Town of Hanna

Municipal Development Plan

Draft Version 1.1

September 2026

TOWN OF HANNA
Part of the Harvest Sky Region

Palliser
Regional Municipal Services

Bylaw page

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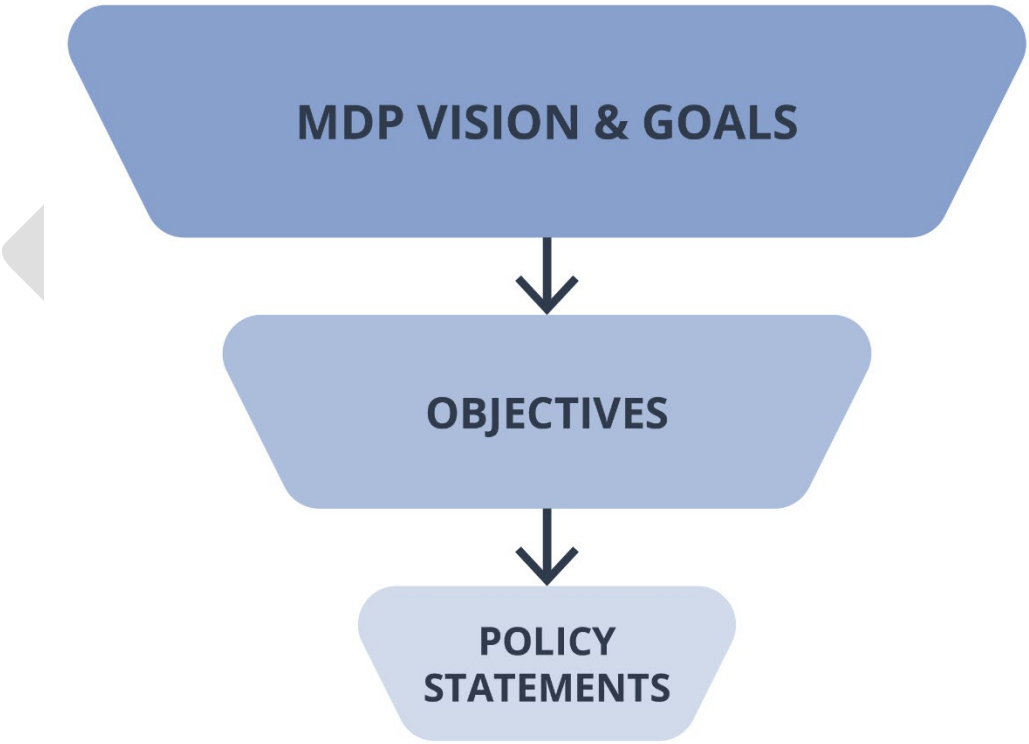
HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

A Municipal Development Plan (MDP) guides long-range planning and land use in a municipality. The MDP establishes goals and objectives for development in the Town of Hanna and includes policy statements for achieving them. It is intended to provide the framework within which the orderly, economical, and beneficial development and use of land can take place. The policy statements contained in this MDP are created to offer guidance to decision makers; however, tensions naturally exist between these policy statements. The MDP is therefore designed and intended to be read in a comprehensive manner. Sections and policy statements are closely connected to each other and need to be read in context and not in isolation from each other.

The Introduction and Community Context sections of the MDP are background information only and are not meant to be interpreted as policy statements. The MDP then includes an overall vision and overarching goals for the community which will provide guidance for the entire document. Each section thereafter is topic-based (e.g. residential, commercial, etc.) followed by objectives and policy statements. The policy statements are specific to each section and will directly guide long-range planning within the Town of Hanna.

The application of all policy statements must be to the satisfaction of the Town of Hanna and/or the applicable approving authority.



1. Introduction

1.1 Plan Purpose

The purpose of this document is to establish a framework for the growth of the Town of Hanna over the next 20 to 30 years and to integrate its community vision into its planning and decision-making. The goals and policy statements contained in this MDP promote the Town's plan for future growth and development, and set standards for the evaluation of all development proposals to ensure longevity, stability, and progress.

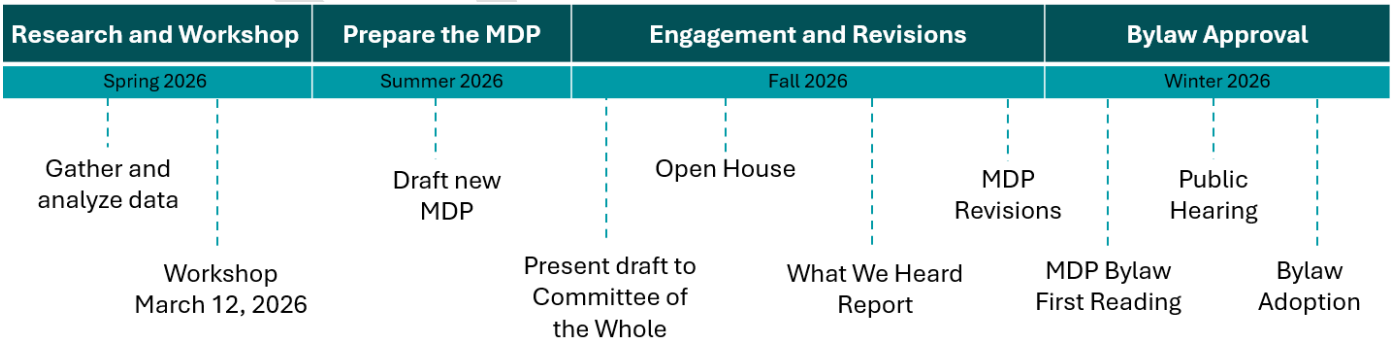
The MDP is a statutory plan that is adopted by bylaw by the Town of Hanna Council pursuant to Section 632 of the *Municipal Government Act R.S.A. 2000 Chapter M-26* (the '*Act*').

The MDP addresses:

- future land use in the municipality;
- the manner of and proposals for future development;
- the provision and financing of municipal services, infrastructure, and utilities;
- the protection of agriculture;
- the provision of reserve lands; and
- identified constraints to development.

1.2 Preparation of the Plan and Public Input

This MDP was prepared in 2026 with multiple opportunities for public input during the process, as shown below. A Workshop held on March 12, 2026 in Hanna with residents helped identify the current conditions, challenges, and opportunities for the future of Hanna. The directions and policies in this MDP have been prepared in consideration of the feedback received at the Workshop.



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1.3 Relationship to Senior Legislation

This MDP has been prepared in consideration of the Province of Alberta Land Use Policies and the *Alberta Land Stewardship Act*.

Policy statements in this MDP are statutory policy statements of the Town of Hanna and will be implemented with due respect for the requirements of senior legislation, including Provincial and Federal requirements. In the case where a specific Federal or Provincial legislation, department, or authority is referenced in this MDP, and that legislation, department, or authority is amended or replaced; it is hereby recognized that the amended legislation, department, or authority shall be considered to be in effect.

In addition to the policy statements of this MDP, users are responsible for ensuring that all applicable Federal or Provincial legislation is referenced and adhered to in all planning, land use, and development activities.

1.4 Planning Hierarchy

The following diagram shows the legislative framework of the planning hierarchy and development process in Alberta (Figure 1 – Planning Hierarchy in Alberta).

Pursuant to the *Act,* the Town of Hanna is responsible for ensuring the safety and well-being of all residents, as well as creating and implementing the rules and regulations that help to develop meaningful and highly valued spaces in our community. The Town is required to adopt a Municipal Development Plan (MDP) as the visionary guiding document that provides the framework for all local planning within the Town of Hanna.

This MDP guides the content of lower-level plans and bylaws, including the following:

- Area Structure Plans (ASP) or Area Redevelopment Plans (ARP),
- Conceptual Schemes,
- the Land Use Bylaw (LUB), and
- any other relevant Policies established by the Town of Hanna Council.

These plans and policies are further described in **1.5 Municipal Planning Process**.

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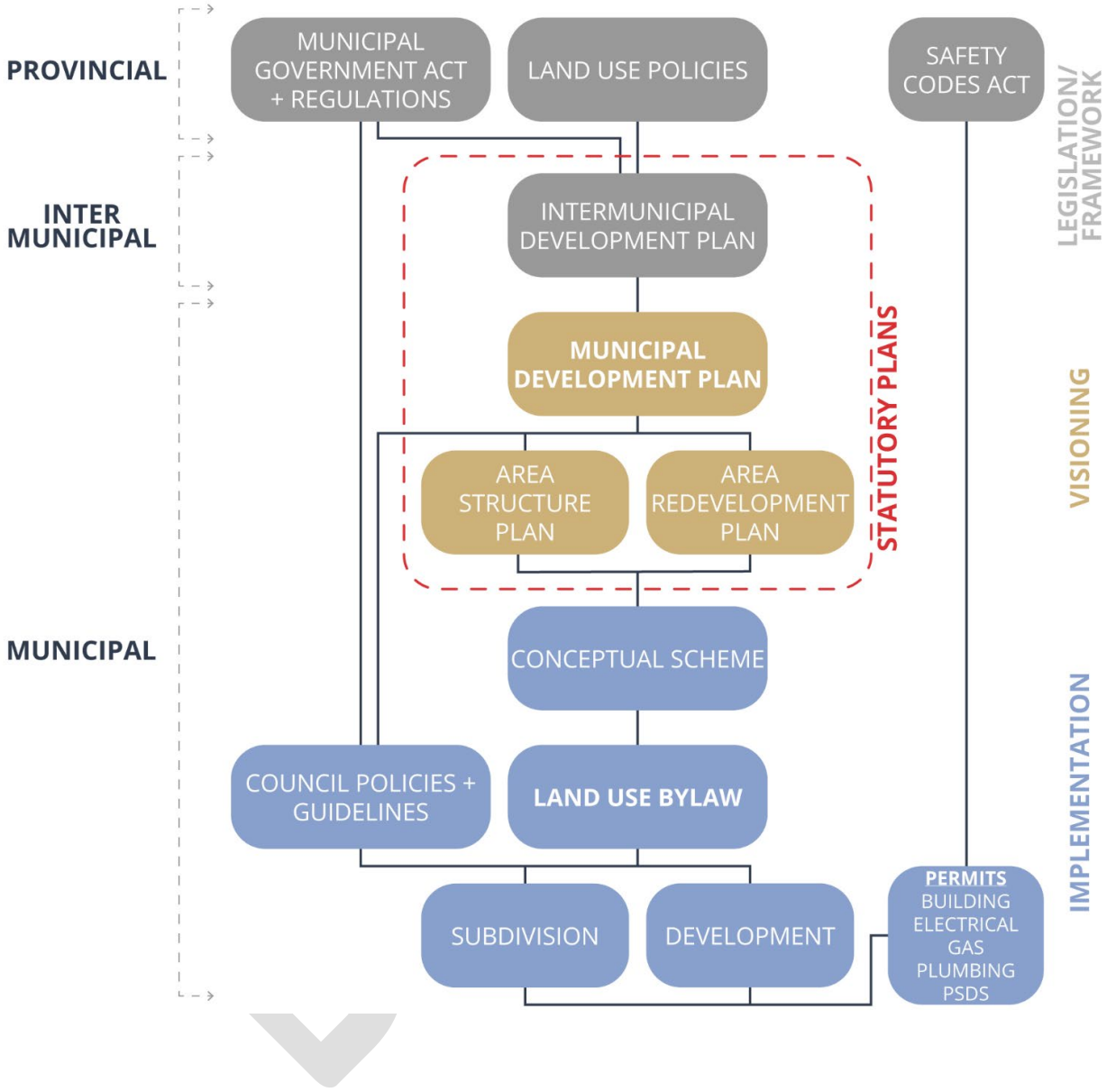
Figure 1 – Planning Hierarchy in Alberta



1.5 Municipal Planning Process

Municipalities may use several plans and other tools when planning for future growth and development in accordance with this MDP.

An Area Structure Plan (ASP) is an intermediate planning document that guides growth and development of a defined area of undeveloped lands. An ASP considers land use, transportation, utility servicing, parks, and natural areas on a large area of land or where there are multiple landowners. The ASP estimates how many people will live in the area and outlines the steps for the community to be built over time.

An Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP) is another intermediate planning document that provides a framework for future development of an already developed area of a municipality. It also considers the establishment or improvement of roads and utility services.

A Conceptual Scheme is a planning document that may be used in lieu of an Area Structure Plan, which outlines a plan for how an application for subdivision relates to future subdivision applications. It is generally used for smaller areas of land.

The Land Use Bylaw (LUB) is the predominate regulatory tool used to implement policy statements in this MDP or an adopted ASP or ARP. The LUB establishes a variety of land use districts (zoning) and regulates the types of uses allowed and the development standards in each district. The LUB provides a basic framework for day-to-day decision-making that balances both certainty and choice.

Council may also adopt other plans and Policies to guide future growth, such as engineering design and technical specifications, stormwater management master plans, and infrastructure master plans.

1.6 Subdivision and Development Permits

The process of subdivision and the development permit process in Alberta is governed by the *Act* and the *Matters Related to Subdivision and Development Regulation AR 84/2022* (the '*Regulation*'), and the Town of Hanna is responsible for its implementation. The subdivision process and the development permit process ensure that new developments comply with the Town of Hanna's rules set out in the LUB, and the adopted plans and policies outlined in **1.5 Municipal Planning Process**. The subdivision and development permit application and decision processes also provide a means through which neighbours can provide feedback, or in some cases, appeal a decision of an approving authority.

Subdivision is the process of dividing a parcel of land into two or more lots, each of which is given a separate Title. Approval by the municipal Subdivision Authority is required before a plan of subdivision can be registered in an Alberta Land Titles Office.

A development permit is a document that gives permission for use or development of or on a parcel of land. A development permit ensures that the proposed development complies with the municipality's policy direction and LUB regulations such as the type of use allowed, the setbacks or height of a building, that adequate parking is provided, and the aesthetics of the development. A development permit may contain conditions of approval to limit any negative impacts on the environment or adjacent properties.

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Other Required Permits

In Alberta, the *Safety Codes Act* regulates a range of safety disciplines to keep people safe in the places they live, work, and play. This includes disciplines such as building, gas, plumbing, electrical, and fire.[1]

A building permit is a document that gives permission to construct a building and ensures the building complies with the Code. The *National Building Code – 2023 Alberta Edition* sets out the technical provisions for the design and construction of new buildings, and for the alteration, change of use, and demolition of existing buildings.

Electrical, gas, plumbing, private sewage disposal system (PSDS), and fire permits are other typical permits issued under the *Safety Codes Act* and their respective codes.

1.7 Interpretation

The Town of Hanna MDP is a high-level document and uses specific language to guide decision-making regarding the development of the Town. The following terms are to be interpreted as follows:



[1] See alberta.ca/safety-codes.aspx for more information on the *Safety Codes Act* and the safety codes framework.

2. Community Context

2.1 Location and History

The Town of Hanna is in east-central Alberta approximately 212 km north-east of Calgary (Figure 2 – Regional Context). It is located along Highway 9, the major east-west transportation route between Calgary and Saskatoon as well as Highway 36, a major north-south transportation route. The closest largest centre is Drumheller, a 45-minute drive to the south-west. Hanna currently has a land area of 8.4 km^2 and is at an elevation of 816 m. The topography of the land is fairly level throughout the Town.

The Hanna area was opened for homesteading in 1909 and was settled as a Village by 1912 due to the opening of the Canadian Northern Railway (CNoR) Goose Lake Line between Saskatoon and Calgary. Hanna was named for the president of the railway, D.B. Hanna. Hanna quickly became the central service town for farmers and ranchers of a large trading area called 'Short Grass Country'. Hanna was incorporated as a Town in 1914 with a townsite area of 0.8 km^2 (Figure 3 – Hanna 1914 Survey Plan). The original townsite was laid out by the railway surveyors in a prairie grid pattern with streets running north-south and avenues running east-west. The Town's 'Main Street' was laid perpendicular to the railway (now called Centre Street) and these lots were listed at a premium price. However, there were cheaper lots for commercial businesses on 2nd Avenue, which ended up becoming the Town's 'Main Street'. Block 35 remained unsubdivided and was designated for a future school. In 1918, the Canadian Government purchased the railway.



1912 Bakery and Furniture Store

The Depression-era drought hurt the Hanna area, and in 1939 the province established a Special Areas government department to provide additional support to the residents in the surrounding region. As railway activity in Hanna declined starting with the closure of the Roundhouse in 1961, there was an oil boom in the region. In the late 1970s the Sheerness Power Generating Station began construction 15 km south of town. The plant and accompanying coal mines created new jobs and there was an influx of construction and people. The railway finally closed its main operations in Hanna in August 1990 which were moved to Calgary and Edmonton. The generating station converted to natural gas during 2020-2021, resulting in a major reduction of staffing at the mine in 2021 due to no extraction of thermal coal. Portions of the mine currently remain in use for extracting hemolite and for reclamation work.

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Figure 2 – Regional Context

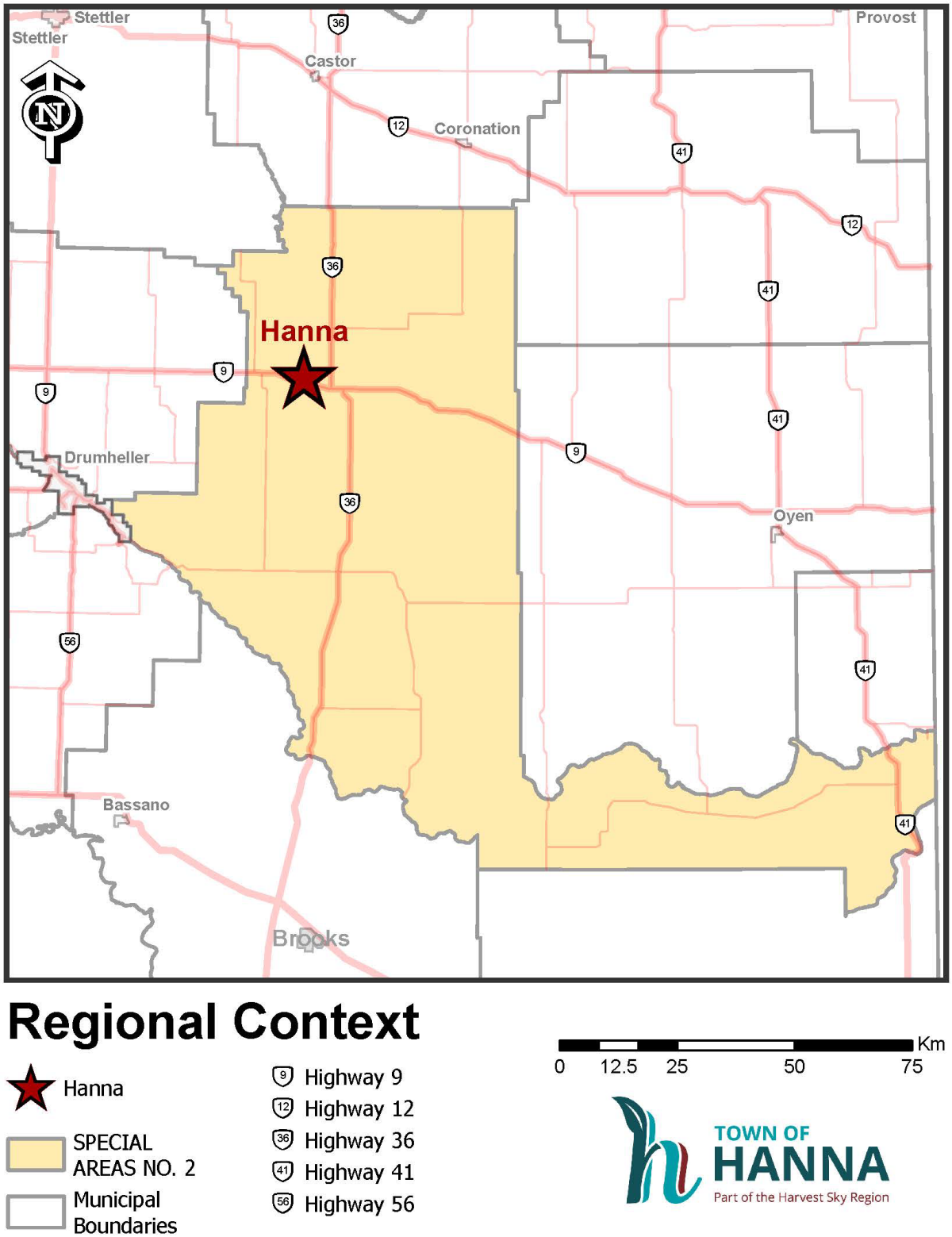
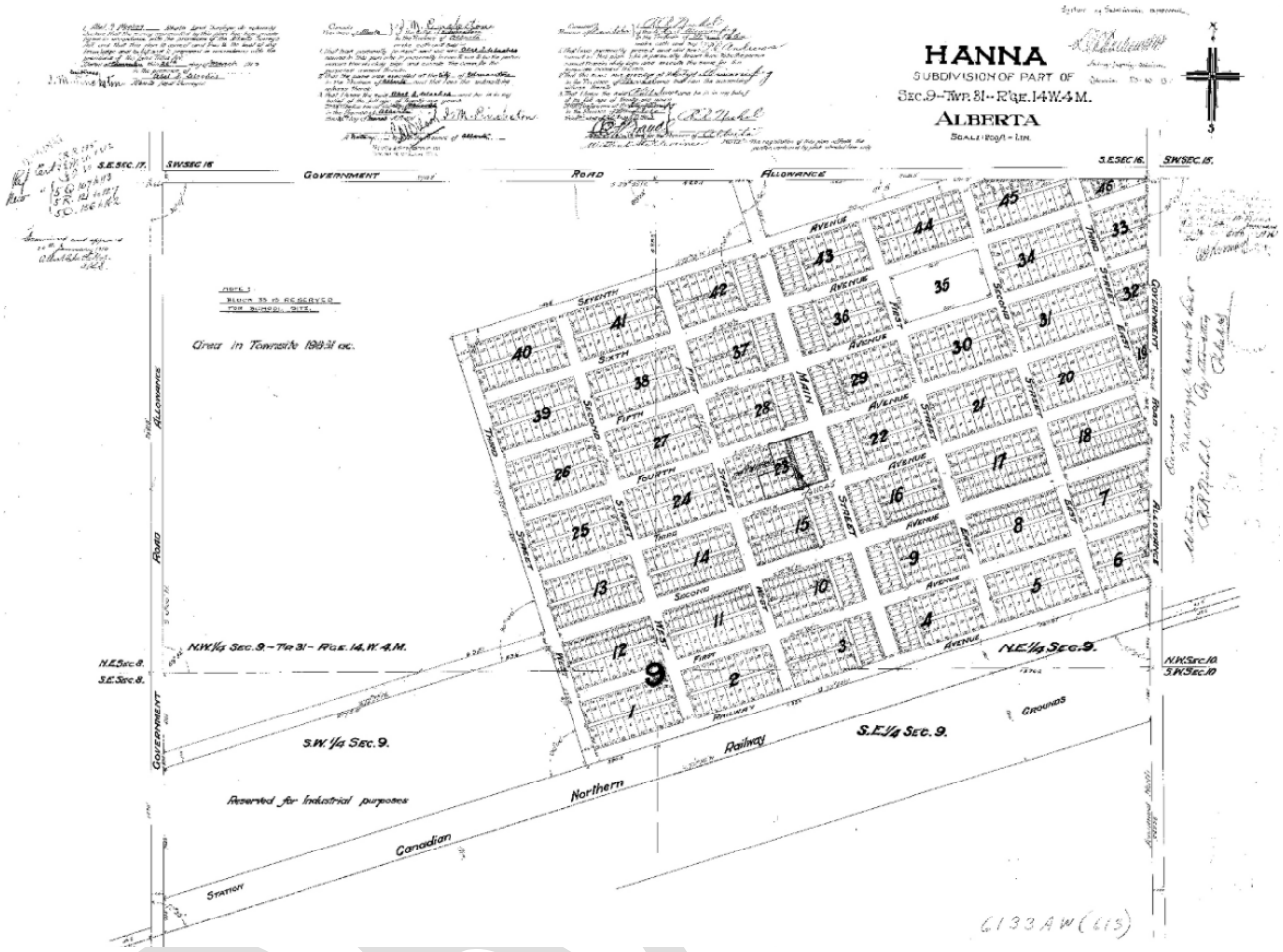


Figure 3 – Hanna 1914 Survey Plan





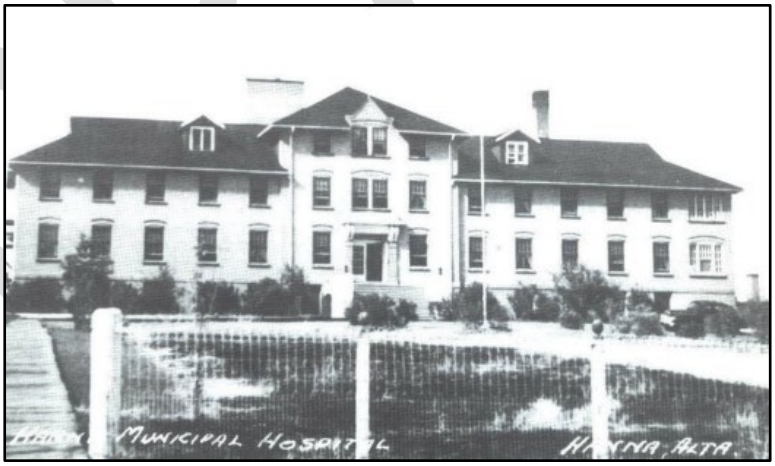
CNoR Roundhouse

2.2 Population

The first census for the Town of Hanna in 1914 recorded 800 persons. The population of Hanna steadily grew, while the surrounding rural population of Special Areas declined. In 1985 the population of Hanna reached its highest population of 3,036 persons, where it remained steady for many years. Around 2006, the population of Hanna began to slowly decline to approximately 2,500 persons in 2021. According to the latest provincial population statistics in 2025, the population of Hanna has slightly increased to over 2,665 persons which is consistent with record growth experienced throughout Alberta in 2024.

The 2021 federal census age distribution of Hanna's population is shown in Figure 4. Hanna's largest age group is between 55 to 75 years of age, with younger age groups comprising a smaller proportion of the population. The current age distribution of the population is therefore considered to be in a constrictive decline. The household size by number of persons is shown in Figure 5. Households in Hanna are mainly comprised of only one or two people and only 25% of households have children. This trend, along with an aging population, is anticipated to occur throughout the province in the next 20 years. The population projections for Alberta anticipate this region around Special Areas No. 2 to experience negative growth (less than -.35% average annual growth) over the next 20 years[2].

Hanna residents identified in the Workshop that retirees are being attracted to Hanna because they do not require employment and housing is more affordable than many other rural areas of Alberta and larger centres. Hanna residents leave to find employment and opportunities in larger centres. These two observed trends contribute to the aging population and smaller household size.



Hanna Hospital 1918

[2] Population Projects: Alberta and Census Divisions, 2026–2051 | Treasury Board and Finance | July, 2026.

Figure 4 – Age Distribution

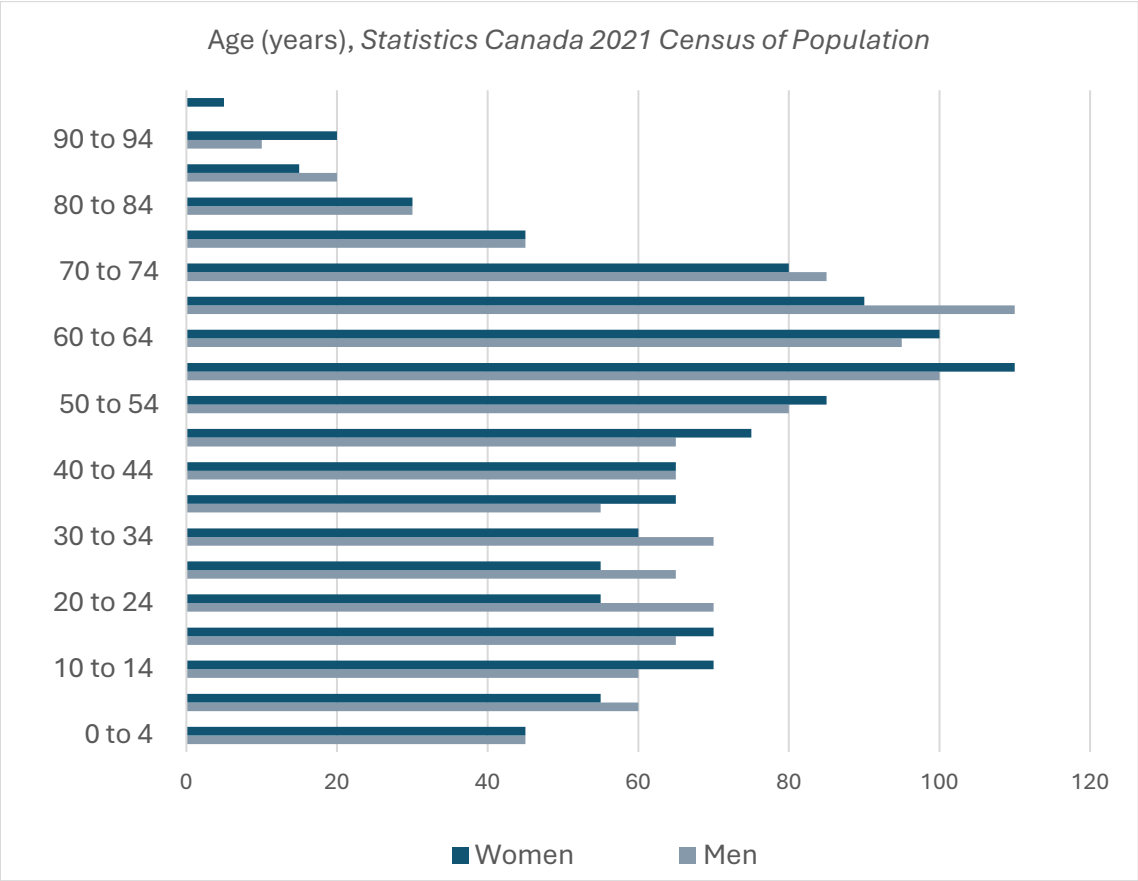
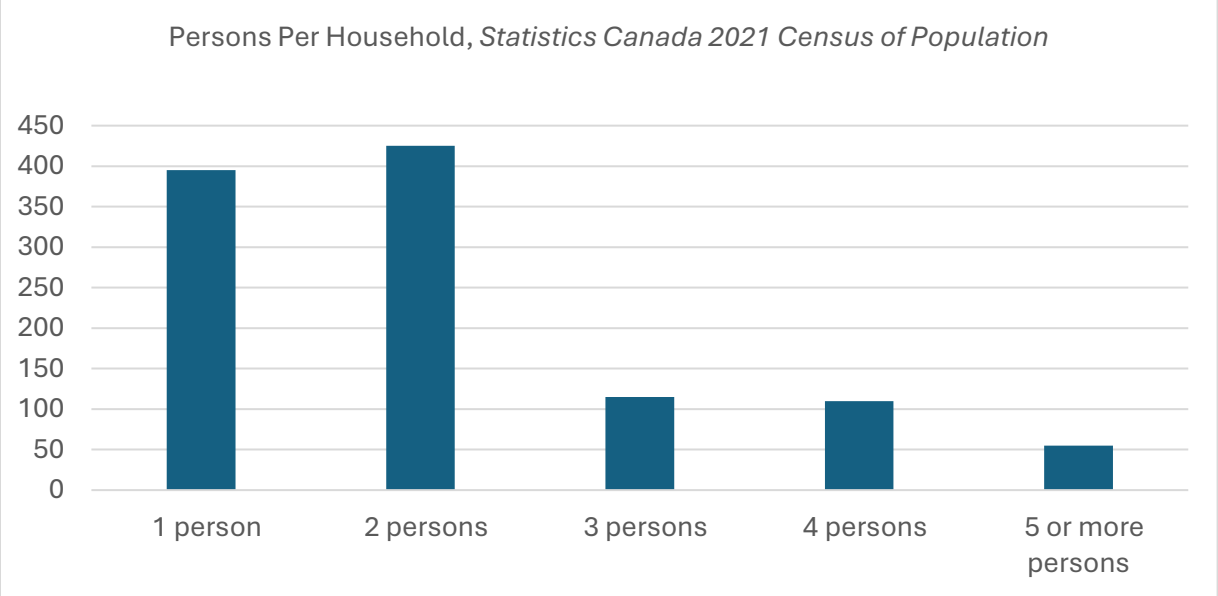


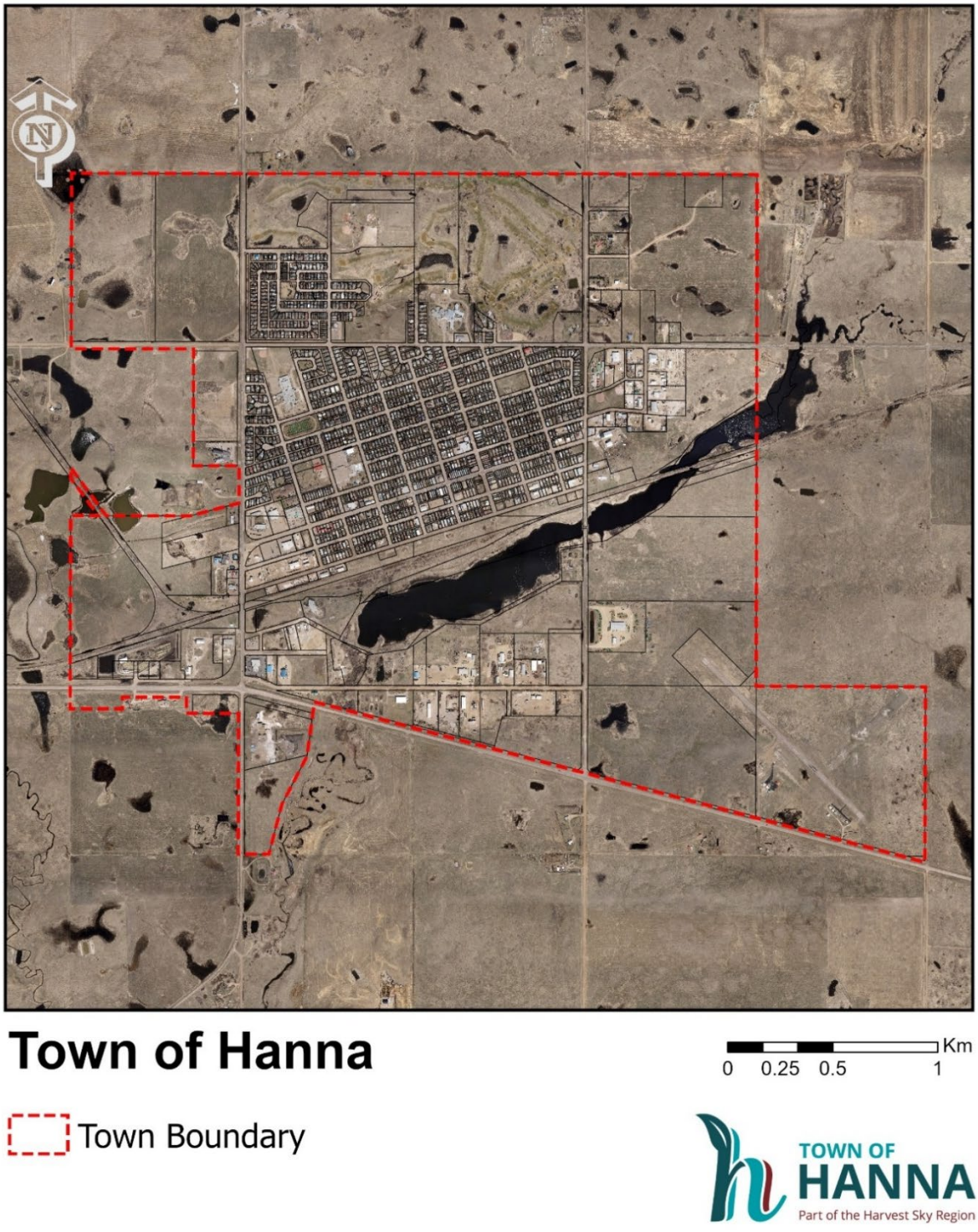
Figure 5 – Household Characteristics



2.3 Current Land Use

The land use in Hanna is comprised of residential, commercial, industrial, parks and recreational lands. Figure 6 shows the general layout of the Town.

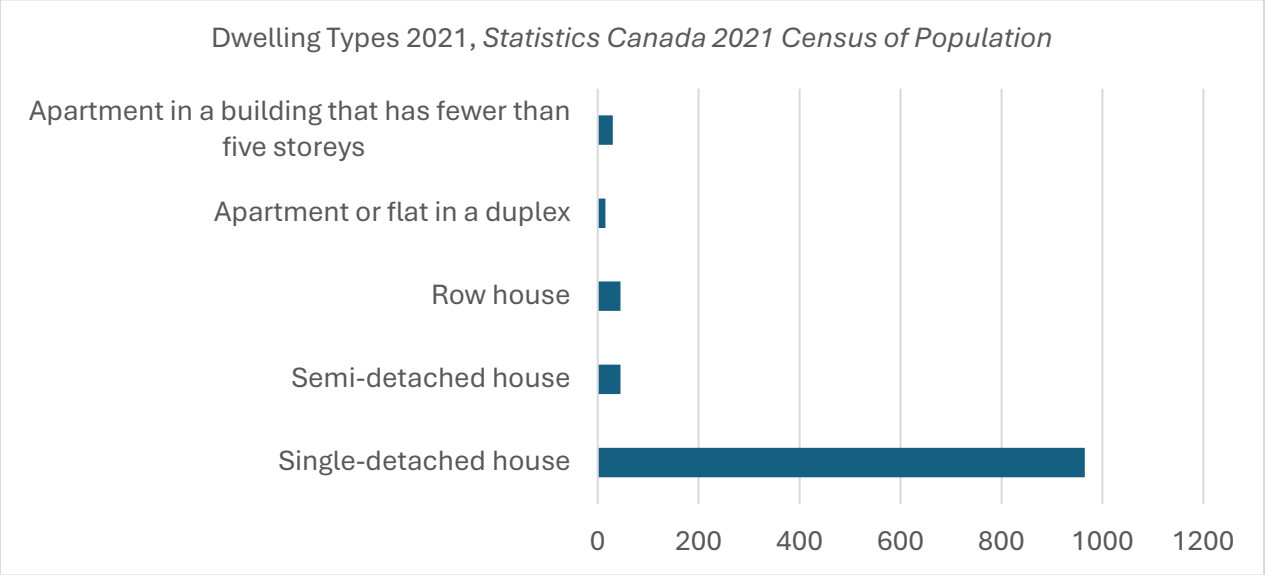
Figure 6 – Town of Hanna



Residential

Residential areas in Hanna are located centrally within the municipal boundaries to the north of the closed railway. There are approximately 1,257 dwellings in Hanna, which are primarily detached dwellings (88%). Figure 7 shows the housing composition in Hanna which highlights that there are very few multi-family housing options available.

Figure 7 – Dwelling Types



The most recent statistics from the 2021 census indicates that 75% of occupied dwellings in Hanna were occupied by owners, meaning 25% of dwellings are available as rental units. However, one commonly heard comment from Hanna residents at the Workshop regarding housing is that there is a shortage of higher-quality rental units currently available.

The 2021 census also indicates that approximately 10% of dwellings in Hanna need major repairs (115 dwellings). This was clearly identified by Hanna residents as a housing constraint at the Workshop. While housing in Hanna is considered affordable compared to other regions of Alberta, residents believe there is a significant amount of housing in Hanna which is beyond repair or requires extensive renovations. In particular, recent newcomers to Hanna indicated it was challenging to find higher-quality housing for families. The 2021 census estimates that 34% of housing was constructed prior to the 1960s, and 68% of the housing stock was constructed prior to 1980. The newest serviced 15-lot residential subdivision in Hanna was developed in 2014 by the Town, but only four houses are constructed, three lots have been sold, seven lots remain vacant and are currently listed for sale. Other "newer" subdivisions in Hanna occurred north of Fox Lake Trail in the late 1970s and early 2000s. The slow residential growth in Hanna is therefore consistent with the population statistics reported in the census data.

Several acreages also exist within the Town's boundaries, primarily in the north-eastern portion of the Town.

Commercial

Commercial development in Hanna is generally located along Highway 9 and the major roads in the east and west sides of Town, Pioneer Trail and Palliser Trail respectively, as well as along Railway Avenue. These commercial areas include businesses such as a car dealership, large and medium retailers, contractors, gas stations, restaurants, offices, and storage uses.

Hanna's downtown is centrally located within the Town along 2nd Avenue. Surrounding the main street of the downtown is an area of transition with a mix of commercial and residential uses. The main street of the downtown has a traditional main street streetscape with small setbacks, narrow storefronts, and single-storey buildings. The downtown is primarily offices, retail, service businesses, banks, and restaurants. Hanna's downtown has a number of vacant buildings and is not the lively street the long-time residents indicate that it once was. The Town invested into downtown infrastructure including rehabilitated water and sanitary sewer pipes, road surfaces, streetlights, sidewalks, crosswalks, and street furniture in 2024 to revitalize the street.

Sales and services are the second largest source of employment in Hanna according to the 2021 census data, followed by business, finance, and administration. Successful commercial areas are important not only for providing goods and services to Hanna residents, but also as a source of employment to residents. Although Hanna continues to be an important regional trading centre, the reality that people are willing to travel longer distances or order online for increased selection and/or lower prices remains a threat to the success or growth of commercial in Hanna.



Main Street 1959



Main Street 2026

Industrial

Industrial lands are located between Highway 9 and Railway Avenue, as well as in the north-east. Industrial businesses include building supplies, utilities, contractors, construction, trucking and transport, fertilizer manufacturing, and agricultural suppliers. In 2021, trades, transport, and equipment operators are the primary source of employment in Hanna whereas manufacturing is on the lower end of the source of employment.

Parks and Recreation

One of Hanna's greatest assets is its access to parks and recreational facilities. The Town has a golf course, an arena, a curling rink, an outdoor pool and track, an artificial turf football field, ball diamonds and soccer fields, a skateboard park, a spray park, and numerous children's playgrounds and greenspaces throughout. Centennial Place contains a fitness facility, indoor courts, dance studios, and an indoor walking track. Hanna also has a municipal campground. There are some pathways for walking, some of which have been identified for required improvements or for surfacing with asphalt.

2.4 Infrastructure

One of the main purposes of a municipality is the provision and maintenance of infrastructure and utility services. These contribute greatly to resident's quality of life and the economic prosperity of a municipality. However, municipal Councils are faced with many competing priorities, including keeping property taxes affordable versus the rising costs of infrastructure maintenance combined with decreased funding from senior levels of government.

The Town of Hanna is in a similar situation with many small rural municipalities in Alberta – much of the infrastructure was installed around the same time and is starting to reach its end-of-life. While surface infrastructure such as roads and sidewalks is the most visible to residents, it is the below ground infrastructure that is not apparent until it fails or does not meet an adequate level of service.

In 2014, the Town of Hanna completed an Infrastructure Master Report which detailed the condition of Hanna's infrastructure and prioritized a 10-year capital plan for infrastructure upgrades. In 2023, a follow up report was prepared to review the progress made and to make recommendations for the next 10-year capital plan.

Transportation

Hanna's 33.5 km of roads are primarily asphalt (93%) with sidewalks and boulevards typically on each side of the road. Hanna's roads are organized in a grid, with laneway access at the rear of the properties. There are a few cul-de-sacs and curvilinear roads in the newer subdivisions in the north.

Over the past 20 years, the Town has been completing annual road upgrades. Approximately 30% (11 km) of the road network has been repaved. The Town's approach to road upgrades is to perform these in combination with underground utility infrastructure replacement. In the last few years, the Downtown received major road and sidewalk upgrades, as well as Palliser Trail, and the bridge along Pioneer Trail was replaced by a culvert along with significant road resurfacing.

Additional priority road upgrades required include portions of the remaining boundary arterial roads (Fox Lake Trail, Pioneer Trail). In 2026, the Town also prepared a report detailing the deteriorating condition of sidewalks and has budgeted for annual sidewalk repair and replacement over time.

The Town also has a municipal airport, with a 1,067 m (3,500 ft) asphalt runway and two shorter turf runways. It has a terminal building, refueling facilities, and private hangars. The airport is used primarily by private aircraft owners, private charters, for flight training, as a base for utility line inspections, and by

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Stars for medical transports. In 2018, the Town repaved the airport runway and very recently installed new LED runway lights.

Figure 8 – Road Network and Airport shows the network of roads in Hanna and the municipal airport.

Water

The Town receives its water from the Henry Kroeger Regional Water Services Commission (HKRWSC) system. Water is drawn from the Red Deer River and is treated in Hanna. Treated water is stored in a reservoir with a capacity of 4,546,000 L (1,200,926 gal). As of 2014, the Town represented a 58% demand of the HKRWSC capacity. The HKRWSC also provides water to Starland County, Delia, Youngstown, Oyen, and Special Areas Board.

The water distribution system in Hanna consists of 37.5 km of water main ranging from 100 mm to 400 mm. In the last 25 years, less than 10% of the water distribution system has been replaced and more sections of water main have been identified as due for replacement.

While the water supply is currently adequate for meeting domestic demands, the system may need to be upgraded in the event there is future development. A few significant main replacements and upgrades have been identified, such as:

- replacing all 100 mm lines with 200 mm lines;
- upgrading Centre Street from 100 mm to 300 mm;
- a new 300 mm main along Pioneer Trail to connect to the mains in Fox Lake Trail, Railway Avenue, and South Municipal Road to improve fire flows; and
- replacing or installing new water valves.

Fire hydrant coverage in town is identified as adequate.

Figure 9 – Water and Wastewater Systems shows the current water and sanitary systems in Hanna.

Wastewater

The wastewater system in Hanna consists of approximately 25.3 km of collection mains, two private lift stations, two small Town-owned lift stations, and a main Town-owned lift station. Wastewater is lifted from the main station to the sewage lagoon located about 2.5 km south of Highway 9 along Range Road 145 within Special Areas No. 2.

While the original design of the wastewater treatment system was to service a population of 4,100 people, the 2014 infrastructure study indicated that the system is prone to extreme infiltration during wet weather events resulting in flows 3-4 times the normal flow rates. The report attributes these higher flows to possible cross-connections with storm sewers, residential sump pump connections, and infiltration from manholes located within traplows. Due to the construction material of the collection system, much of the system has reached its life expectancy. It is recommended that sewer mains are replaced on an ongoing basis in conjunction with water and/or stormwater mains.

The sewage lagoon consists of four anaerobic primary treatment cells, one secondary treatment/polishing cell, and one storage cell. Treated wastewater is discharged to Bull Pound Creek and ultimately to the Red

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Deer River. The only recorded cleaning record in the last 25 years of the first two lagoon cells was just over 10 years ago. The Town is currently in the process of completing a Regional Wastewater and Lagoon Infrastructure Study. While the Town has upgraded the main lift station, the forcemain from the main lift station to the sewage lagoon is likely undersized and will require upgrades.

Figure 9 – Water and Wastewater Systems shows the current water and sanitary systems in Hanna.

Stormwater

The Town's stormwater system consists of three primary catchment areas composed of overland conveyance systems and some underground pipes. The 2014 infrastructure study identified 16 projects to address at-risk areas. The highest priority upgrade of a new diversion outfall at the south end of 3 Street W was recently completed by the Town and this helped increase the capacity of the west drainage system, the largest of the three catchments, and reduced the flooding risk at various other priority areas throughout the west catchment.

Solid Waste

Solid waste in Hanna includes garbage, organics, and recycling. Curb-side residential garbage collection is managed by the Town through the regional Big Country Waste Management Commission (BCWMC) transfer station, located just north of Town. Hanna residents have access to the transfer station and the Youngstown landfill. Industrial and commercial garbage pickup may be contracted to the Town. Compost is currently picked up twice a year. Recycling services were increased to a regular residential recycling curb-side pickup in fall 2026.

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Figure 8 – Road Network and Airport



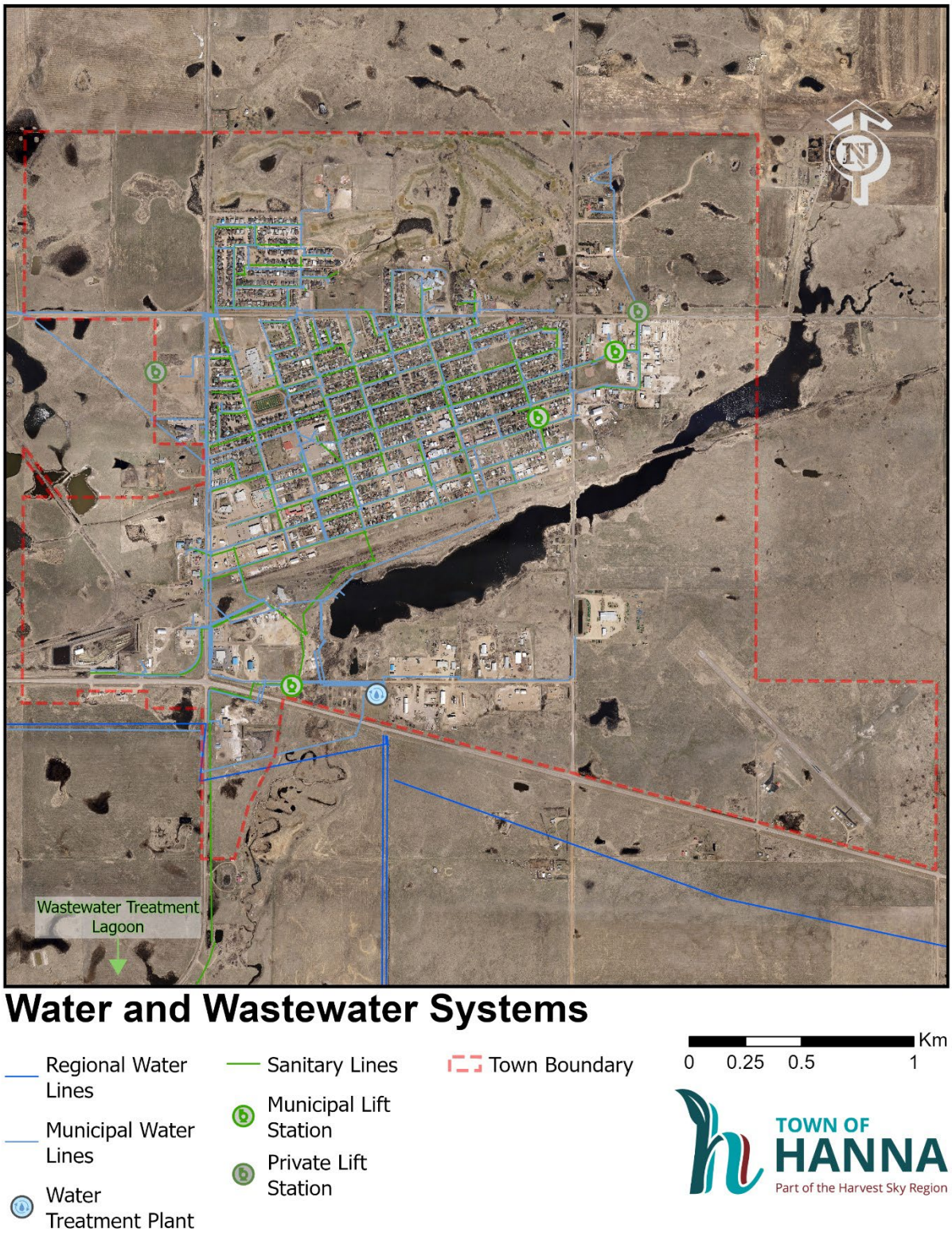
Road Network and Airport

- Asphalt Road
- Gravel Road
- Gravel Alley
- Oiled Road
- Airport Terminal
- Airport Runway
- Highway 9
- Town Boundary

0 0.25 0.5 1 Km

TOWN OF HANNA
Part of the Harvest Sky Region

Figure 9 – Water and Wastewater Systems



2.5 Community Services

A variety of other services are provided to residents and the surrounding area.

- Planning, development, and safety codes services are provided by the Town and Palliser Regional Municipal Services.
- Grades K-12 at the J.C. Charyk Hanna School, part of the Prairie Land Public School Division.
- The Hanna Health Centre, a hospital operated by Alberta Health Services that provides a range of services, including a 24/7 emergency, laboratory and diagnostics, and ambulances services.
- An on-call Fire Department.
- An RCMP detachment and Bylaw officer.
- A municipal library.
- A variety of senior's services and a senior's lodge.
- Family and Community Support Services.
- Recreation programming.
- A Community Centre.

2.6 Summary of Current Issues and Opportunities

Issues

In summary, the Town of Hanna faces a number of planning issues to be addressed in the MDP policies and through other Council actions:

- slow population growth, including families and youth;
- retention and creation of new employment opportunities;
- older housing stock with a significant number requiring major improvements, and higher costs of demolition;
- low availability of rental housing;
- the amount and cost of infrastructure upgrades and replacement;
- the number of vacant commercial buildings and lots, and high business turn-over;
- the appearance and land uses at the Town's main entrances;
- the upkeep or replacement of Town facilities such as recreation facilities, and the desire for new and improved sidewalks, trails and pathways; and
- long-term financial viability of the Town with rising operating costs.

Opportunities

Despite the planning issues that Hanna faces, there are opportunities that are also addressed in this MDP:

- Hanna is a small town with an incredible history that offers a strong sense of community;
- the central location of Hanna in the region, farther away from the hustle and bustle of busy cities;
- the availability of affordable housing compared to other regions of Alberta;

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- increased events and programming in the revitalized downtown to draw residents and visitors;
- attract families with quality recreational facilities and programming;
- vacant serviced residential lots are available for new construction;
- the availability of senior's housing and services;
- the municipal airport as a means for attracting economic development; and
- available lands for future residential development that can be easily serviced.

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3. Community Vision and Goals

3.1 Vision

"Hanna is a thriving, welcoming hub for east-central Alberta; a Town that reflects its residents and business owners' needs today and tomorrow. A community where generations of families continue to build our future."

3.2 Goals

These goals act as the guiding principles for the objectives and policies of this Plan.

3.2.1 To improve and promote existing developed areas through infill and redevelopment.

3.2.2 To establish a comprehensive growth management strategy to ensure the development of an orderly, economical, and beneficial use of land in conjunction with anticipated population changes.

3.2.3 To develop an efficient land use pattern.

3.2.4 To ensure that community services reflect the needs of the community within financial and physical capabilities of the Town.

3.2.5 To support small businesses and unique businesses.

3.2.6 To promote highway commercial and to welcome a variety of economic ventures and development opportunities.

3.2.7 To efficiently maintain and improve existing utility and transportation infrastructure, and plan for future infrastructure needs to accommodate long-term growth.

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4. General Policies

The purpose of this section is to establish policy statements that guide future growth and achieve the Town's vision and overarching goals. These policy statements have relevance at many levels of planning, including new ASPs/ARPs or amendments, Conceptual Schemes, Land Use Bylaw amendments, subdivision applications, and development permit applications. They apply to all lands within the municipal boundary.

4.1 Natural Environment and Historical Resources

The Town of Hanna is located within the Northern Fescue Natural Subregion of the Grasslands Natural Region. This region is characterized by dry, flat-to-rolling prairie terrain with deeply incised river valleys and badlands. It features glacial moraines, saline wetlands, and areas with significant erosion. It is a transition area between the drier Mixed grass regions to the south and the moist Parkland region to the north. The area is characterized by long, cold winters with low snow cover and hot summers. Within the Town's boundaries, there are several water bodies identified, including the CN Reservoir (a man-made dam), and a number of small wetlands classified as marshes[3]. The CN Reservoir was constructed in 1913-1914 as a source of water to service steam locomotives.

The province has also identified the presence and potential presence of Historical Resources within the Town's boundaries[4]. These include resources of provincial and municipal significance, of both archeological and paleontological resources. The Roundhouse, the building to shelter and maintain the locomotives, has been designated as a provincial Heritage Resource. In 2022, a planning report was prepared for the Harvest Sky Economic Development Corporation regarding the future potential of the Roundhouse as a tourist destination. The original 1914 train station building, which currently serves as the Visitor Information Centre, is also recognized federally as a heritage train station. Other original buildings have been preserved and moved onto the site of the Hanna Pioneer Village and Museum site, including the telephone office, the general store, and the first Hanna hospital.

Objectives

- To ensure a healthy environment is maintained in all aspects of future planning and development.
- To protect and minimize the impact of development on environmentally sensitive areas.
- To protect and promote heritage resources.

Policies

4.1.1 Development should preserve natural features and vegetation that contribute to the natural visual quality.

[3] Alberta Merged Wetland Inventory.
[4] Alberta Listing of Historic Resources.

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4.1.2 Setbacks from waterbodies or wetlands may be established during the planning process of an ASP, the Land Use Bylaw, or at subdivision to ensure that:

a) land adjacent to a waterbody or wetland is dedicated as Environmental Reserve (ER);

b) riparian areas, the waterbody or wetland, and watershed processes are maintained in a natural state;

c) public access is provided, where desirable; and

d) bank erosion is minimized.

4.1.3 The Provincial guidelines "Stepping Back from the Water: A Beneficial Management Practices Guide for New Development Near Water Bodies in Alberta's Settled Region" (2012) should be used as a guideline for the identification of riparian areas and development of management options to determine waterbody setback distances.

4.1.4 Lands that qualify as ER shall be dedicated at subdivision. The width of the ER will vary depending on the geotechnical stability and riparian habitat but must not be less than six (6) metres in width.

4.1.5 Public access to ER lands may be provided where environmental protection concerns can be adequately addressed or mitigated. Land along waterbodies should be incorporated into the parks and open space system where possible.

4.1.6 Stormwater systems are encouraged to be designed to provide water quality treatment including options such as Low Impact Development (LID) practices, storm ponds, and constructed wetlands.

4.1.7 Prior to the preparation of an ASP, or for a subdivision or development permit application on lands identified in the Provincial Listing of Historic Resources[5], a Historic Resource Application must be prepared and submitted.

4.2 Community Services

The community services provided within the Town are instrumental to providing a high quality of life for residents. The residents of Hanna support fiscal responsibility as a high priority and understand that growth provides opportunities for enhanced services within the community.

Objectives

- To provide community services that fit the Town's needs.
- To create and maintain quality community spaces that function to bring residents together and strengthen social connections.
- To sustain current services levels and attract growth to increase the provision of services.

Policies

4.2.1 Essential community services provided by the Town for the needs of residents will be maintained and enhanced.

[5] https://www.alberta.ca/listing-historic-resources.aspx

4.2.2 Existing community services and cultural facilities, and the community's needs and demands for such services, as determined though public consultation, will be periodically reviewed by the Town.

4.2.3 The Town will support and collaborate with relevant government agencies and other service providers to provide or maintain the following services at appropriate levels of service:

a) accommodation and care for senior citizens;
b) child care;
c) public education;
d) library services; and
e) ambulance and health services.

4.3 Sour Gas Facilities

The *Act* requires that the MDP contain policies to provide guidance on the type and location of land uses adjacent to sour gas facilities. Presently there are no sour gas facilities located within the Town.

Objectives

- To ensure development proceeds in a manner to protect personal safety.

Policies

4.3.1 Subdivision and development permit applications must be referred to the Alberta Energy Regulator as required by and in accordance with the *Act* where the lands are within the distance specified in the *Regulation* of a sour gas facility.

4.3.2 Subdivision and development permit approvals must conform to the setbacks to sour gas wells as specified in writing from the Alberta Energy Regulator, in accordance with the *Regulation*.

4.4 Transportation

The Town's transportation system will require a planned and funded road rehabilitation program to ensure the roads are properly maintained, as costs of road rehabilitation significantly increase as deterioration continues. The Town's road rehabilitation plan will be coordinated with underground utility repair and replacement for efficiency.

Objectives

- To develop and maintain an efficient, economical, and safe transportation system.
- To ensure a safe pedestrian circulation system and provide connectivity throughout the Town.
- To maximize the potential of the Hanna Airport for future economic development.

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Policies

4.4.1 New roads in Hanna will be designed to Town standards. Variances to these standards may be approved at the discretion of the approving authority where innovative solutions address local site conditions.

4.4.2 Subdivision and development proposals shall be designed to provide safe and efficient access for emergency vehicles.

4.4.3 The transportation system should be designed for safe and accessible pedestrian circulation, including sidewalks, intersection crossings, and pathways that provide logical connections between the downtown, residential neighbourhoods, commercial nodes, schools, parks, recreational facilities, and other key Town amenities.

4.4.4 The Town will encourage alternative modes of transportation when preparing budgets and in capital planning processes that result in the repair and improvement of sidewalks and pathways.

4.4.5 The Hanna Airport shall be protected from incompatible development and shall include a review of noise, flight path, building height, and location and proposed land use in consideration of normal airport operations.

4.4.6 The Town shall continue to coordinate with surrounding communities regarding the potential for transportation initiatives that support regional economic development and options for residents, including youth and senior populations.

4.5 Utilities

The focus of the Town on utility services will be to ensure that existing utilities can be maintained and upgraded as required in a cost-effective and efficient manner, and to ensure that development is undertaken in a coordinated manner with utility condition and capacity.

Objectives

- To provide municipal utility services in an efficient, economic, and coordinated manner.
- To promote efficient patterns of development and effective infrastructure management.
- To ensure costs of new or upgraded utility infrastructure that supports growth are fairly and equitably distributed using appropriate financial tools.

Policies

4.5.1 The Town will continue to monitor the condition, capacity, and long-term performance of existing utilities to develop sustainable capital plans for rehabilitation, replacement, and expansion.

4.5.2 Proposed new or intensified developments will be phased in accordance with statutory plans and utility master plans, or other supporting engineering studies, to provide logical and orderly extensions of existing infrastructure.

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4.5.3 For an application for a land use amendment, subdivision, or development permit the approving authority, at its discretion, may require the proponent to undertake a study to determine the capacity of the Town's utility infrastructure to accommodate the proposed development.

4.5.4 New utility infrastructure in Hanna will be designed to Town standards. Variances to these standards may be approved at the discretion of the approving authority where innovative solutions address local site conditions.

4.5.5 Developers shall be responsible for the construction, installation, and oversizing of infrastructure and utility systems which service a future growth area to the Town's standards.

4.5.6 The Town may collect a utility oversize charge as specified in a Development Agreement to pay for the cost of infrastructure built with excess capacity to accommodate the subdivision or development.

4.5.7 Notwithstanding 4.5.5, the Town may collect development charges as specified in a Development Agreement from a developer where the Town has constructed the infrastructure.

4.5.8 The Town may explore the use of a local improvement levy bylaw or an off-site levy bylaw to finance infrastructure needs such as replacement, upgrading, or new infrastructure.

4.5.9 Communications towers under the jurisdiction of Industry, Science and Economic Development (ISED) will be considered by the Town in accordance with a Telecommunications Structure Policy. Council may issue a letter of concurrence or non-concurrence to ISED for the proposed structure.

4.6 Redevelopment, Infill and Growth Areas

Growth phasing is a tool used to manage when and where growth or change should happen. The purpose of growth phasing is to allow for orderly growth at a pace and manner that can be integrated into the community's social and physical infrastructure, while considering the long-term fiscal implications.

Given the population decline experienced in Hanna over the past 20 years, combined with the continued aging of buildings and of the Town's infrastructure, growth in the form of infill and redevelopment will be supported as the primary means for growth.

In addition, Growth Areas are lands identified to accommodate potential growth. The boundaries of Infill and Growth Areas are conceptually shown in Figure 10 – Infill and Growth Areas, recognizing that more detailed boundaries and land uses will be determined through the preparation of Area Structure Plans or Conceptual Schemes, subdivision, and Land Use Bylaw amendment processes.

Objectives

- To encourage growth that promotes and maintains the character of Hanna.
- To prioritize growth in areas that achieve the Town's goals for the provision of residential neighbourhoods and economic development.
- To plan for and manage growth at a level that can be integrated into and sustained by the Town's physical infrastructure and fiscal responsibilities.

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Policies

4.6.1 Growth of the Hanna population and the economy will be encouraged through:

a) the publication or promotion of opportunities for commercial, industrial, and residential development, and working with Regional Economic Development Partnerships;

b) providing support for existing businesses and promoting the establishment of new businesses;

c) the maintenance of good working relationships with municipal neighbours and external agencies;

d) the pursuit of quality development within the municipality; and

e) maintaining a capital plan which supports the outcomes of this MDP.

4.6.2 Development that utilizes existing infrastructure facilities and services and minimizes financial impact on the Town will be encouraged.

4.6.3 Within existing built areas, infill and redevelopment will be considered as a primary means for accommodating growth. Factors that are important to consider are:

a) that the new development respects the context of, or provides an appropriate transition from, existing development; and

b) that adequate utility services and infrastructure can support the development.

4.6.4 The Town, at its discretion and subject to budgetary considerations, will continue to support and encourage development through the implementation of its Development Incentives Policy. Such incentives may include property tax deferrals, infrastructure improvements, demolition assistance, and beautification and storefront improvements.

4.6.5 New residential growth will be encouraged in and directed to the Residential Infill and Growth Areas as generally shown in Figure 10 – Infill and Growth Areas. These areas are the most logical to extend residential neighbourhood development and are anticipated to be sufficient to accommodate any future residential growth in the next 20-30 years.

4.6.6 The Commercial/Industrial Infill and Growth Areas as shown in Figure 10 – Infill and Growth Areas are the most logical areas to extend highway commercial and industrial development. The Infill and Growth Areas may require extension of water or wastewater infrastructure for developments that require servicing.

4.6.7 The Town may consider growth in an area not identified in Figure 10 – Infill and Growth Areas where there is an exceptional economic development potential or exceptional potential to provide required housing that does not cause undue financial burden on the Town.

4.6.8 The Town, at its sole discretion, may sell, acquire, service, and/or subdivide land to ensure an adequate supply of land for growth.

4.6.9 Land Use Bylaw amendments (e.g. rezoning) to accommodate new growth may be approved where the supply of land available for development is demonstrated as necessary within the next

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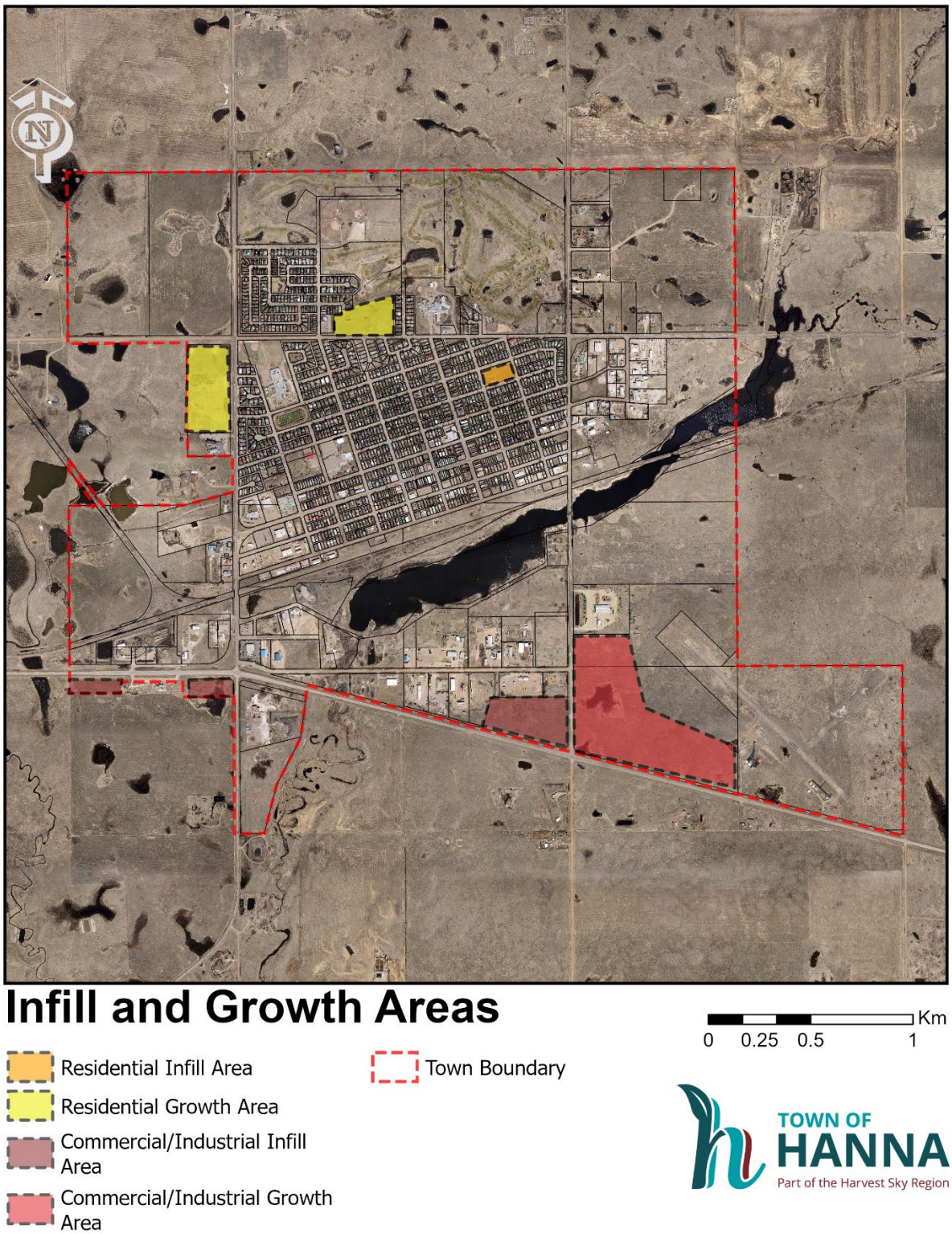
three to ten years. This provides the Town and Hanna's residents with an opportunity to respond to current and changing circumstances.

Figure 10 – Infill and Growth Areas



5. Residential

The policies in this section focus on achieving the Town's housing needs and good neighbourhood design.

Objectives

- To create and support safe residential neighbourhoods that build a sense of community for Town residents.
- To ensure that a variety of housing type preferences can be accommodated.
- To support redevelopment and infill to effectively use existing infrastructure for housing provision.

Policies

5.1.1 Residential redevelopment will be supported through the Town's Development Incentive Policy, as noted in 4.6.4.

5.1.2 Although the predominant style of housing will be detached dwellings, the Town will encourage the provision of a variety of lot sizes, housing types, and densities in existing and new residential areas that can accommodate the needs of Hanna's current and future residents.

5.1.3 Adequate fire suppression for proposed residential development, including but not limited to apartments, attached/row housing, and subdivision in a Residential Infill and Growth Area, requires an investigation completed by a qualified professional.

5.1.4 The Town will support secondary and backyard suites as well as multi-unit dwelling types that are scaled to fit within the Town's existing and new residential areas.

5.1.5 The Town will enable factory-constructed dwellings, including those styles commonly known as "ready-to-move (RTM)" homes and "modular homes" to be located in all residential neighbourhoods where they are consistent in massing and design to dwellings that have been constructed on-site.

5.1.6 The Town may limit those styles of factory-constructed dwellings which are typically constructed as a single-level building with a narrow frontage and shallow pitch of roof (commonly known as "mobile homes") to specific land use districts in the Land Use Bylaw.

5.1.7 The Town should ensure development or redevelopment within existing residential areas is compatible with and complimentary to the surrounding neighbourhood, including consideration for:

a) building height and massing; and

b) lot layout and streetscape.

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5.1.8 The Town will support and enable opportunities for home-based businesses in residential neighbourhoods provided they are secondary to the residential use and do not detract from the amenities of the surrounding residential neighbourhood.

5.1.9 Neighbourhood serving uses such as care facilities, childcare centres, worship facilities, and other community support services, should be encouraged if sited in appropriate locations.

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6. Commercial

6.1 Downtown

Hanna's Downtown is celebrated as the hub of the community: where residents meet their daily needs and congregate to commemorate their history and culture. Downtown is also a destination for visitors and entrepreneurs and is important to boost the economic health and vibrancy of the community. However, to achieve this, there is a recognized need and a desire for continued revitalization and new investment in Hanna's Downtown. This includes strategies to attract new businesses to existing vacant buildings, investment to redevelop older buildings, support to reduce business turnover, support for unique small-businesses, and to bring residents and visitors into Downtown through events and programming. Hanna's Downtown includes the Main Street (2nd Avenue) as well as surrounding streets that provide other commercial services, as generally shown on Figure 11 – Commercial and Industrial Areas.

Objectives

- To support the Downtown as a civic and cultural centre of the Town.
- To provide for a range of retail and service businesses to meet the day-to-day needs of local residents.
- To encourage business owners to collaborate to continually improve the image and presence of the Downtown within the community.

Policies

6.1.1 Hanna's Downtown will be supported as the primary civic and cultural centre of the Town by employing the following strategies:

a) maintaining civic services,
b) promoting events and gatherings,
c) providing a pedestrian-friendly and universally accessible streetscape,
d) attracting new investment in buildings;
e) attracting new businesses.

6.1.2 Downtown will be the primary focus of retail, office, and personal service uses within the Town.

6.1.3 Buildings in Downtown will be of quality design and scale that contribute to the existing main-street style streetscape.

6.1.4 Opportunities for accessory dwelling units and mixed-use buildings will be supported in Downtown.

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6.2 Highway Commercial

Highway Commercial development is an important economic contributor to the Town as Hanna is one of few stops along Highway 9 for providing commercial services to highway travelers in the region. The intersection of Highway 9 and Palliser Trail is important to draw visitors further into Hanna to explore its Downtown and historic sites. Highway Commercial areas are located as generally shown on Figure 11 – Commercial and Industrial Areas, and future potential Highway Commercial areas may be located at the intersection of Highway 9 and Pioneer Trail.

Objectives

- To provide goods and services to the travelling public and the surrounding region.
- To encourage a high standard of design and appearance along Highway 9 that establishes a positive first-impression of the Town of Hanna.

Policies

6.2.1 Highway Commercial areas shall be maintained and developed as specialized commercial areas providing goods and services to the travelling public. Typical businesses encouraged in Highway Commercial areas include restaurants, gas and service stations, hotels, and campgrounds.

6.2.2 Development in the Highway Commercial areas will be of a high standard of appearance, including considerations of building siting, building materials and finishing, signage, landscaping, and parking of vehicles and transport trucks.

6.3 General Commercial

In addition to the Downtown and the Highway Commercial areas, Hanna has other general commercial development located throughout the Town. This includes commercial development along Pioneer Trail and Railway Avenue, as well as along 2nd Avenue outside of the Downtown.

Objectives

- To provide for a diversified range of commercial goods and services that meet the needs of residents and the surrounding region.

Policies

6.3.1 General Commercial includes businesses such as grocery stores and hardware stores, restaurants, hotels, automotive services, contractor services, and storage.

6.3.2 General Commercial developments must be located and designed in a manner to be sensitive to nearby residences.

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7. Industrial

The diversification of Hanna's Industrial areas is important to Hanna's continued growth and success.

Objectives

- To promote a diversified industrial mix which will support a variety of employment opportunities.
- To ensure adequate land is designated for industrial purposes.
- To minimize potential conflict between industrial and residential areas.

Policies

7.1.1 Hanna's Industrial areas are as generally shown on Figure 11 – Commercial and Industrial Areas.

7.1.2 Intensification and effective use of industrial lands will be encouraged.

7.1.3 Industrial subdivisions should provide a variety of lot sizes and levels of servicing to accommodate a wide range of industrial activity.

7.1.4 Industrial lands shall be protected from adjacent uses that could impact the continued operation of industrial uses. This may include strategies such as buffering with open spaces or a gradual transition from industrial to commercial to residential uses.

7.1.5 An efficient transportation system will be developed within Industrial areas and their connections to highways by:

a) providing direct routes to industrial areas;
b) providing adequate internal circulation routes; and
c) ensuring roads are designed and constructed to accommodate industrial traffic.

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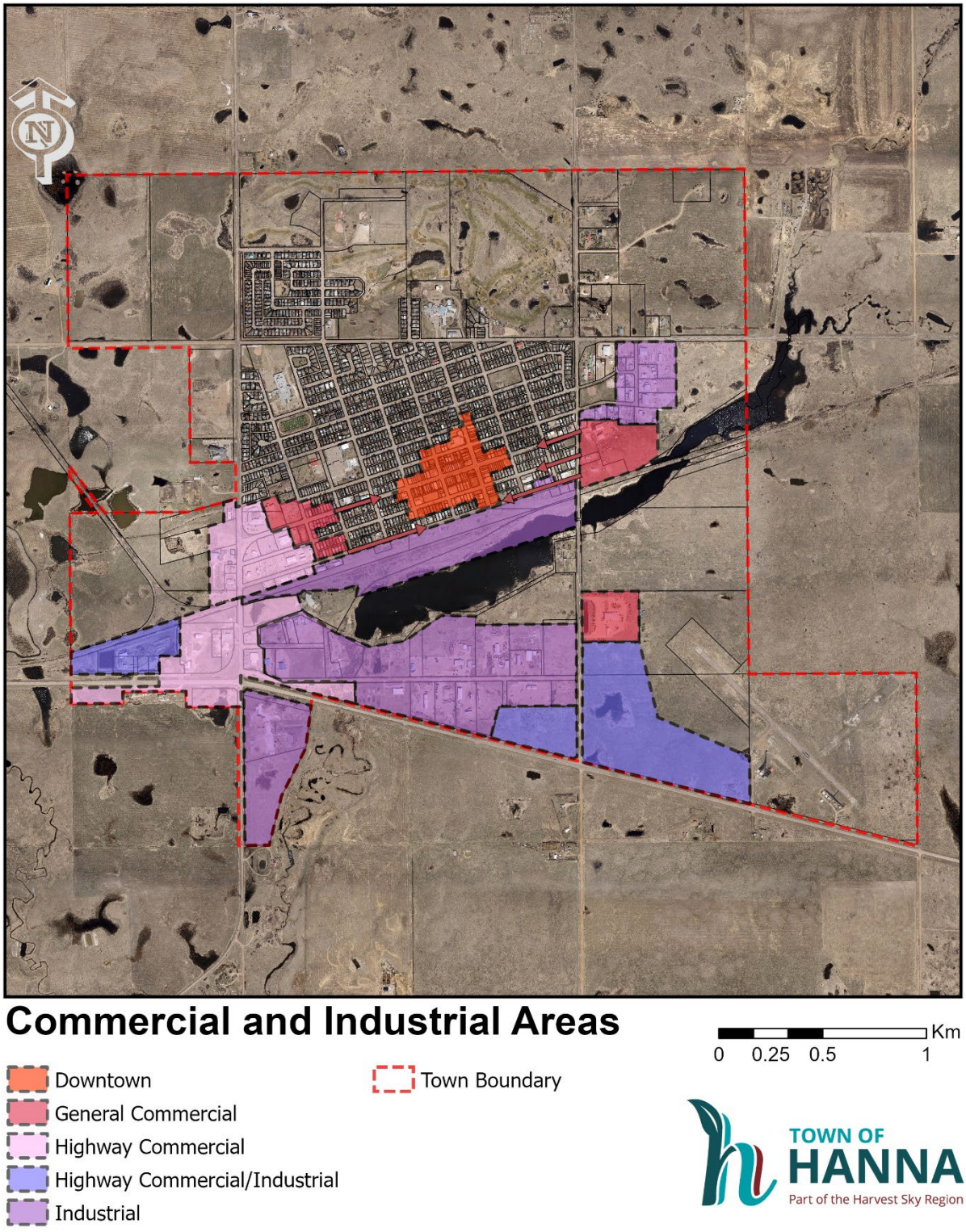
Figure 11 – Commercial and Industrial Areas



8. Parks and Recreation

Parks and recreational facilities are a foundational component of the Town. They provide key meeting places for residents and contribute to a healthy environment and the overall attractiveness of a community. The parks and recreational services provided by the Town are considered excellent, however, Hanna residents have indicated a desire for better access to trails and walking paths and improved sidewalks.

Objectives

- To maintain and enhance existing parks and recreational facilities, and to ensure the availability and accessibility of parks and recreational facilities for current and future residents.
- To improve and extend Hanna's pathway network.

Policies

8.1.1 The Town shall preserve and enhance the existing parks and recreational facilities and continue to provide a high level of service.

8.1.2 The Town may require parks and lands for recreational facilities to be provided as Municipal Reserve (MR) in new areas to accommodate a broad range of activities and user groups, including playgrounds, informal gathering spaces, and pathways.

8.1.3 A maximum of 10% of the area of a parcel of land to be subdivided shall be required to be dedicated MR. Where MR is deemed not required or not in alignment with the Town's MR priorities, it may be provided as cash-in-lieu.

8.1.4 The location and distribution of MR land will generally be determined at the Area Structure Plan, Conceptual Scheme, or subdivision stage. The MR priorities may vary on a site-specific basis, but the following will be considered:

a) pathways; and

b) local requirements for maintained parkland and playgrounds.

8.1.5 The Town will not accept as part of a required MR dedication:

a) walkways or road islands that can be accommodated within a road right-of-way or utility lot;

b) remnants of land that do not serve a community purpose;

c) contaminated lands, well sites, or lands that cannot be effectively used for MR purposes.

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9. Agriculture

Agriculture is an important part of the regional and local economy. Lands currently used for agricultural operations such as cropping are not required for growth opportunities.

Objectives

- To minimize conflicts between agricultural operations and non-agricultural uses.
- To ensure growth of the Town is not restricted by agricultural operations.

Policies

9.1.1 Opportunities for additional acreage development may be accommodated.

9.1.2 The Town will allow limited agricultural operations on undeveloped lands until such time that lands are developed.

9.1.3 Confined feeding operations shall not be located within the Town of Hanna.

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10. Civic Engagement and Cooperation

Good governance in land use planning and decision-making processes includes public engagement, communication, education, and cooperation. These elements are all required to build strong and trusting relationships between the Town, residents, and neighbouring municipalities. It also ensures that residents have the capacity to effectively share perspectives, to participate in dialogue and to be actively involved in the planning and governance of the community in a constructive manner.

Objectives

- To make decisions in a transparent and accountable manner.
- To create opportunities for meaningful public engagement.
- To make decisions regarding land use, infrastructure, emergency services, recreation, and economic development that benefits the Town and the region.

Policies

10.1.1 When holding a public hearing, the Town will employ a process that facilitates and encourages public participation by reducing opportunities for conflict and creating an environment that is conducive to the sharing of opinions.

10.1.2 In order to better inform residents about issues, proposals, decision-making processes, and initiatives, the Town will use a variety of communication and engagement methods and strategies.

10.1.3 The Town will participate in the Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework (ICF) with Special Areas No. 2 to ensure effective and efficient delivery of services to residents and the surrounding region.

10.1.4 Applications for subdivision and development within the Town and adjacent to the municipal boundary shall be circulated to Special Areas No. 2 for their comments and concerns.

10.1.5 The Town shall collaborate with Special Areas No. 2 to find solutions to common concerns through inter-municipal planning processes based on open communication and consultation.

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11. Implementation

The implementation of these MDP policy statements into decision-making processes is the responsibility of not only Town Council and Administration, but also the residents of Hanna through public engagement opportunities. Decisions with respect to municipal plans, policies, land use, subdivision, and development permits must conform with the policy statements in this MDP.

This MDP must be reviewed and monitored at regular intervals to ensure the Plan remains relevant and reflects the vision and aspirations of the Hanna community, as it guides municipal decision-making. It is essential that Council and Administration take into consideration the objectives and policy statements of this MDP when establishing a strategic vision, business plan, or capital plan.

Objectives

- To implement the long-term vision of the MDP in a coordinated and cost-effective manner.
- To build Council, Administration, residents, and developers understanding and commitment to the implementation of the MDP.
- To ensure the MDP remains effective and responsive for municipal land use decision making, policy, and capital planning purposes.

Policies

11.1.1 The policy statements in this MDP must be implemented through detailed planning processes including the adoption and implementation of Area Structure Plans, Conceptual Schemes, the Land Use Bylaw, and other Council Policies.

11.1.2 The Town will, subject to planning decisions and financial capacity, initiate and oversee the implementation of policy statements within this Plan. All planning processes, programs, and committees necessary for achieving the goals of this Plan will be directed by Council.

11.1.3 Prior to making a decision on land use, subdivision, or development, the decision-making authority must ensure that all relevant internal municipal departments, government agencies, and stakeholders are involved in the application review process.

11.1.4 The Town should review and clarify municipal processes to ensure that barriers to development are removed and that the processes and requirements are transparent and easy to follow.

11.1.5 The Town should work with developers and the community to explore creative opportunities to incentivize infill, redevelopment, and new development that promotes the vision and goals of this MDP.

11.1.6 This MDP should be reviewed at five-year intervals to ensure the goals and policies remain current and effective. A comprehensive update of this Plan should occur when deemed warranted by Council.

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11.1.7 The Town Council or a member of the public may initiate an amendment to this MDP. Amendment of this MDP must follow the appropriate procedures as outlined in the *Act*.

11.1.8 Where an amendment to this MDP is proposed by a member of the public, the Town shall require the submission of such information as is deemed necessary to consider the purpose and rationale of the amendment.

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