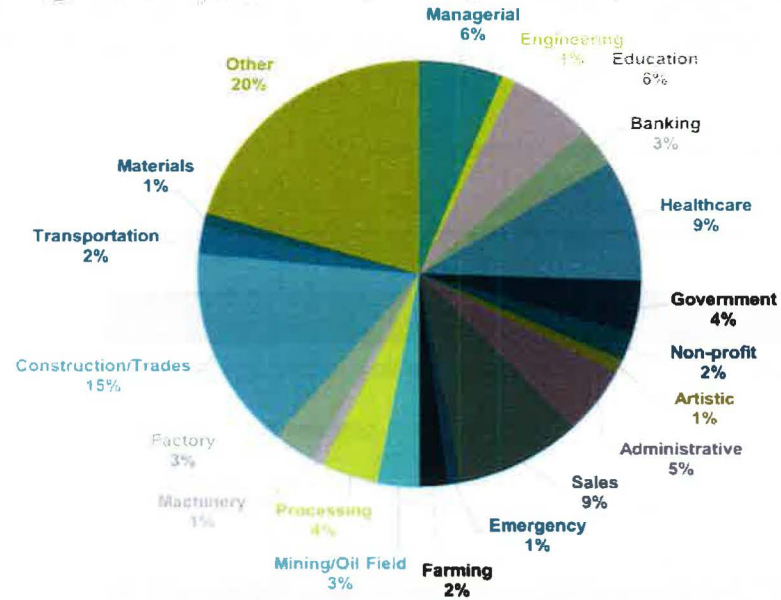
6.2 Labour Force by Industry

Information collected through the 2019 Municipal Census indicates that approximately 20% of employed residents work for a government service provider, with another approximately 20% working in the trades. The majority of the 20% that work in the 'Other' category is made up of 'Oil & Gas' and the service industry (restaurants and retail).

Note: The 2019 Municipal Census included a note that stated a portion of the 'other' category includes oil field workers as there was some misunderstanding with where 'oil field work' would best fit (due to it being included under the 'mining' category). Therefore, the

'Mining/Oilfield' category should be higher and the 'Other' category is lower. Also, many of those who also answered 'other' and indicated they worked in the service or retail industries.

Figure 5: Occupation Field by Industry, HR Municipal Census 2019

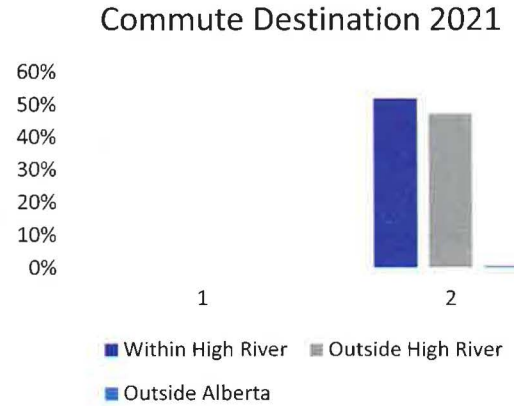


6.3 Commute Destination

Figure 6 indicates that 50% of the working population in High River commutes outside of the Town for work purposes. The data illustrates the need for diversification of the local economy, businesses, and infrastructure to retain the working population and promoting High River as a place for new industries in the Calgary Metropolitan Region.

Source: Statistics Canada Census, 2021

Figure 6: Commute Destination 2021



6.4 Commute Duration

Figure 7 shows 84.2% of the Town’s employed labour force above 15 years and over commute duration is less than 45 minutes. This includes 48.90% of the population’s commute distance is under 15 minutes.

6.5 Mode of Commute

Figure 8 shows High River’s mode of travel to work, collected during the 2019 Municipal Census. The information indicates that 88% of the trips are made using personal vehicles, whereas, about 0.6% of the trips are made using public transit. Walking to work comprises 5.42% and is the second highest mode of travel to work, whereas biking is just 1%.



Figure 7: Commute Duration for High River residents in 2021
Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2021

Figure 8: Modes of Travel to Work, 2019



Source: High River Municipal Census, 2019

6.6 Town Plan Implications

The high number of residents commuting outside of High River for employment indicates that there is a need to increase employment opportunities locally. Consideration should be given when planning for employment areas including lands for commercial, industrial, and office use. Additionally, the highest percentage of mode of travel to work was through personal vehicle, this indicates that regional travel opportunities would be a benefit and would contribute to reducing the number of vehicles on the road.

7. Growth and Development Context

7.1 Growth Values of High River Residents

Through the comprehensive community engagement process, completed in support of the Town Plan review, the following values were established:

- Protect the small-town feel.
- Manage a balanced growth (upward growth rather than outward growth).
- Ensure growth does not exceed the capacity of our existing water supply.
- Protect the natural environment and landscape.
- Attract a variety of retail businesses and developments that fit our vision.

Although the Town has an opportunity to pursue multiple growth scenarios, the comprehensive community consultation process resulted in one preferred growth scenario a managed, balanced, and responsible growth. A growth that respects and protects the community values. Therefore, our community will strive to ensure existing infrastructure is enhanced and maintained properly and new infrastructure is built when needed, and that it is complete, connected, and multi-functional.

Managed growth has many benefits, including but not limited to:

- Achieving the long-term vision described in the Town Plan, Council Strategic Plan, and other statutory documents; and
- Supporting complete and vibrant neighbourhoods in the growing and changing established areas, in support of a sustainable and compact urban growth pattern.

7.2 Smart Growth Principles (SGPs)

The town and the community SGPs guide the future growth of the community. Principles that protect the small-town feel and return to building complete neighborhoods that people can live, work, shop, and play within. Increasing the mix and density of land uses and housing, a better sense of place is created, aging within the community is supported, green space is preserved, ecosystem health is improved, and a better quality of life for residents' results.

Smart growth supports sustainability, affordability, and climate change resiliency and ensures that fiscal, environmental, economic, and social responsibilities are recognized and considered in the planning and development decision-making process. Being resilient and adaptive in the way we grow will better prepare us for what's ahead.

Smart Growth Principles will:

- Create a variety of housing opportunities and choices for all residents.
- Create pedestrian-friendly communities where healthy options to walk or cycle are convenient and attractive to residents.

- Create compact and complete communities by mixing land uses and using land more efficiently.
- Provide transportation services in a safe, effective, affordable, and efficient manner.
- Preserve open space, agricultural land, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas.
- Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.
- Engage community members to ensure that growth responds to local needs and makes the community a better place.
- Direct development towards existing neighbourhoods and communities.
- Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost-effective.

Incorporation of these principles in the design and development of new communities should result in a sustainable growth approach that balances public interests with private innovation while promoting long-term sustainability to meet the needs of our current residents and future generations.

To maintain High River as an attractive place to live, work, play, or start a business, it is important to anticipate, plan, and strategically invest to accommodate balanced and well-managed future growth. This requires a review of development opportunities within the established areas and greenfield areas, together with available municipal servicing for supporting this growth.

7.3 Growth and Development Trends

The following are highlights of growth and development trends in High River since the current Town Plan was adopted.

Consistent Single-Family Residential Construction

New residential growth in High River has been driven largely by single-family home construction. This has taken place in the Hampton Hills Estates, Redtail Rise, and Montrose neighbourhoods.

Diversification of Multi-Housing Types

The housing stock in High River has grown rapidly more diverse since 2006, with several semi-detached and row housing developments being constructed in the Montrose and Monteith neighbourhoods.

Steady Commercial Development

High River continually sees steady commercial development, with most new commercial development occurring in Sunrise Meadows, the Highway Industrial Park, and the Sunshine Meadows areas.

Modest Industrial and Institutional Growth

High River has experienced limited industrial growth and development over the last 10 years. The highest number of Institutional building permits issued were in 2014 and 2016.

7.4 Growth and Development Numbers

The following are local statistics illustrating the type of growth and development trend experienced in the community over the last 10 years in High River.

Table 19: High River New Construction between 2012-2021

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Single Family Residential	41	39	33	34	33	38	45	20	28	55
Multi-Family Residential	39	5	10	6	4	8	13	8	4	14
Commercial	18	23	4	63	52	44	56	42	60	62
Industrial	3	3	5	3	4	4	3	0	1	1
Institutional	5	5	10	5	10	2	3	0	2	2

Source: Town of High River

Table 20: High River New Growth-Related Infrastructure (Roads and Walks) between 2019-2021

Year	Road	Sidewalk
2019	328m	756m
2020	135m	0
2021	1890 m	7m

Source: Town of High River

Table 21: High River New Growth-Related Infrastructure (Roads and Walks) between 2019-2021

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Town Plan Amendments	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rezoning Applications	1	3	18	18	4	6	2	0	0	0	2
LUB Amendments	1*	1	2	0	0	0	1*	0	0	0	1**
Development Permits	143	127	169	155	121	102	89	119	61	71	109
Development Permit - Variance Requests	14	6	10	10	8	10	10	57	23	25	56

Source: Town of High River

*Represents New Land Use Bylaw ** Represents Updated Land Use Bylaw

7.5 Infrastructure Considerations

The management of infrastructure (also known as asset management) is a key factor in the successful development and sustainability of a community. The key to making good decisions on asset management is good data and understanding how a community may grow. Decisions need to be made on the budgetary implications of maintaining, replacing, and repairing community infrastructure. This is especially important when reviewing future development.

Asset Management is an integrated approach involving planning, financing, engineering, and operations to effectively manage existing and new infrastructure to maximize benefits, reduce risks, and provide satisfactory levels of service to community users in a socially, environmentally, and economically sustainable manner. It is a function of growth and development.

In September 2022, the Town of High River prepared an Asset Management Strategy Framework and Action Plan. This includes the Town's service delivery strategic priorities and a roadmap with the steps to achieve the strategic goals by the year 2024. The report provides a gap assessment, and opportunities for future infrastructure upgrading, and identifies the roles, responsibilities, and guidance for the Town's administration involved in managing assets. The report also recommends establishing an up-to-date Asset Management Policy to ensure its alignment with the New Town Plan and the Asset Management Strategy.

7.6 Municipal Infrastructure

A critical factor in achieving sustainable development and building resilient communities is determining how, when, and where municipal infrastructure should be built and who should pay for it. This includes the quality and quantity of potable water, wastewater capacity, stormwater management, and transportation. The Town aims to identify existing infrastructure capacities and plan growth around them.

7.6.1 Municipal Water

The Town receives its water supply from a few shallow groundwater wells, located south of the Highwood River within the Town Boundary. Water is pumped via a network of supply mains to the water treatment plant, located just south of the Highwood River, a short distance west of Highway 2A.

After a careful review and analysis of the existing capacity, without requiring an immediate upgrade to the system, it has been confirmed that there is an adequate water license in place to service the projected population growth of 24,000 people. This indicates that the Town has sufficient water for development during the lifetime of this Plan.

Should the projected population growth change for any reason and surpass the projected number, along with development pressure, the following is a list of key recommendations of the Infrastructure Master Plan (IMP) related to water supply that should be followed to facilitate future growth and development:

- Construct a new water servicing system.
- Implement a new northwest pressure zone, which can be achieved by the development of a new reservoir/pumphouse in the northwest.
- Construct a water reservoir in the northwest of the plan area.
- Continue with monitoring of water leakage and target replacement of existing water mains in areas with high water leakage.

7.6.2 Wastewater

To provide the required wastewater servicing for supporting population growth, it is necessary to consider how future development areas will be serviced by the wastewater collection system without causing problems for existing development areas.

Based on the current condition and capacity of the wastewater treatment plant, it has been determined that it will need to be upgraded to provide the required capacity to service population growth during the lifetime of this Plan. It has also been confirmed that the new upgrade in the pre-design stage should accommodate growth for the next 20 years.

In addition to increasing the capacity of the wastewater treatment plant, an additional lift station servicing the north/northeast area will be required, and the northwest area will require a lift station to be serviced.

The IMP also identified the following upgrades to the existing system to allow growth and development to proceed in the future. Before any development taking place in the 2012 annexation areas, ensure provisions are made to:

- Install a new lift station for supporting growth in the northwest.
- Expand the capacity of the existing wastewater treatment plant.
- Provide for improvement to the efficient discharge into Frank Lake.

8. Potential Growth Options

The updated Town Plan will guide future growth and development decisions in High River. The following highlights high-level growth options for High River based on the baseline assessment. They are intended to start the conversation on what, where, and how growth will be accommodated in the community over the next 20 years.

8.1 Sensitive Intensification

Sensitive intensification to densify some of the areas through infill development in existing single-family neighbourhoods, could occur within the Town of High River. Low-density neighbourhoods such as single-family land uses which are not suitable for higher-density development, could allow this form of densification. Types of gentle densification are:

- Carriage Homes
- Accessory Suites
- Small Lot Homes

All these housing types have the potential to be built on an existing single-family lots.

Table 22: Pro/Con for Sensitive Intensification

Pro	Con
Supports an increase in rental housing & homeowner affordability (i.e. mortgage helper)	Potential to create parking challenges
Efficient use of existing Town infrastructure	Potential need to upgrade Town services in areas
Near invisible approach to intensification	Potential neighbour concerns/resistance to change

8.2 Downtown

The Downtown area continues to be one of the focus areas of our community, by supporting growth in downtown High River, through mixed commercial and higher-density residential development. The Mixed Use/Downtown Areas are areas that are focused on concentrating growth through mixed commercial and higher-density development. Although much of this area is built out, there is an intensification opportunity on brownfield sites and the redevelopment of underutilized sites. Some of these areas overlap with the Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan (DARP). The transition of these areas is further supported by the DARP for higher density residential. These areas provide opportunities for more intensive residential and mixed-use developments, while ensuring alignment with the DARP.

Table 23: Pro / Con for Downtown First

Downtown First	
Pro	Con
Supports a walkable & vibrant core	Possible limited market demand
Supports local economy & crime prevention	Limited vacant land availability
Increases housing options	Potential resistance to change
Efficient use of existing Town infrastructure	Potential for overnight parking challenges

8.3 Land Supply

To determine whether the Town has a sufficient supply of land in its current boundary to meet the anticipated growth during the lifetime of this Plan, a review of the land currently designated under the Land Use Bylaw was undertaken. In addition, approved existing plans (e.g. ASPs, approved NOPs, and concept plans), and the annexation areas were also reviewed. All areas with detailed planning in place are anticipated to be developed in an orderly fashion, according to their approved phasing plans and the Smart Growth principles recognized and listed in this Plan.

It is further understood that areas that are presently without detailed planning documents can be developed in the future provided that detailed plans and servicing studies for these areas have been completed supported, and adopted by Council.

Available Land Supply Within Established Communities

The established areas are mature areas, some of which are fully built out, while others have available redevelopment opportunities. Generally, development in these areas will occur through infill development. The redevelopment in these areas shall be sensitive and compatible with existing development while supporting additional growth.

The structure and fabric of these areas will largely remain unchanged, with targeted increases in density taking place in select areas. Intensification will be directed primarily to vacant or underutilized land. These areas will provide for an increasingly greater mix of uses including residential and retail opportunities.

To support these areas to accommodate future growth, investments in public spaces such as parks, open spaces, sidewalks, enhanced public realm, and pathways will help communities build capacity to accommodate people and businesses choosing to locate here and improve the quality of life for existing residents.

Currently, there is 186.5 ha (460 acres) of land available for new development and infill development opportunities within the established communities (table # 24).

Based on the population projection, which estimates that our community will grow by 12,385 people by the year 2042, and assuming household sizes remains at approximately 2.40 people or more residents per household, about 5,160 new units will be required to accommodate the growing population over the next 20 years. This would require approximately 261 ha (645 acres) of land for residential housing by that year. This translates into a density of 8 units per acre.

Table 24: Estimated Serviced Population

Area	Size of Gross Developable Areas	Estimated population
Infill Opportunities	8.02 ha (20.05 Acres)	384 people
Hampton Hills Community	37 ha (91.43 Acres)	1,755 people
Montrose Community	36 ha (89 acres)	1,708 people
South High River ASP	88 ha (217.45 acres)	4,175 people
Superman Land	10 ha (24.71 acres)	447 people
Ellis Land Area Concept Plan	3.5 ha (8.64 acres)	165 people
North Eagleview Area Concept Plan	4 ha (10 acres)	192 people
Total	186.5 ha (460 acres)	8,832people

As the policy direction within this Plan suggest that 75% of future growth can be accommodated within the existing communities, it would mean that 3,870 units would be required for providing housing opportunities which could accommodate 75% of the expected population growth (12,385 people), which is 9,289 people. This would require 196 ha (484 acres). According to the land inventory available for development within the existing communities, with additional 12 ha (30 acres) of land, the Town would have sufficient land to accommodate 75% of the anticipated growth.

Should a portion of this serviced land be used for meeting high density targets of 37 upa, the available serviced land could provide more housing opportunities within the existing communities than needed.

To achieve these density targets, the Town may need to ensure that the ASPs for the areas with development opportunities are reviewed and aligned with the new Town Plan policy direction.

The available land inventory for supporting development within the existing communities are highlighted in Table 24.

8.4 Undeveloped Suburban Land

Currently within Town boundaries there is a significant amount of undeveloped suburban land. These lands provide opportunities for growth within Town boundaries without the need for additional annexation.

Areas currently considered 'undeveloped suburban land' include a total land area of approximately 560 ha (1,384 acres) of land. Some of these areas are currently covered by an Area Structure Plan including the Sptizee Crossing ASP.

Some of the other greenfield areas are located within the South High River ASP and Hampton Hills ASP. Lands located in these areas are considered development opportunities within existing communities due to the availability of servicing in proximity.

Although these lands are covered by an ASP, consideration should be given to creating Master Planned Communities should the developments not be proceeded with as planned. Masterplan Communities are areas that take a comprehensive and integrated approach to land use. They typically include a mix of housing types and land uses, including retail, commercial, civic, and recreational amenities within walking distance of residences. These areas generally include safe and direct pedestrian and bicycle access between uses.

There are potentially 8 expected new communities that may partially be built during and/or beyond the lifetime of this Plan. The new communities include Red Tail Rise, Country Residential Parcels, located east of 112 Street, and five communities within the Spitzee Crossing ASP, the North ASP, and Northeast areas. These new communities shall follow the policy direction of this plan and be developed as more residential and mixed-use, dense, and livable, in a greater way than established communities. In addition, investments in these new communities should support housing choice and affordability.

Prior to the development of these new communities, a comprehensive planning process shall be completed. This planning process includes the development of Areas Structure Plans (ASPs), Functional Servicing Reports (FSRs), Neighbourhood Outline Plans (NOPs), Site Master Plans, and any other required technical studies to the satisfaction of the Town. Completing the required planning process before the development of any of the areas would ensure that the areas are designed and built with consideration of the most appropriate land use, and best transportation options.

Furthermore, new potential communities can be placed into two categories – those that have completed the planning process, and been previously approved by Council, where the funding and/or delivery of infrastructure has not yet been finalized. The other category is those communities that have not yet initiated and/or completed the required planning process. The first category includes the Spitzee Crossing ASP and the second category includes Red Tail Rise, Country Residential Parcels, North ASP, and Northeast areas.

Although the policy direction of this Plan suggests that 25% of future growth can be accommodated in these areas within the lifetime of this Plan, there is opportunity for accommodating part of the anticipated growth should the required planning and servicing studies have been completed and new growth pays for itself.

Table 25: Estimated un-serviced land and population.

Area	Gross Developable Areas	Estimated Additional Population
Spitzee Crossing ASP	247.6 ha (612 Acres)	11,750 people
North and Northeast ASPs	295 ha (729 Acres)	13,996 People
Red Tail Rise ASP	17.4 (44 acres)	844 People
Country Residential Parcels ASP	73.81 ha (182.1 acres)	N/A
Total	560 ha (1,384 acres)	26,572 People

8.5 Employment Area Intensification

While businesses are located throughout High River, Employment Areas are dedicated locations for a variety of businesses that are essential to the town’s economy and non-residential tax base. Within High River’s Employment Areas, there is an opportunity for further growth through the development of areas of parking and intensification of underutilized sites.

Employment areas are generally characterized by a variety of commercial and industrial land uses that may include office complexes, research parks, warehousing, and manufacturing. Supporting uses for workers may also be included in these areas.

Table 26: Pro/Con for Employment Area Intensification

Employment Area Intensification	
Pro	Con
Reduces an individual’s environmental footprint by reducing commuting distances	Significant investments in new infrastructure & increase in future maintenance
Allows for the efficient use of land	New infrastructure may be required

8.6 Sensitive Intensification

Sensitive intensification through infill development in existing neighbourhoods could occur within the Town of High River. Predominantly single-family neighbourhoods which are suitable for higher density development, could allow this form of densification and more ownership opportunities.

Sensitive density focuses on higher-density infill development in existing neighbourhoods throughout High River. Types of densifications are:

- Duplexes and semi-detached residences
- Townhomes and stacked townhomes
- Low-rise apartments.

Table 27: Pro/Con for Sensitive Density

Visible Density	
Pro	Con
Supports an increase in housing tenure & mixed housing options within existing established areas	Limited land availability
Encourages aging in place	Potential neighbour concerns/ resistance to change
Efficient Use of Town Infrastructure	Can be more costly than suburban development if major up-grades to infrastructure are required

8.7 Commercial Land and Development

One of the key principles underlying the concept of building a complete community is to ensure that retail commercial services are available in various locations, throughout the community. These retail commercial services can enhance the quality of life serving the day-to-day needs of the neighbourhood's residents, creating social gathering places, reducing vehicle trips, and promoting walkability within the neighbourhood.

Currently, High River's catchment population that depends on High River for local needs is 2,898 people. This adds to the High River population of 14,324 for a total catchment population of 17,222, which is equivalent to 20.2% of the Town's population.

The review of our commercial land inventory provides information on the amount of existing and future commercial land opportunities.

The total commercial land within the Neighbourhood Centre District (NCD) and the Service Employment District (SED) is 88 ha (217 acres). Out of this amount, 53 ha (131 acres) is occupied while 35 ha (86 acres) remain vacant. In addition, 4.38 ha (11 acres) of land remains un-serviced within the Spitzee Crossing ASP.

In addition, at present the commercial floor space ratio is 28.4 sq. ft (2.64 m²) per person. This ratio is higher than what was documented by the *Town's Urban Development Potential* study (Coriolis Consulting Corp 2009). The recorded ratio at that time was 27 sq. Ft (2.5 m²) per person. This ratio suggests that High River has a slightly higher ratio of retail/service floorspace than might be expected in a town of its size.

As there is significant commercial space that can still be developed in the Town, it is reasonable to assume that this ratio could continue to grow over the next 20-year period.

With a projected population of 26, 833, by the year 2042, High River may need 47.60 ha (117.6 acres) of vacant commercial land to meet the community's needs over the next 20 years. As it stands, High River has 35 ha (86 acres) of vacant serviced commercial land and 4.38 ha (11 acres) vacant un-serviced commercial land. Therefore, High River does not have enough vacant commercial land to meet the needs of the community over the course of the next 20 years and requires an additional 8.4 ha (20.76 acres) of commercial land.

8.8 Industrial Land and Development

There has not been much industrial development occurring inside the Town's boundaries in the recent years. One of the reasons is that the industrial development tends to prefer large serviced low-cost land with highway accessibility. This scenario is reflected in the large number of industrial parcels available outside the Town's boundary, along highway 2A corridor, north of the Town.

Currently, there is 153.31 ha (379 acres) of designated industrial lands located within the community. 59.43 ha (147 acres) of these lands are occupied while 94 ha (232 acres) are vacant. Based on this information, along with the current population, the ratio of industrial land is

4.14 ha (10 acres), which is equivalent to 31 sq ft (2.88 sq m) per person. This ratio is higher than the ratio of occupied commercial floor space in our community.

According to the CMRB population projection, the Town is expected to grow by 12,509 people by the year 2042. Therefore, the Town can expect to need 52 ha (128.5 acres) of vacant industrial land to meet the needs of the community over the next 20-year period. By considering the current available vacant industrial land, which is 93.88 ha (232 acres), High River has more than enough vacant industrial land to the needs of the community over the next 20 years. Therefore, the available industrial land is sufficient for accommodating the required industrial development within the Town during and beyond the lifetime of this Plan.

Based on the abovementioned information, for the Town to succeed in attracting industrial development to our community, the Town would have to take a different approach. This may include the Town taking a proactive approach and playing a more direct role in exploring potential partnership opportunities and facilitating the planning process, servicing, encouraging the provision of medium to large parcels, and marketing the existing serviced industrial lands within the town boundaries.

8.9 Priority Growth Areas

Based on the land supply, density requirement, available servicing, and projected population, it is fair to assume and consider all available land identified within established neighbourhoods as PGAs. This will require a prioritization of municipal capital infrastructure projects to support and facilitate the intensification and development of these areas when needed.

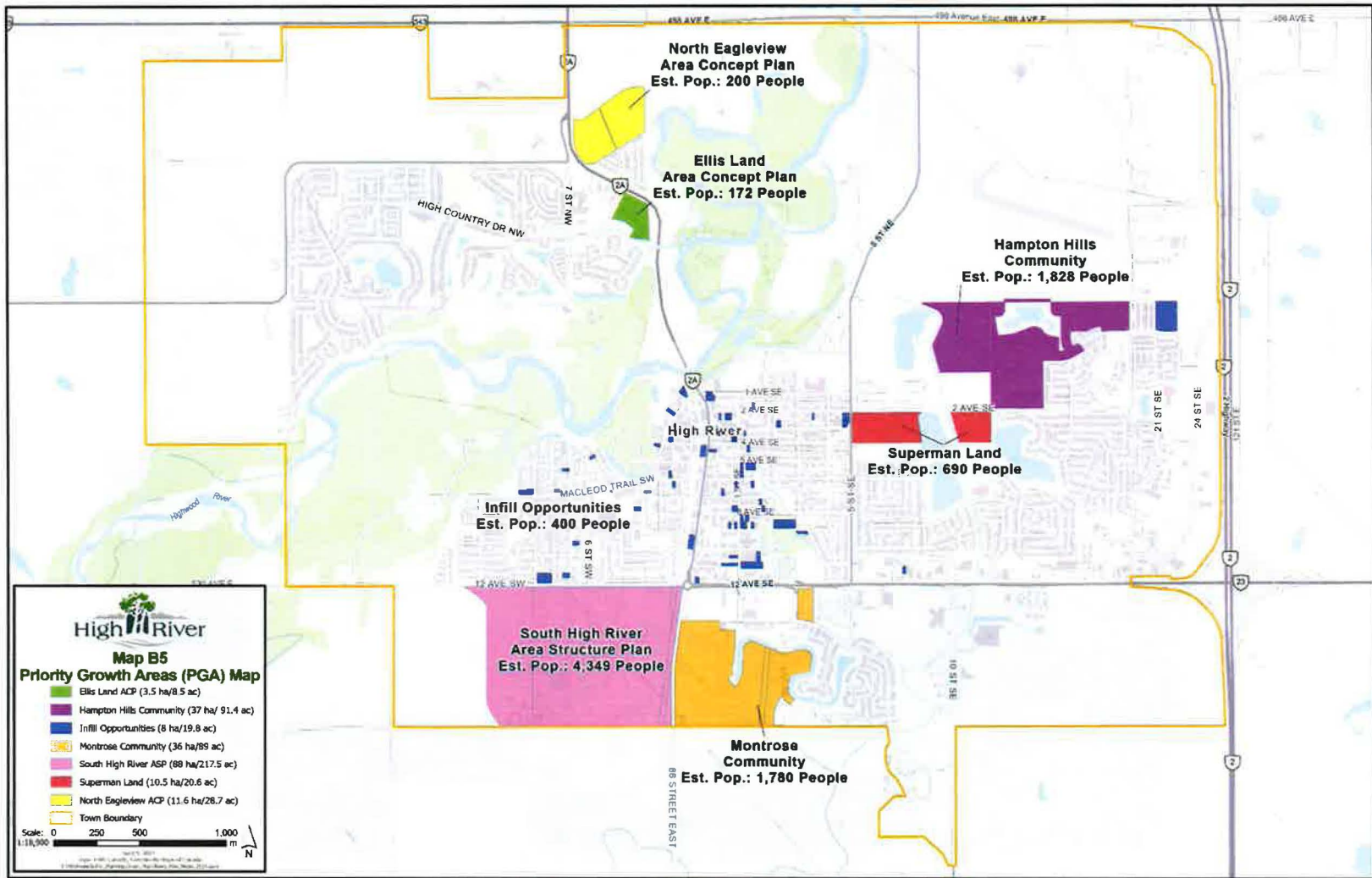
In previous years, the Town focussed on striving to achieve 75% of future growth in the greenfield areas and 25% of growth within infill development opportunities. Based on the state of available infrastructure capacities and land supply within established communities, together with a well-thought inward growth strategy that focuses on taking advantage of available development opportunities, may help us achieve the long-term vision described in the Town Plan while mitigating the short –and medium-term risks.

Furthermore, with the need to have balanced and managed growth, it is essential to target 75% of future growth over the next 20 years within the established communities, while allowing 25% of growth in the greenfield areas, provided that the required planning studies, servicing, technical studies have been completed.

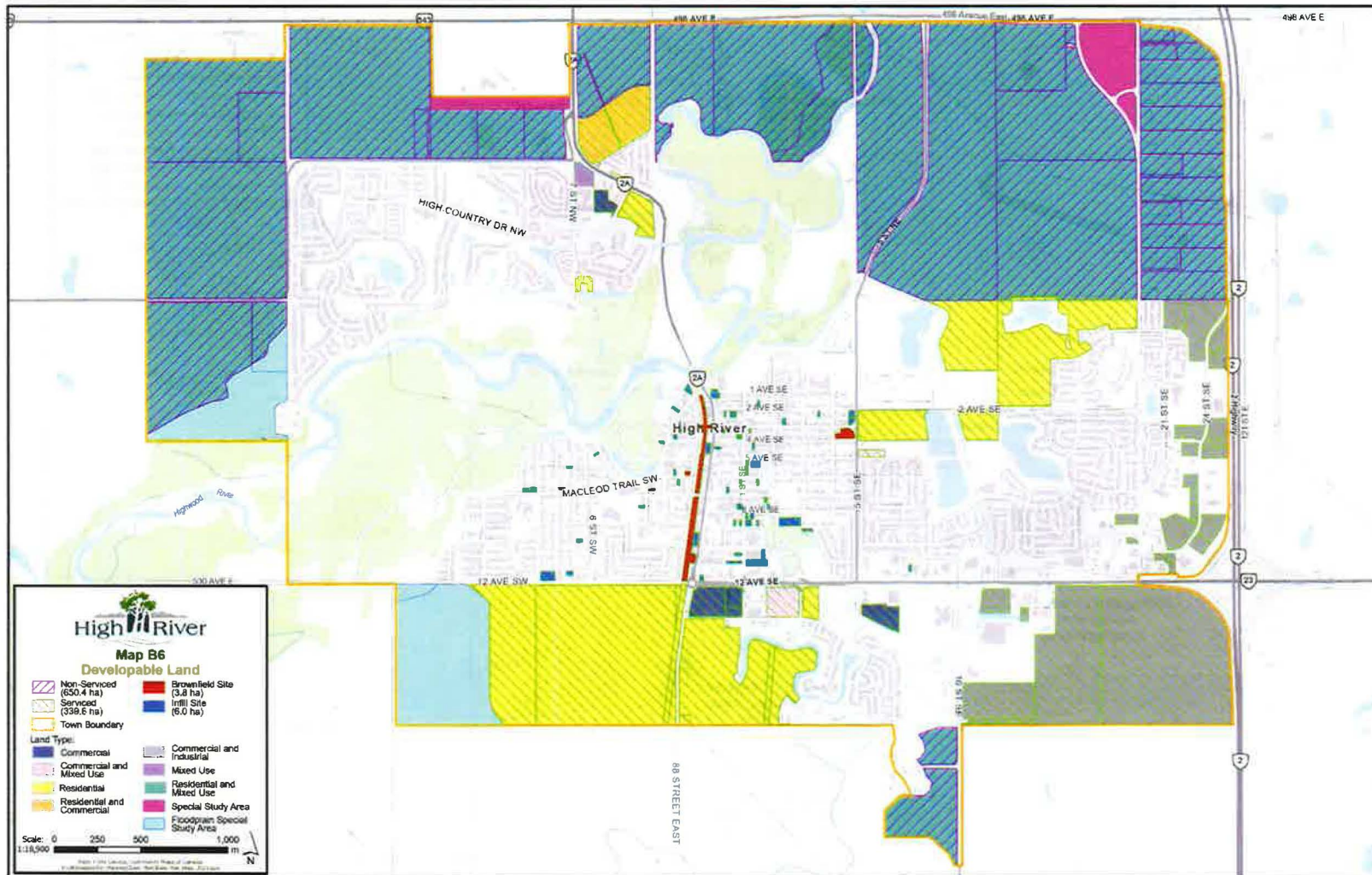
8.10 Town Implications

The Town of High River has been fortunate to experience steady development and investment over the last 20 years. Looking into the future, and after a careful review of available development opportunities within existing communities, the Plan is recommending certain Priority Growth Areas (PGAs) as locations where significant population and service growth could be accommodated. These growth areas are expected to accommodate more dwelling units and meet the population growth during the lifetime of this plan. It includes areas with development and redevelopment opportunities and readily available and accessible servicing.

Map 1- B5: Priority Growth Areas



Map 2- B6: Developable Land



An aerial photograph of a town, likely High River, Alberta, Canada. The town is densely packed with houses and commercial buildings, interspersed with green spaces and small ponds. The background shows rolling hills and a clear sky. A white logo is overlaid on the center of the image. The logo features a stylized tree with a large, rounded canopy, positioned behind a range of mountains. Below the mountains, the words "High River" are written in a white, serif font. Underneath the text, there are three wavy lines representing water.

High River

