County of Wetaskiwin No. 10 Municipal Policy

Department:	Policy No.
61.1 Planning and Development	61.1.7

Title Development Concept Plan (DCP) Policy

1. **Policy Statement:**

The County of Wetaskiwin recognizes that certain development proposals require a greater level of planning than can be achieved through a Development Permit, but do not warrant the preparation of a statutory Area Structure Plan (ASP).

The purpose of this Policy is to establish a Development Concept Plan (DCP) framework that supports responsible, incremental development through a planning process proportionate to the scale, complexity and potential impacts of a proposal. The intent is to reduce unnecessary barriers for applicants, encourage appropriate small-scale development, and ensure Administration and Council have sufficient information to evaluate a proposal prior to future planning approvals.

This Policy is intended to support site specific developments where no subdivision is proposed and where the development does not require new municipal infrastructure or a statutory land use framework. This Policy aims to ensure future growth occurs in a coordinated and sustainable manner.

A DCP shall not be used as a substitute for an ASP where an ASP is required by the Municipal Development Plan (MDP), an applicable Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP), Policy 61.1.6 – Requirements for Area Structure Plans, or another applicable statutory plan or County policy, or by Administration.

2. **Responsibilities:**

2.1. Council shall:

- Endorse Development Concept Plans by resolution.
- Consider whether the proposed development is appropriate in principle and consistent with the County's planning objectives.
- Provide strategic direction regarding the implementation of this Policy.

2.2. Administration shall:

- Determine whether a Development Concept Plan is required and whether the proposal remains within the intended scope of a DCP.
- Confirm that an ASP is not otherwise required by the MDP, an applicable IDP, ASP Policy or another applicable statutory plan.
- Establish submission requirements through an Administrative Appendix and through a pre-application meeting with the applicant.
- Coordinate internal and external referral review.
- Identify technical studies necessary to evaluate the proposal.

- Coordinate adjacent landowner circulation and any additional engagement as deemed necessary.
- Prepare recommendations for Council.
- Maintain and update the Appendix as required.

2.3 The Applicant shall:

- Prepare and submit a Development Concept Plan in accordance this Policy and the Administrative Directive.
- Provide all required supporting information and technical studies.
- Demonstrate how the proposal is consistent with applicable statutory plans, the Land Use Bylaw and County policies.
- Address comments received during the review and referral process.

3. **Guidelines:**

3.1. Purpose of a Development Concept Plan:

A Development Concept Plan is a non-statutory planning document used to evaluate site specific developments that require coordinated planning but do not require a statutory Area Structure Plan.

A Development Concept Plan shall:

- illustrate the overall vision for the proposed development;
- demonstrate that servicing, transportation, environmental, land use and compatibility considerations have been addressed;
- consider existing and anticipated development on surrounding lands;
- provide a framework to guide future planning approvals; and

A Development Concept Plan does not constitute approval of subdivision, rezoning, development permits, construction, or any other municipal or provincial approval.

3.2. Development Planning Framework

The County utilizes the following planning tools based on the scale, complexity, impacts and statutory planning requirements of a proposed development.

Planning Tool	Typical Application
Area Structure Plan	Development requiring a statutory framework, including new neighbourhoods, significant multi lot development, municipal infrastructure or other circumstances identified within the County's MDP or ASP Policy.
Development Concept Plan	Site specific development, without subdivision, requiring coordinated

	planning and technical review but not comprehensive statutory planning.
Development Permit/Subdivision	Routine development or subdivision that is consistent with the existing planning framework with limited off site impacts.

Administration shall determine the appropriate planning tool based on the nature, scale, complexity and potential impacts of the proposal, in accordance with the MDP, applicable statutory plans and County policies.

3.3 When A Development Concept Plan May Be Required:

Administration may require a Development Concept Plan where a proposal:

- is of sufficient scale or complexity to require planning beyond a Development Permit;
- involves phased development;
- requires coordinated private servicing or infrastructure planning;
- requires technical studies to demonstrate site suitability or mitigate potential impacts;
- requires significant internal roads, access arrangements or private infrastructure;
- has potential off-site impacts that require coordinated planning or mitigation; or
- would benefit from an overall development framework prior to future planning approvals.

Examples include small scale or incremental recreational and tourism developments, provided the proposal does not trigger an ASP requirement, such as:

- Campgrounds and RV parks;
- Glamping and Eco-Tourism Developments;
- Small Scale Resort or Outdoor Recreation Developments;
- Outdoor Recreation Facilities;
- Event Venues and Retreat Centres; or
- Similar developments as determined by Administration.

3.4 Relationship to Area Structure Plans:

Where Administration determines that a proposal exceeds the intended scope of a Development Concept Plan, the applicant may be required to prepare an Area Structure Plan. A DCP shall not be used to avoid or replace an ASP required by the MDP, an applicable IDP, Policy 61.1.6, another applicable statutory plan or County Policy, or by Administration. Circumstances that generally warrant an Area Structure Plan are outlined in Policy 61.1.6 - Requirements for Area Structure Plan.

3.5 Submission Requirements

A Development Concept Plan shall provide sufficient information for Administration and Council to evaluate the proposed development. The level of detail required shall be proportionate to the scale, complexity, location and potential impacts of the proposal.

Unless otherwise waived by Administration, a Development Concept Plan shall generally include:

Project Overview

- Planning rationale, description of the proposed development and demonstration of site suitability;
- Existing and proposed land uses and development statistics;
- Development phasing, where applicable;
- Confirmation that no subdivision is proposed as part of the development concept; and
- Identification of applicable MDP, IDP, Land Use Bylaw and County policy provisions, with an explanation of how the proposal is consistent with the County's planning framework.

Site Planning

- Existing site conditions and conceptual site layout;
- Existing and anticipated land uses on surrounding lands;
- Internal roadway network, access and emergency access;
- Parking and circulation;
- potential off-site impacts and proposed mitigation; and
- Landscaping, screening and buffering.

Servicing

A preliminary servicing strategy addressing:

- Potable water
- Wastewater;
- Stormwater management;
- Utilities; and
- Fire protection.

Environmental Considerations

Identification of:

- Environmental features;
- Natural hazards or constraints;
- Wetlands and watercourses;
- Vegetation; and
- Proposed mitigation measures.

Supporting Technical Studies

Where required, Administration may require supporting studies prepared by qualified professionals, including but not limited to:

- Hydrogeological Assessment;
- Water Supply Assessment;
- Wastewater Servicing Assessment;
- Stormwater Management Report;
- Traffic Impact Assessment;
- Geotechnical Investigation;
- Environmental Site Assessment;
- Biophysical Assessment; and
- any other study deemed necessary by Administration.

Implementation

Where applicable:

- Proposed Development Phasing;
- Anticipated Municipal and Provincial Approvals;
- Future Development Applications; and
- Private Infrastructure Sequencing.

Administration may waive submission requirements where they are not applicable to the proposal or require additional information where warranted.

Appendix A – How to Prepare a Development Concept Plan (DCP) provides applicants with guidance on the recommended structure, content, mapping and level of detail expected in a DCP. The guide is intended to assist with preparation; submission requirements remain proportionate to the nature, scale and complexity of the proposal, as determined by Administration.

3.6 Public and Adjacent Landowner Engagement

Prior to a DCP being presented to Council for endorsement, Administration shall circulate a Notice of Plan to adjacent landowners for a minimum of fourteen (14) days, using the County's established notification procedures for Rezoning and Area Structure Plan applications. The notice shall describe the proposed development and provide an opportunity for written comments.

Administration shall review comments received during the circulation period and summarize relevant feedback for Council. Where the nature, location, scale, intensity or potential off-site impacts warrant, Administration may require additional public engagement, including an information package or open house. This notification is not a statutory Public Hearing.

3.7 Council Endorsement

Development Concept Plans shall be presented to Council for endorsement by resolution.

Council endorsement:

- Confirms support for the overall development concept;
- Does not constitute approval of subdivision, rezoning, development permits, construction, or any other municipal or provincial approval; and
- Does not bind future Council decisions respecting subsequent planning applications.

3.8 Amendments

Minor amendments to an endorsed Development Concept Plan may be approved by Administration where the proposed changes remain consistent with the intent of the endorsed DCP and do not materially alter:

- development intensity;
- overall site layout or land use;
- access or transportation impacts;
- servicing strategy;
- environmental considerations;
- off-site impacts; or
- compatibility with surrounding lands.

Where proposed changes are more than minor but remain within the intended scope of this Policy, Administration may require an amended or replacement DCP and, where warranted, renewed Council endorsement.

Where proposed changes introduce subdivision, materially alter the development framework, or trigger an ASP requirement under the MDP, Policy 61.1.6 or another applicable statutory plan or County policy, the proposal shall be evaluated outside the DCP process, and an ASP or other applicable planning approval may be required.

There is no automatic limit on the number of DCP amendments; however, repeated or cumulative amendments may be considered by Administration in determining whether the development has evolved beyond the intended scope of a DCP.

3.9 Expiration

A Development Concept Plan shall expire one (1) year from the date of Council endorsement unless a Development Permit has been issued and development authorized by that permit has commenced.

4. Related Documents

- Municipal Government Act
- Municipal Development Plan
- Applicable Intermunicipal Development Plans
- Land Use Bylaw 2024/66, as amended
- Policy 61.1.6 – Requirements for Area Structure Plans
- Other applicable Planning & Development policies

- Appendix A – How to Prepare a Development Concept Plan (DCP)

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