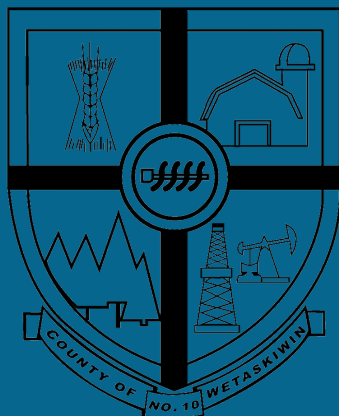


COUNTY OF  
WETASKIWIN

# PARKS & OPEN SPACE



2023 Edition



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

02

03.	INTRODUCTION
03.	COMMITTEE VISION
04.	PARKS & OPEN SPACE PROJECT TEAM
05.	PURPOSE OF THE PARKS & OPEN SPACE STRATEGY
07.	WHAT ARE...
09.	MUNICIPAL & ENVIRONMENTAL RESERVES
10.	RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STRATEGY & DOCUMENTS
12.	DOCUMENT RELEVANCE
14.	MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (MDP)
17.	NATURAL REGIONS
21.	CANADIANS CARE ABOUT NATURE
22.	DEMOGRAPHICS
27.	TYPOLOGY OVERVIEW
30.	TYPOLOGY - TRAILS
33.	TYPOLOGY - CAMPGROUNDS
36.	TYPOLOGY - COMMUNITY
44.	TYPOLOGY - LAKES
46.	LOCATION EVALUATION
53.	TYPOLOGY - RECAP
54.	TYPOLOGY - TRAIL DEVELOPMENT
60.	GROWTH THROUGH OPEN SPACE DEVELOPMENT
62.	OPEN SPACE DEVELOPMENT
63.	CONCLUSION





# INTRODUCTION

The Parks and Open Space Strategy is a long-term plan that will guide the delivery of services in the parks and open spaces within the County of Wetaskiwin for the next 10+ years. This document is designed to be a part of the County of Wetaskiwin's larger planning process that will involve community input to create a vision on how open spaces should look and function, as well as establish key initiatives.

# COMMITTEE VISION

The Parks & Open Space Committee drafted a vision statement to guide the process and future work.

"The County of Wetaskiwin's Parks and Open Space Strategy promotes improved quality of life, both physical and mental health, by enhancing and engaging our communities for current and future generations."

"Creating and preserving the natural environment while providing affordable, sustainable, inclusive, and diverse recreational opportunities."



# PARKS & OPEN SPACE PROJECT TEAM

The Leisure & Community Services Department and internal staff participated in the creation of the strategy with the "Parks & Open Space Committee", which comprises of three elected officials and three members at large from the County of Wetaskiwin.

04

## COUNTY OF WETASKIWIN COUNCIL MEMBERS

**Ken Adair**  
Division 5

**Dale Woitt**  
Division 3

**Lyle Seely**  
Division 7

## COUNTY OF WETASKIWIN PUBLIC MEMBERS

**Gil Lechelt**

**Grace French**

**Susan Kokas**





# PURPOSE OF THE PARKS & OPEN SPACE STRATEGY

This Strategy will be a roadmap to guide planning, management, and municipal investment over the next 10 years. The Parks & Open Spaces Master Strategy is a strategic-level document that identifies broad goals and planning initiatives. It will be used to focus efforts and prioritize resources toward achieving measurable outcomes.

## **BENEFITS OF A PARK & OPEN SPACE STRATEGY**

- Prioritization of investments in parks and open spaces within the County of Wetaskiwin.
- Reinforces local identity and enhancing the physical character of an area through shaping existing and future development.
- Enables participation in physically active recreational experiences throughout the life course that continuous to focus on children and youth but expands to meet the needs and foster the participation of the growing number of older people in the County.\*
- Increases the attractiveness of the local area to create a sense of community pride.
- Boosts the economic potential of tourism, leisure, and cultural activities.
- Supports the future growth and development of outdoor recreation spaces in the County.
- Improves opportunities to connect people with nature.\*
- Increases inclusion and access to recreation for populations that face constraints to participation. \*

\*goals from the "A Framework for Recreation in Canada 2015 - Pathways to Wellbeing"

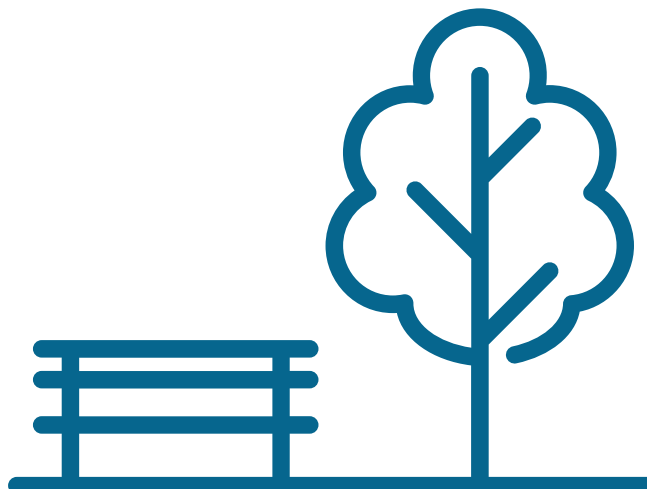


# PURPOSE OF THE PARKS & OPEN SPACE STRATEGY

## **BENEFITS OF A PARK & OPEN SPACE STRATEGY CONTINUED**

- Provides outdoor spaces in under-resourced communities based on community and/or regional needs and resources.\*
- Develops public awareness and education initiatives to increase understanding of the importance of nature to wellbeing and child development, the role of recreation in helping people connect to nature, and the importance of sustainability in parks and recreation.
- Works in partnership with planners and Indigenous communities to provide natural spaces and places in neighborhoods, communities, and regions through the retention and addition of natural areas, forests, parks, trails, and recreational waters (rivers, lakes, canals, and beaches).

\*goals from the "A Framework for Recreation in Canada 2015 - Pathways to Wellbeing"



# WHAT ARE...

07

## What are Open Spaces?

Open Spaces are undeveloped County Lands with limited or no facilities. These lands conserve natural features like shorelines, steep slopes, or forested areas. Some Open Spaces are lands held in reserve to provide locations for future recreation or other municipal services.

For the purpose of this Strategy, 'Open Space' is a collective term that refers to the current provision of parks, amenity greenspace, children's play areas, outdoor sports facilities such as sports grounds, natural, and semi-natural greenspace. This Strategy does not include private Open Spaces with the exception of the Gwynne Ski Hill, Chickadee Trail, the Pipestone Creek Natural Area, and the Alberta Sport, Recreation, Parks, and Wildlife Lands. It also does not include incidental areas such as public right of way, road allowances, public utility lots, etc.

Compared to more urban areas, County Residents live on relatively large lots which provide residents with a good deal of Open Space at home. However, the County heard clearly that, even with the size of residential lots in the County, our Residents highly value easy access to parks, natural areas, and the experiences those provide our residents.

As noted in the County of Wetaskiwin Recreational Needs Assessment (2015), the demand for an expanded supply of recreational trails and the improvement of existing parks were the two most frequent requests emerging from the community consultations.

The results also mirror the recent resident survey by the Lakedell Agricultural Society (2019) in which trails, natural areas, picnic areas and mechanized use trails were identified as the top outdoor facility planning priorities.



# WHAT ARE...

## CONTINUED

08

### What are Parks?

Parks are lands owned by County of Wetaskiwin that are managed for active recreation including campgrounds, day use areas, playgrounds, trails, beaches, and boat launches to give access to lakes in our region.

The County offers residents and visitors six County Campgrounds and three County Owned Day Use Parks. Campgrounds and Day Use Parks are just one part of a larger network of parks and protected areas in the County. In addition to Day Use Parks, the County is responsible for:

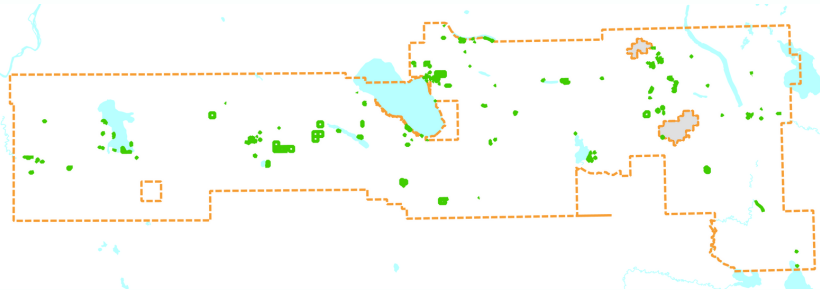
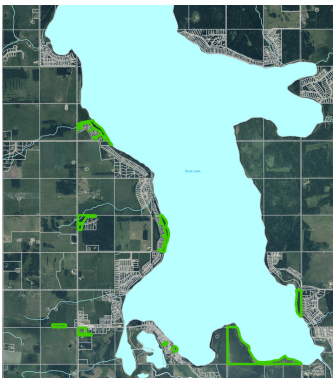
- 90 Environmental Reserve (ER) Sites totaling 558 Acres; and
- 170 Municipal Reserve (MR) Sites totaling 608 Acres.

Though public access is permitted, unless designated as a Day Use Park, County MR and ER is unprogrammed and passively managed. The County also contains park spaces managed by Alberta Parks and private conservation lands.

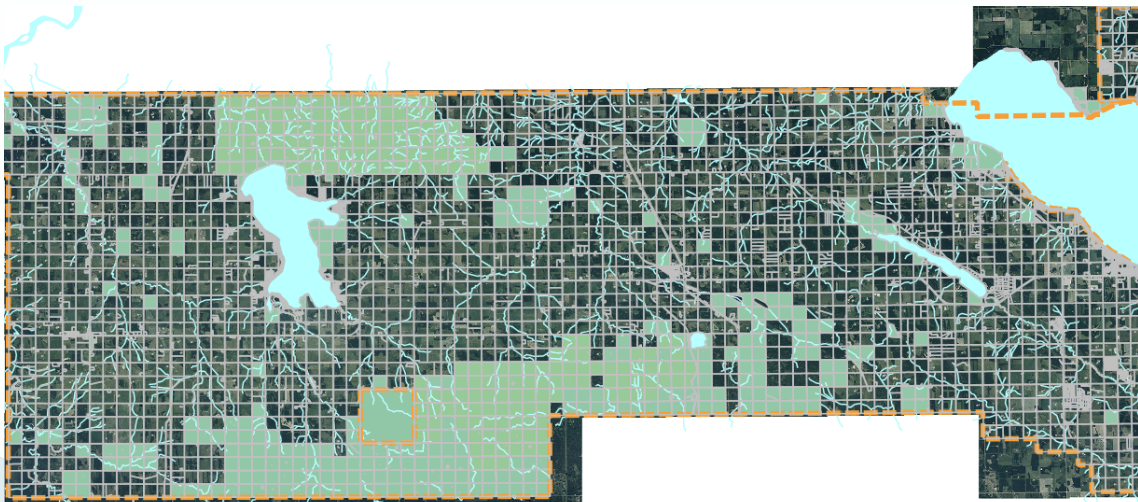


# MUNICIPAL & ENVIRONMENTAL RESERVES

09



Highlighted in green are the Municipal Reserves within the County of Wetaskiwin



Highlighted in green are the Environmental Reserves within the Western region of the County of Wetaskiwin



# RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STRATEGY & DOCUMENTS

10

The studies outlined below are key in that they have identified the needs for recreation from a Federal, Provincial, and Municipal perspective. All three documents are related and intertwined to assist the local delivery of recreation. The creation of a national document has assisted in developing a clear vision and suggests some common ways of thinking about the renewal of recreation based on clear goals and underlying values and principles.

The **Framework for Recreation** in Canada is a guiding document for recreation providers. It acknowledges the role recreation plays in the lives of people and communities by enhancing mental, physical, and social wellbeing, helping build strong families and communities, help people connect with nature, and provides economic benefits such as jobs and tourism. In 2015, the Provincial and Territorial Ministers of Sport, Physical Activity, and Recreation endorsed the Framework for Recreation in Canada and supported by the Government of Canada. The Framework focuses on five goals:

- **Active Living:** Fostering active living through physical recreation;
- **Inclusion and Access:** Increasing inclusion and access to recreation for populations that face constraints;





# RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STRATEGY & DOCUMENTS

## CONTINUED

- **Connecting People and Nature:** Helping people connect to nature through recreation;
- **Supportive Environments:** Ensuring the provision of supportive physical and social environments that encourage participation in recreation and build strong, caring communities; and
- **Recreation Capacity:** Ensuring the continued growth and sustainability of the recreation field.

The **Alberta Recreation Survey** supports national and provincial outcomes of the Framework for Recreation in Canada and an active Alberta. The survey supports four of the five Framework goals – active living, inclusion and access, connecting people and nature, and supportive environments. In the 2017 Alberta Recreation Survey, the report identified several linkages between the Framework goals and the Alberta Recreation Survey.









The **County of Wetaskiwin Recreation Needs Assessment** documents the present and future needs for recreation, trails, parks, open spaces, and programs in the County of Wetaskiwin No. 10. This was achieved by identifying possible needs that are not currently being met, creating an inventory of current indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, and evaluating programs and services. Through this study, strategies are provided to meet identified needs for the residents of the County of Wetaskiwin No. 10 over the next 15 years.



# DOCUMENT RELEVANCE

# 12

This section identifies the specific Federal, Provincial, and Municipal goals and how they are aligned and will provide in this Strategy.

 <p>A Framework for Recreation in Canada 2015</p>	 <p>2017 Alberta Recreation Survey</p>	 <p>County of Wetaskiwin Recreational Needs Assessment</p>
 <p>Goal 1: Active Living Foster active living through physical recreation.</p>	<p>Walking is on the top 3 favorite activities for nearly a quarter of Albertans (23%). Those who walk favour parks or outdoor spaces and are motivated to walk primarily for exercise, but also enjoy nature.</p>	<p>If trails were provided in the County, 81% responded that they would use them for hiking/walking, 61% biking, 50% cross-country skiing/snowshoeing, 50% motorized vehicles, and 33% horseback riding.</p>
 <p>Goal 2: Inclusion and Access Increase inclusion and access to recreation for populations that face constraints to participation.</p>	<p>Although participation rates are lower among those from households with lower incomes, most individuals are still active. Among those from households with less and \$50K in income, in the past year 87% of individuals have participated in an activity connected to nature and 57% in a supportive environment activity.</p>	<p>According to "SitewisePro, 2013" 43.8% of household incomes in the County of Wetaskiwin are less than \$50K. Issues limiting residents to participate in activities and service in the County: 38% stated facility locations not convenient and 30% stated services not available in the County.</p>
 <p>Goal 3: Connecting People and Nature Help people connect to nature through recreation.</p>	<p>Land-based activities (e.g., day hiking, overnight camping, picnicking) are most common (78% of individuals), followed by water activities at 47% of individuals. Albertans are motivated by relaxation, fun, to spend time with family, and to enjoy nature.</p>	<p>54% of respondents indicated that improvement of out door facilities was needed to enjoy the County's natural areas.</p>
 <p>Goal 4: Supportive Environments Ensure the provision of supportive physical and social environments that encourage participation in recreation and help to build strong, caring communities.</p>	<p>Participation is most common for activities that can be done at indoor or outdoor facilities (e.g., swimming, soccer, ice hockey, 60% of individuals), followed by activities at outdoor only facilities (e.g., golf, downhill skiing, softball/ baseball, 43% of individuals). Participation is lowest for activities performed at indoor only facilities (e.g., wall climbing, curling; 23% of individuals).</p>	<p>Respondents were also asked to indicate if they think there are enough recreational trails in the County to meet the needs of their household. Of the respondents, 54% (122 respondents) indicated 'yes' and 46% (102 respondents) indicated 'no'. Those who indicated no wanted more trails for hiking, biking, and horseback riding while also adding winter opportunities.</p>
 <p>Goal 5: Recreation Capacity Ensure the continued growth and sustainability of the recreation field.</p>	<p>The Purpose of Alberta Recreation Survey survey is to find out about the recreation activities of Albertans and what influences their recreation choices and help Government and practitioners to grow and sustain recreation.</p>	<p>This study documents the present and future needs for recreation, trails, parks, open spaces, and programs in the County of Wetaskiwin No. 10.</p>

# DOCUMENT RELEVANCE

CONTINUED

13

## Supporting Documents for Open Space Development

Support for open space development has been identified by Council at the strategic level through the Municipal Development Plan where the County encourages recreation and tourism development that enhances the quality of life but also to develop a network of parks, open spaces, and land for recreational facilities and amenities. The Recreational Needs Assessment and the Lakedell Survey also identifies support of the County developing open spaces, these also align with the “Framework for Recreation in Canada” and the “2017 Alberta Recreation Survey”.





# MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (MDP)

14

In 2021, the County began the process in developing a new Municipal Development Plan (MDP) that reflected the County's vision and goals for the future.

The MDP functions as the principal long-range land use planning document for the County of Wetaskiwin. The MDP is a tool for managing growth and development and includes policy direction for land use activities within the County. The MDP is also a strategic document that provides the County with direction and guidelines on matters of social, economic, and environmental importance.

The goals, objectives, and policies of the new MDP work toward ensuring the future sustainability of the County by promoting efficient forms of land use and infrastructure, fostering local and regional economic development, and supporting communities so that they can be welcoming places for people to live, play, work, and farm.

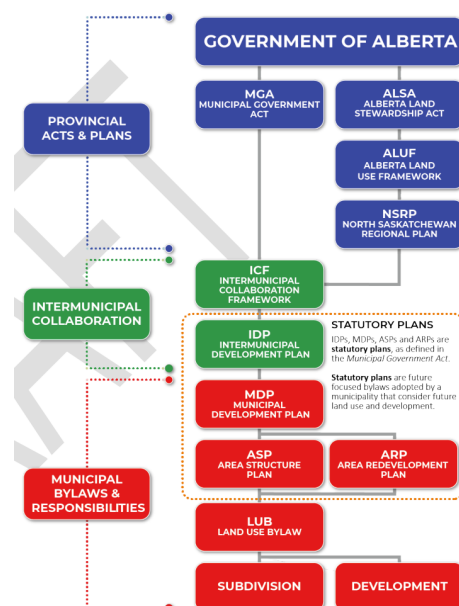
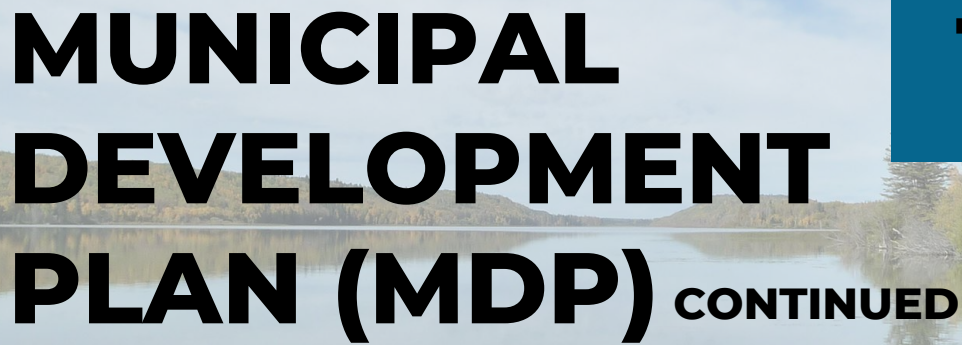


Figure 6. Planning Hierarchy



# MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (MDP) CONTINUED

15

Provided below are the relevant sections of the MDP that will guide the Open Space Strategy.

## *9. Recreation and Culture*

9.0 Recreation and Culture - Goal: The County encourages recreation and tourism development that enhances the quality of life for residents and visitors and supports opportunities to conserve unique heritage resources within the Region.

9.1 Recreation Development - Objective: Provide a network of parks, open spaces, and land for recreational facilities and amenities that complement the municipality's natural features and meet the needs of residents and visitors within the Region.

9.2 Municipal Reserves - Objective: Provide recreational open spaces for current and future generations of County Residents.

9.3 Access to County Lakes - Objective: Provide public access to County Lakes.

9.4 Historic Resources - Support culture, heritage and creativity, and lifelong learning within the region.



# MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (MDP) CONTINUED

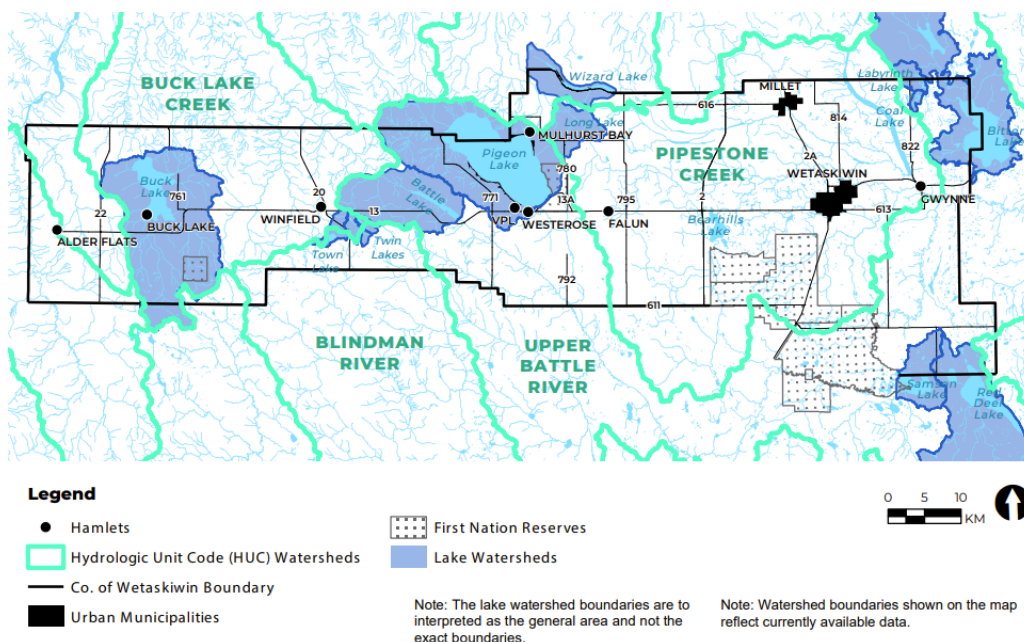
16

## 14. Hamlet Policy Area

14.2 Hamlet Classification and Land Uses - Objective: Prioritize development in hamlets to reflect the character, context, and service capacity of the community.

## 16. Lake Policy Area Overlays

**Developed Lakes Policy Area Overlay:** The shore lands of lakes within the Developed Lakes Policy Area Overlay are characterized by Crown and privately owned lands. These lakes are highly developed and are popular residential and tourism destinations, with day-use recreation areas, golf courses and campgrounds. Historic subdivision and development trends in this area have been significantly higher than near other lakes in the County.



# NATURAL REGIONS



Natural regions provide the big picture of Alberta's landscapes and they are the largest mapped ecological units in our classification system. An individual region contains landscape patterns with a mix of vegetation, soils, and landform features that differ from the other natural regions. For example, mountains and prairies are clearly different from each other in landscape and in the flora and fauna that inhabit them. Six natural regions are recognized in Alberta (see Fig. 2): Grassland, Parkland, Foothills, Boreal Forest, Rocky Mountains, and Canadian Shield. Alberta's largest natural region is the Boreal Forest. The smallest is the Canadian Shield.

# NATURAL REGIONS

## CONTINUED

The County of Wetaskiwin has a wide range of landscape with the 127 kilometer wide municipality. As seen in the illustration, on the page above, the municipality has a large mixture of natural landscape including the Boreal Forest Natural Region, Foothills Natural Region, and the Parkland Natural Region.

### **Boreal Forest Natural Region**

Subregion: Central Mixed wood: The Central Mixed wood Natural Subregion is defined by vast expanses of upland forests and wetlands on level to gently undulating plains. Hunting and fishing is common in this region as Agriculture is limited to hay crops and pasture for livestock. The County of Wetaskiwin has approximately 300,000 acres of Central Mixed wood areas.

### **Foothills Natural Region**

Subregion: Lower Foothills: The Lower Foothills Natural Subregion is a transition area, with cold winters and high winter snowfalls typical of more mountainous climates. The rolling plateaus are forested with the most diverse in Alberta in terms of forest types and tree species. The County of Wetaskiwin has approximately 130,000 acres

### **Parkland Natural Region**

Subregion: Central Parkland: The Central Parkland Natural Subregion occupies a broad, intensively cultivated, and heavily populated fertile crescent in central Alberta. It lies between the cold, snowy northern forests and the warm, dry southern prairies. Cropland covers about 80% of Alberta's Central Parkland area. The County of Wetaskiwin has approximately 300,000 acres of Central Mixed wood areas.



# NATURAL REGIONS

## CONTINUED

### Natural Regions/Landscape

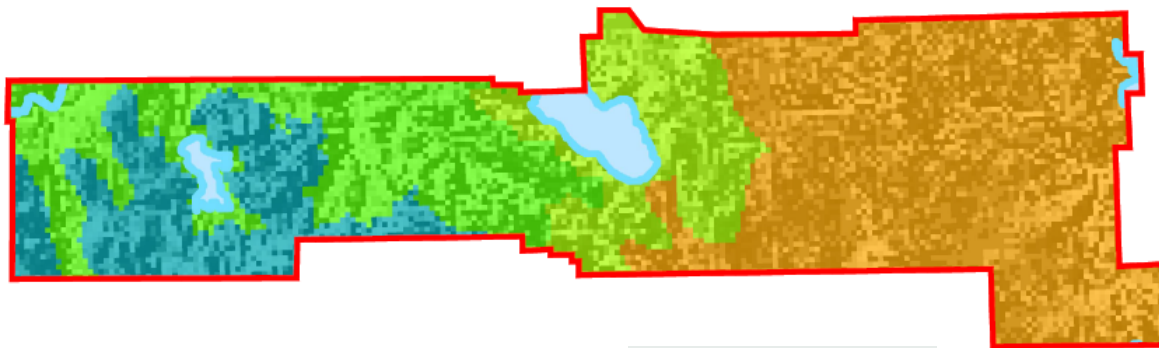
As identified in this document, the County of Wetaskiwin is fortunate to have a variety of different landscapes to provide recreational open space development. The landscape in the West region of the County is made up of Boreal Forest and Foothills Region, this area would be well suited for a variety of trail types such as hiking, biking, and equestrian usage, while the East Region of the County is comprised of Parkland Natural Regions, this region is typically croplands and not well suited for hiking or mountain bike trails. The County Quarter could be developed into a seasonal recreational area, such as the winter months, skating/cross country skiing trails, developed sledding hills could be developed while in the summer a BMX trails could be developed. The area could be a potential location for a sports field house if the demand for such a service was identified. The proximity of this location to a large urban center could make it a valuable recreational facility if planned accordingly.



# NATURAL REGIONS

## CONTINUED

The County of Wetaskiwin Natural Region Map is provided below.



**2005 Natural Regions  
and Subregions of Alberta**

**Boreal Forest Natural Region**

- Central Mixedwood
- Dry Mixedwood
- Northern Mixedwood
- Boreal Subarctic
- Peace-Athabasca Delta
- Lower Boreal Highlands
- Upper Boreal Highlands
- Athabasca Plain

**Rocky Mountain Natural Region**

- Alpine
- Subalpine
- Montane

**Foothills Natural Region**

- Upper Foothills
- Lower Foothills

**Canadian Shield Natural Region**

- Kazan Uplands

**Parkland Natural Region**

- Foothills Parkland
- Peace River Parkland
- Central Parkland

**Grassland Natural Region**

- Dry Mixedgrass
- Foothills Fescue
- Northern Fescue
- Mixedgrass

☒ Contours/Elevations

☐ Thematics:

250 m to 475 m

475 m to 700 m

700 m to 925 m

925 m to 1150 m

1150 m to 1375 m

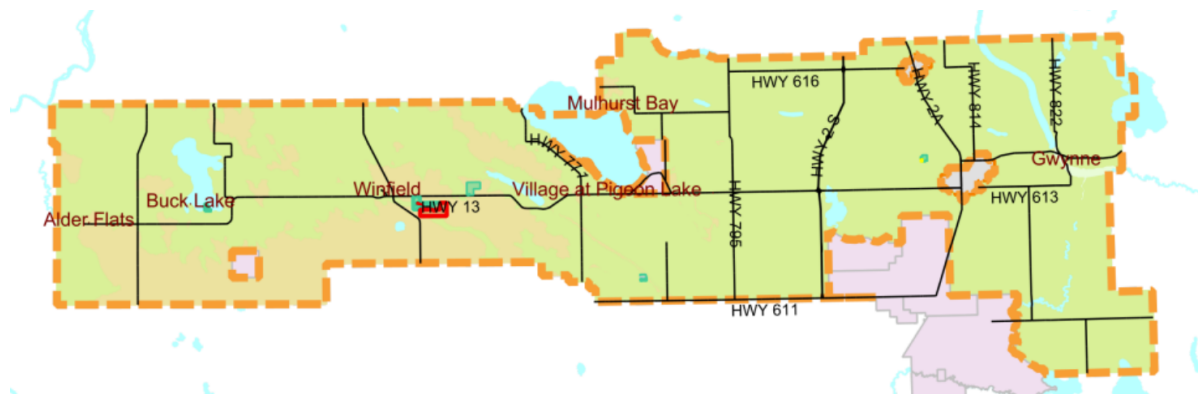
1375 m to 1600 m

1600 m to 1825 m

1825 m to 2050 m

2050 m to 2275 m

2275 m to 2500 m



# CANADIANS CARE ABOUT NATURE

## PERCENTAGE OF CANADIANS IN 2012 WHO:

- 70% Spent time in nature
- 53% Participated in nature education
- 47% Travelled to experience nature
- 45% Reduced their ecological footprint
- 13% Volunteered in nature conservation

## MOST POPULAR ACTIVITIES:

- 71% Picnics and relaxing in nature
- 64% Hiking, climbing and horseback riding
- 41% Gardening and landscaping
- 21% Fishing
- 18% Birding







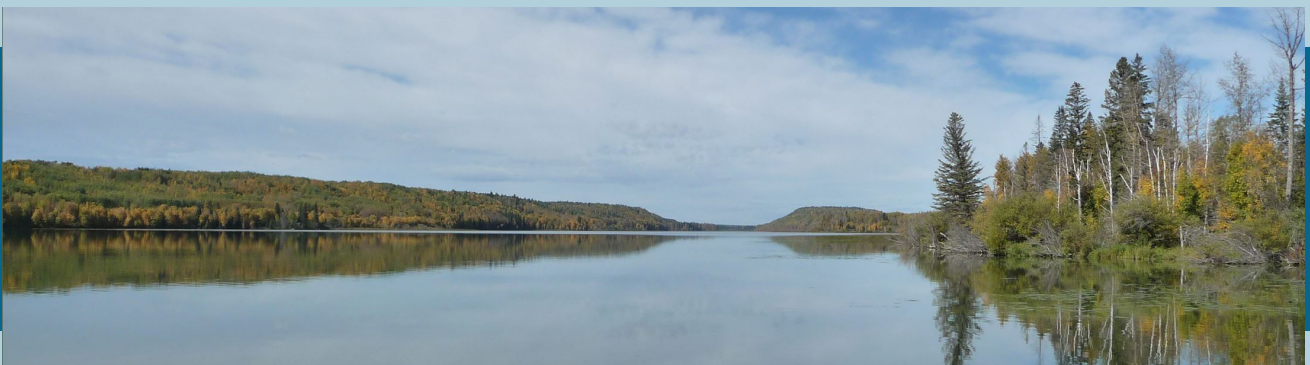
## County of Wetaskiwin Demographics

The County of Wetaskiwin, located in central Alberta on the Highway 2 Corridor, offers a casual country setting with a diverse farming community. The County stretches from Bittern Lake on the east boundary to the Alder Flats area in the west. Geographically centered in the Province, a network of provincial primary and secondary highways provide quick and easy access to and from major centers in Alberta. It is rich in natural attractions boasting several lakes, nestled in forested, hilly parkland settings and home to a variety of wildlife.

The County of Wetaskiwin has nine urban municipalities within its boundary including the City of Wetaskiwin, the Town of Millet, and the Summer Villages of Argentia Beach, Crystal Springs, Grandview, Ma-Me-O Beach, Norris Beach, Poplar Bay and Silver Beach.

There are eight hamlets within the County of Wetaskiwin primarily dispersed along the Highway 13 corridor. From East to West: Gwynne, Falun, Mulhurst Bay, Westeros, Village at Pigeon Lake, Winfield, Buck Lake, and Alder Flats.

According to the 2021 data gathered from the Government of Alberta's Regional Dashboard, the County of Wetaskiwin has a population of 11,666 with 6,362 dwellings. The County of Wetaskiwin is 3,132 square kilometres.





### Population and Socio-Demographic Context

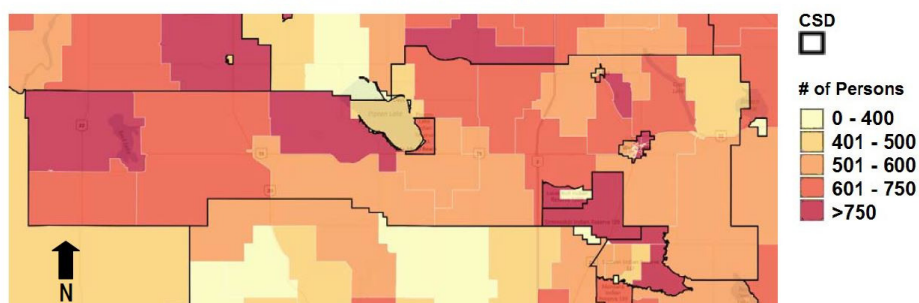
This section summarizes population and socio-demographic data relevant to the County of Wetaskiwin No. 10. Population and socio-demographic information is based on data gathered from the Government of Alberta's Regional Dashboard. The data spans a variety of years.

In 2021, the population of the County of Wetaskiwin No. 10 was 11,666 individuals. The County has a total land area of 3,132.06 square kilometres and density of 3.72 persons per square kilometre. Population growth was stagnant between 2017 and 2020, with an average population of 11,587. There was a 0.68% population increase between 2020 and 2021 and 2.14% increase between 2016 and 2020.

The Population is estimated to continue to rise between 2021 and 2023 but by a lesser amount of 2%. The estimated and projected demographic data was generated from SitewisePro, a web based program used for data analysis and visualization.

Figure 2.5 illustrates the population changes within the dissemination areas that make up the Census Subdivision (CSD) of the County of Wetaskiwin No. 10 for 2023. Staff noted that the area to the far west of the County should have a lower population than shown and the area around Pigeon Lake, and between the Town of Millet and City of Wetaskiwin should be shown as growing in population.

Figure 2.5: 2023 Population by Dissemination Area





# DEMOGRAPHICS

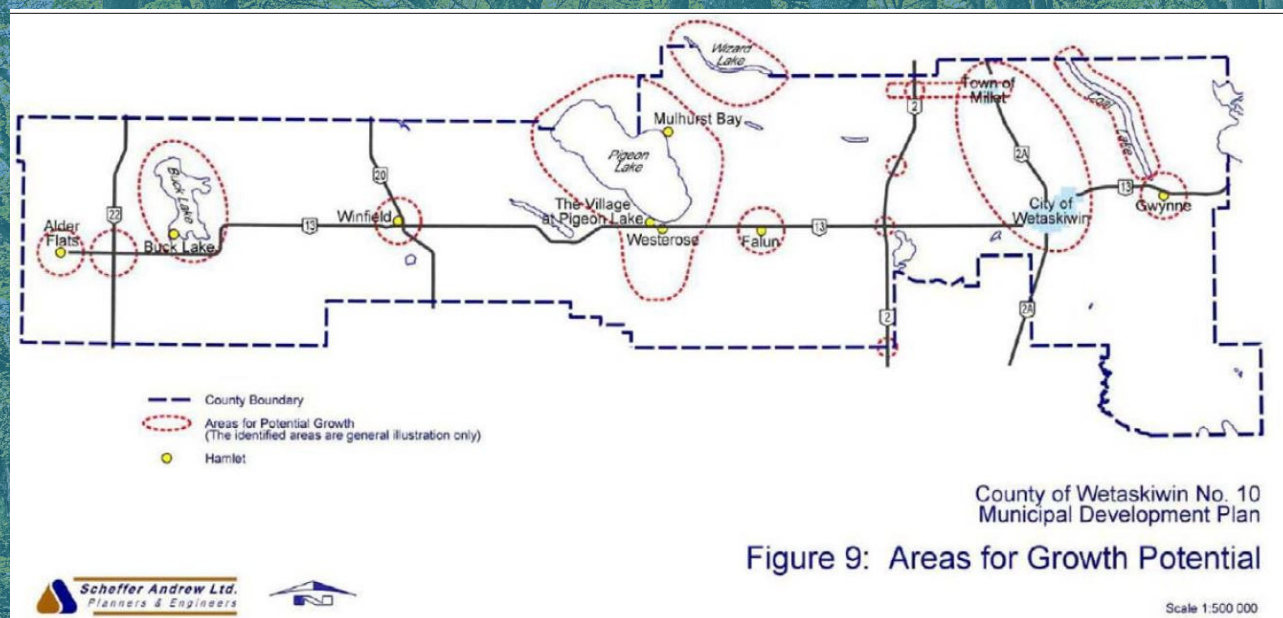
## CONTINUED

24



### Population and Socio-Demographic Context Continued

The County's Municipal Development Plan identifies areas of growth potential in the County. These growth areas include the Hamlets of Alder Flats, Winfield, Falun, and Gwynne, the areas around the major lakes including Buck Lake, Pigeon Lake, Wizard Lake, and Coal Lake, and the area between the Town of Millet and the City of Wetaskiwin.





# DEMOGRAPHICS

## CONTINUED

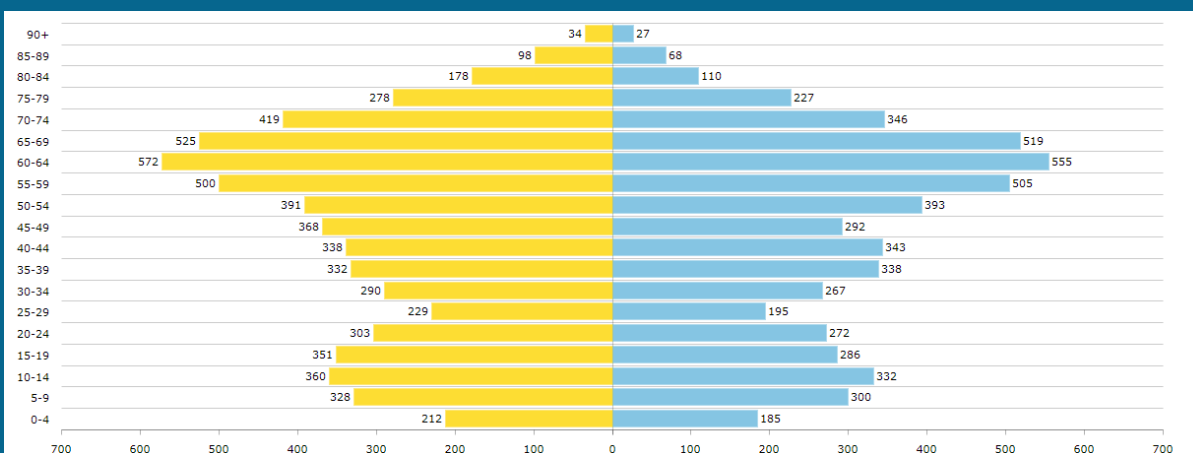
25



### Age Distribution and Characteristics

An analysis of changing age structure provides demographic trends that will affect delivery of services and market opportunities in the region.

According to the 2021 Government of Alberta's Regional Dashboard, the County of Wetaskiwin No. 10 total female population is 5,560 or 47.7% of the total population. The total male population in 2021 is 6,043 or 52.3% of the total population. There are more males than females with the average age of males 43.4 and 42.5 for females. Also apparent in the population data below is the aging of the "baby boomers" who are in their late 50's and 60's.



#### Source Attribution

Adapted from Statistics Canada, Population Estimates (custom data request) and Alberta Municipal Affairs Population Lists. This does not constitute an endorsement by Statistics Canada of this product.

[View this dataset on the Alberta Open Government Website](#)

Last Updated - February 06, 2022



### Family Structure and Households - Income

In 2021, the average household income\* in the County of Wetaskiwin was \$116,800, while the median income was \$99,000 compared to the average household income in the Province of \$140,000 and the median income of \$115,000. Chart 1 compares average income levels in the County of Wetaskiwin No.10 to the Province. Chart 2 provides a visual of households within the County and their average household income.

CHART 1

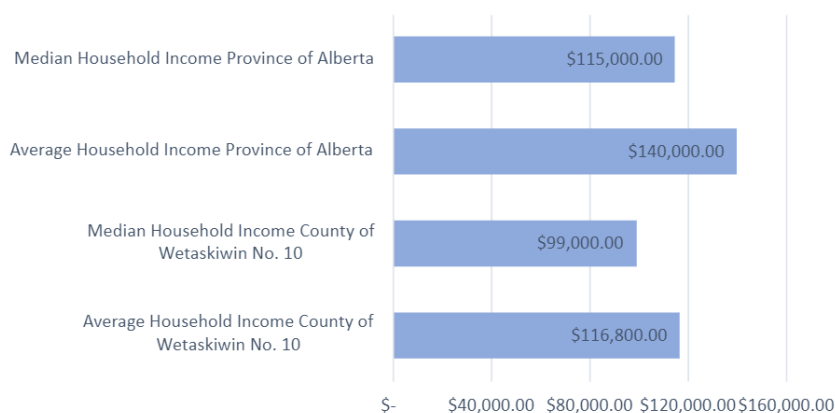
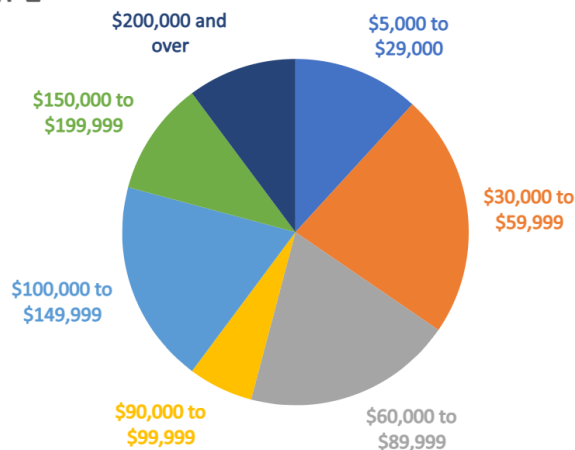


CHART 2



\*CMHC, adapted from Statistics Canada  
(Census of Canada and National Household Survey)

# TYPOLOGY OVERVIEW

27

## Typologies

The Committee identified four (4) typologies for this document which includes Trails, Campground, Community and Lakes. Many of these open spaces may fit into more than one type, thus allowing for a more multi functional approach in identifying opportunities to develop open spaces within the County of Wetaskiwin. The prioritization of lands that have multi use capabilities should be ranked high on the list of properties.



**Trails:** Although there are several third party trail networks throughout County, the County of Wetaskiwin has not developed or taken ownership of such trails. Trails such as, the Pipestone Creek Natural Area, Waskahegan Trail, Chickadee Trail, and Pigeon Lake Area Trails offer a limited user experience and are maintained and operated by volunteers or service groups. Feedback from the community identifies the need for more formalized multi seasonal trails that accommodate hiking, mountain biking, OHV, and equestrian use. County Owned Land, Municipal/ Environmental Reserves, and campgrounds are areas are best suited to develop. Existing game and primitive walking trails can be further developed to the standards according to the Government of Alberta.



# TPOLOGY OVERVIEW

## CONTINUED

28

### Typologies Continued



**Campgrounds:** Campgrounds have been the main driver of recreational tourism in the County for the past 25 years. With a mixture of private and municipally owned sites, it has been recorded that an average of 90% of visitors are from outside the County. Some of the County Campgrounds are multi functional due to the location of being adjacent to a lake, have undeveloped trails in the property and are surrounded by the appropriate landscape.



**Lakes:** Lakes are an open space area forgotten when investigating open space strategies. The County of Wetaskiwin has many lakes in which residents and tourists perform their favorite water-based activities in. Developing water access points and interpretive water trails are developments that can increase locals experience but also increase recreational tourism.







**Community:** Hamlets provide an opportunity to develop open spaces for residents. The potential partnership with the Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools could help develop Hamlets by providing urban style amenities sports areas, picnic areas and areas, for free play which help build a sense of pride and belong when living in the area. This potential partnership has endless opportunities to assist with the revitalization of the Hamlets.

# TPOLOGY OVERVIEW

## CONTINUED

29

For the purpose of this Open Space Strategy the following typologies have been defined by their primary use. These typologies are not mutually exclusive. Many open spaces within the County may fit into more than one type as many rural open spaces tend to be multi-functional with many different uses.

TPOLOGY	DESCRIPTION	Example
 <b>TRAILS</b>	Trails throughout County Owned Land, Municipal/ Environmental Reserve, and private land that is open for public use. These trails may be used for hiking, equestrian, motorized, and seasonal. Possible activities: birding, skiing, etc.	Pipestone Creek Natural Area, Waskahegan Trail, Chickadee Trail, Pigeon Lake Area Trails
 <b>CAMPGROUND</b>	This type includes a wide range of activities and approaches to outdoor accommodation. This may include camping, day trips, picnicking, water activities, or other activities that may occur at County Owned Campgrounds and Day Use Areas.	Battle Lake, Buck Lake, Coal Lake South, Mound Red, Red Deer Lake, Twin Lake, Winfield Pioneer Park
 <b>COMMUNITY</b>	Parks and Open spaces that are community hubs, they may be located in urban or rural areas and usually have more amenities. May include an open space adjacent to or apart of a larger recreational area.	May include Community Halls, Playgrounds, Sports Fields, Schools, Outdoor Rinks, Rodeo Grounds, etc.
 <b>LAKES</b>	This type recognizes the importance of water bodies within the County of Wetaskiwin and the need for lake access. Possible activities: fishing, swimming, canoeing. This type includes Municipal and Environmental Reserves near waterbodies.	Battle Lake, Buck Lake, Coal Lake, Mound Red Reservoir, Pigeon Lake, Red Deer Lake, Twin Lake, Wizard Lake

# TPOLOGY - TRAILS

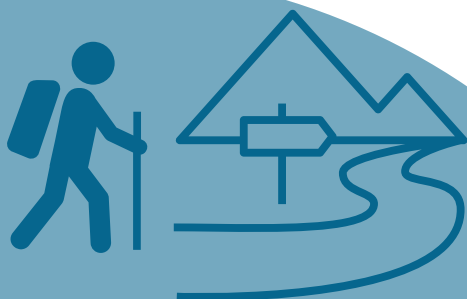
30

The County has heard very clearly through the Recreational Needs Assessment & Master Plan, the Lakedell Survey, and Council's decision to create an Open Space Strategy Committee that there is a desire for the development of official trails within the County of Wetaskiwin. It has been well researched the development of trails benefits the Community, Economic, Health, and Environment.

## Community Benefits

Trail corridors and greenways are accessible to all income groups, particularly to those who cannot afford the cost of some alternative outdoor experiences. Common trail activities such as walking, bicycling, and cross-country skiing prove to be quite inexpensive, providing accessible recreation opportunities to a wide range of people. "An important by-product of trails is improved self-image and social relationships, reduced crime, a livelier community atmosphere and a lifestyle that encourages young people to find their entertainment in healthier and more wholesome ways." (Active Living – Go for Green, 1996) Trails encourage community participation and infuse pride through neighborhood groups, connecting rural and urban centers, and taking ownership of community projects. Partnerships can be built among private companies, landowners, neighboring municipalities, local governments, and advocacy groups in order to promote community involvement (Warren 1998).

Source: Alberta Recreation and Parks Association: Trails Policy Paper





# TPOLOGY - TRAILS

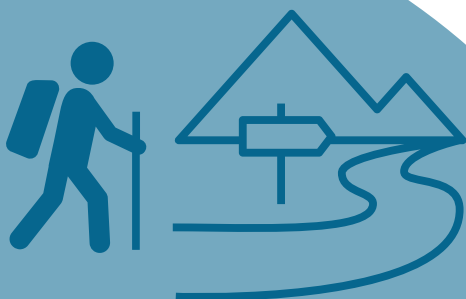
31

## Economic Benefits

Trails attract a significant number of tourists, contributing to local businesses and economies. Tourists have an increased interest in the outdoors and nature-based activities, and they are willing to travel to pursue special interests and experiences (Active Living – Go for Green, 1995). The influx of tourists leads to development opportunities such as additional bed and breakfasts, campgrounds, motels, retail opportunities for equipment sales, outfitting opportunities, and special events.

Not only do trails attract new businesses, but they also provide job opportunities and lifestyle benefits that hold residents in the area, resulting in dynamic changes that support sustainable local economies. According to a report by the U.S. National Parks Service, increases in property values range from 5% to 32%. Increases are particularly noted near greenways that highlight open space rather than highly developed facilities

(Royal Commission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront, 1992).



# TPOLOGY - TRAILS

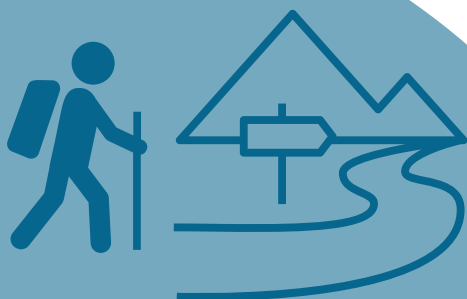
32

## Health Benefits

Trails should ideally provide accessible, low-cost opportunities for informal, active recreation close to home. Engagement in such activities results in numerous personal benefits. Personal benefits range from psychological, which attribute better mental health and personal development, to psychophysiological benefits featuring reduced stress and cardiovascular benefits (Driver & Burns, 1999).

Better general health permits individuals to live independently as they grow older while contributing to a higher quality of life. Accessible trail systems motivate people to be active and participate in activities which otherwise would be overlooked due to the lack of opportunity. In addition to direct health benefits (e.g., reduced obesity, prevention of juvenile diabetes, etc.), trails and greenways, coupled with physical activity, also generate associated economic benefits. Through the reduction of medical care, health insurance claims and hospital costs, the cost of institutional care decreases due to the increase in active living (Ministry of Health, Ontario, 1995).

Source: Alberta Recreation and Parks Association: Trails Policy Paper



# TPOLOGY - TRAILS

33

## Environmental Benefits

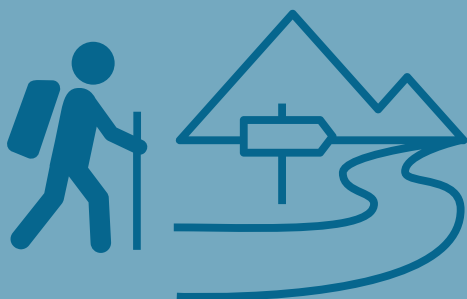
Trail systems protect regionally significant natural landscapes and/or significant or unique natural features. Through protection of resources and preservation of open space, trails define zones free of human habitation and development areas. Also, greenways and corridors protect examples of natural resource features.

Outdoor recreation has also proven to be one of the best sources of environmental education. Trails and greenways provide information to visitors about the importance and value of our natural environment.

Through personal interactions with vegetation, geology, and wildlife, users come to learn about and appreciate natural settings.

Sustainability and responsible behaviors are important factors in realizing optimum environmental benefits while also accommodating recreation use. User awareness programs, communications, careful trail planning and design, and stewardship are key program elements that support trail environmental benefits and trail sustainability.

Source: Alberta Recreation and Parks Association: Trails Policy Paper



## ACTIONS

1. Council prioritize land for non motorized trail development.
2. Council allocate funds for trail development.
3. Proactively pursue new cost share partnerships that will enable the County to address eligible areas to develop.



# TPOLOGY - CAMPGROUNDS

34



The County operates six Campgrounds that are spread throughout the County as identified in the map. These are of varying size and quality with different visitor amenities. While the number of visitors varies among the Campgrounds, they are generally well used and were positively evaluated by local stakeholders.

Currently the Campgrounds play a role as local recreational resources, but with between 90% of visitors from outside of the County, they also contribute to tourism. Many of the visitors are likely from the immediate area and often use the Campgrounds in association with other events, such as rodeos. Differing opinions were expressed to the consultants of the Recreation Needs Assessment in 2013 concerning these roles. Some felt that the current role was appropriate with a mix of local resident use complemented by a relatively low key role in accommodating visitors. Others felt that the Campgrounds, if improved and appropriately marketed, could play a much more significant role in the local economy by attracting tourists.



# TPOLOGY -

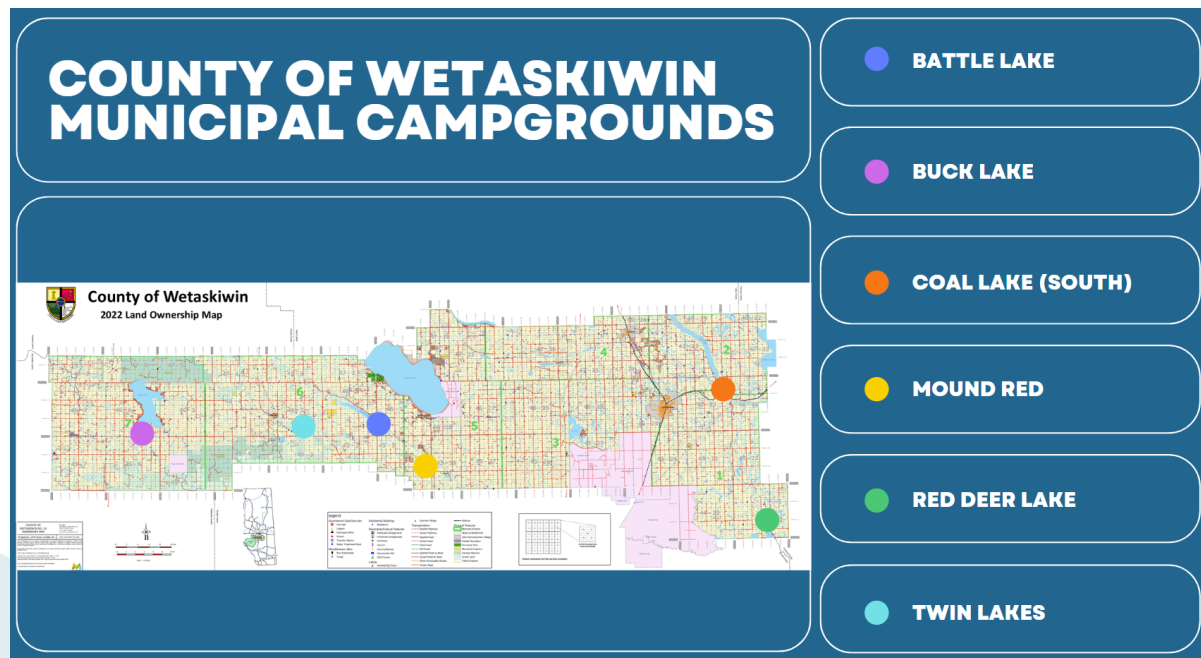
## CAMPGROUNDS

### CONTINUED

35

As the Committee evaluated Open Space areas in the County, two of the six campgrounds were identified as possible areas for open space development. Twin Lakes and Mound Red Campground had the most available area and landscape that could accommodate several trail types depending on the final design.

If future trail development is to occur on either Twin Lakes or Mound Red Campground, public engagement should be considered to ensure that the demand is met.



# TPOLOGY -

## CAMPGROUNDS

### CONTINUED

36

In addition to Campgrounds and Day Use Parks, the County can designate land as Municipal Reserve and Environmental Reserve. Municipal Reserve can be designated for a public park, recreation area, school board purposes, or to separate lands that are used for different purposes.

Environmental Reserve is to remain in its natural state or be used as a public park and can be designated if it is a swamp, gully, ravine, coulee, a natural drainage course, unstable or subject to flooding, or adjacent to the bed and shore of any water body.

The recently updated *Municipal Government Act* now provides municipalities the ability to designate “Conservation Reserves” which are lands intended to protect environmentally significant areas. At the time of this plan, the County does not have any lands designated as Conservation Reserve.

## ACTIONS

1. Develop a marketing strategy to promote the County Campgrounds and local area.
2. Develop an enhancement program that will enhance the amenities such as power, shower facilities and enhanced day use parking.
3. Develop inclusive access to all people regardless of age, mobility range or ethnic background.





# TPOLOGY - COMMUNITY

# 37

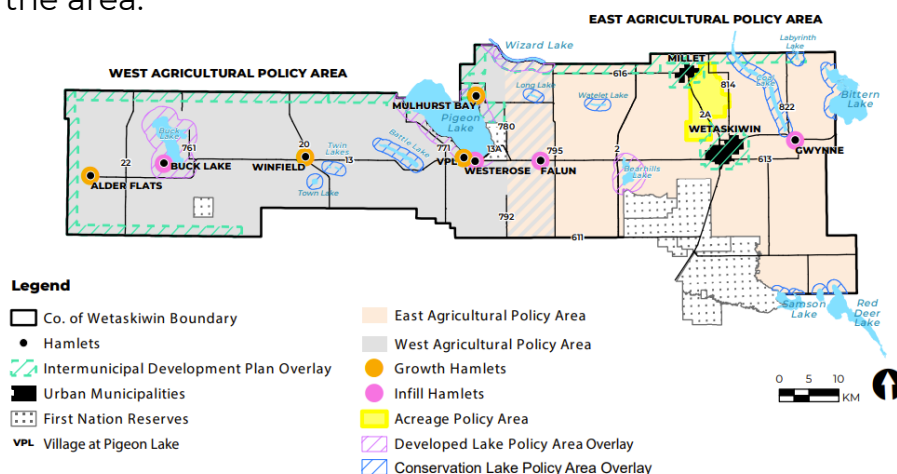
Hamlets, which fall under the Community Typology are another key area for open space development. Most recently the County of Wetaskiwin revitalized the Mulhurst Bay Day use area and parking are examples of open space development and falls under the Typology of Community. The revitalization has significantly improved the level of service and provided an modern space for families and individuals to enjoy.

The Hamlets to be considered for open space development are taken from the potential growth areas from the Municipal Development Plan. These areas have been identified for potential growth and with that growth a more defined plan for recreational open space development must be considered to attract and retain community members.

Although a few key pieces are still required to finalize the project, this has shown to be a perfect example of how open space development can connect individuals in the community, revitalize and add value to the area.

## HAMLETS

Identified in the maps attached are the eight (8) Hamlets within the County of Wetaskiwin.



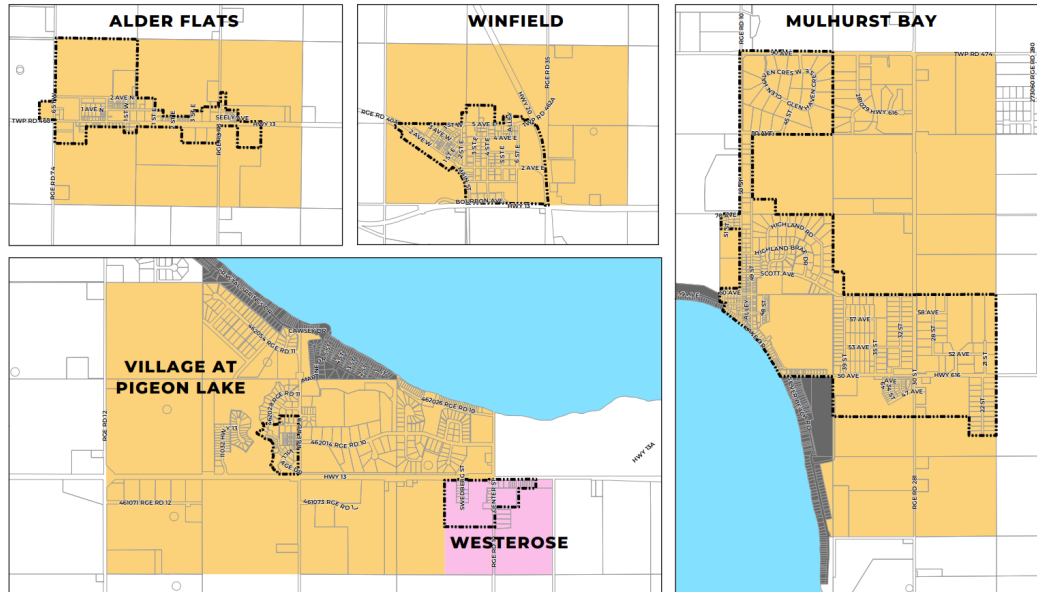
**MAP 1**  
COUNTY FUTURE LAND  
USE CONCEPT

Digital Information: Altalis, County of Wetaskiwin,  
Government of Alberta, Government of Canada,  
Geogratis, Geodiscover.  
Projection: UTM NAD 83 12N



# TPOLOGY - COMMUNITY CONTINUED

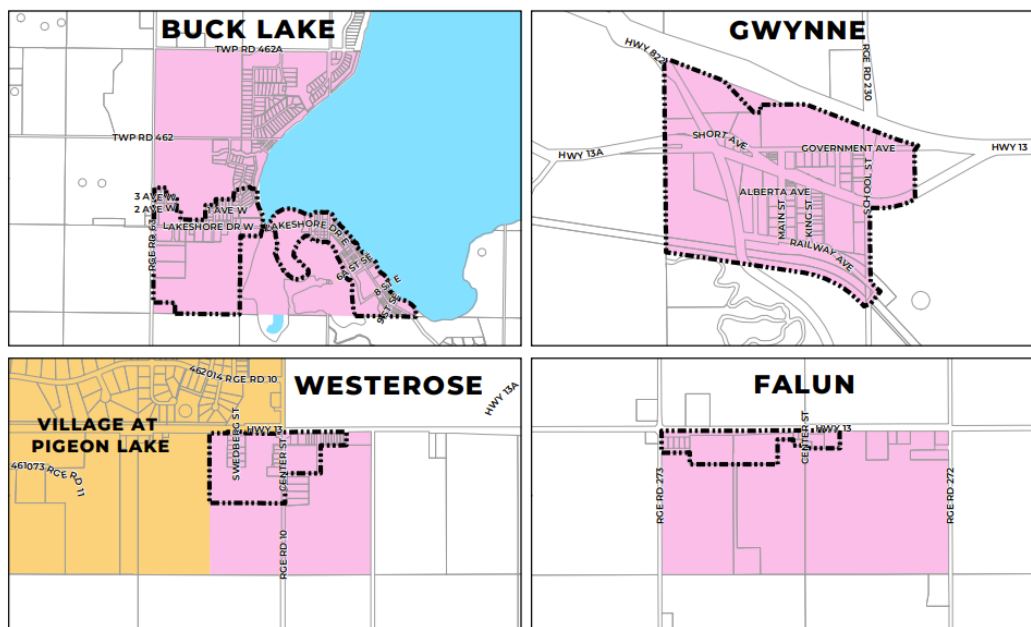
# 38



**MAP 2**  
GROWTH HAMLET  
DEVELOPMENT AREAS

Urban Municipalities Growth Hamlet Development Area  
Hamlet Boundaries Infill Hamlet Development Area

Digital Information: Altalis, County of Wetaskiwin,  
Government of Alberta, Government of Canada,  
Geogratis, Geodiscover  
Projection: UTM NAD 83 12N



**MAP 3**  
INFILL HAMLET  
DEVELOPMENT AREAS

Urban Municipalities Growth Hamlet Development Area  
Hamlet Boundaries Infill Hamlet Development Area

Digital Information: Altalis, County of Wetaskiwin,  
Government of Alberta, Government of Canada,  
Geogratis, Geodiscover  
Projection: UTM NAD 83 12N





# **TPOLOGY - COMMUNITY CONTINUED**

**39**

The local Hamlets within the County can be geographically remote. Some however, have developed specialized recreation open spaces such as rodeo facilities, community halls, or outdoor recreation amenities (outdoor rinks & ball diamonds).

Local sport spaces can be critical to these communities for social and recreational purposes. Open spaces in communities (Hamlets) are attractive to prospective buyers and generate multiple economic benefits for local governments, home owners, and businesses. The economic benefits of open, walkable, green spaces play an important role in policy-making decisions about zoning, restrictions on land-use, government purchase of lands for parks, and similar initiatives.

A green area can be a great place for members of the community to meet, interact and enjoy their community. Ultimately investing in the open spaces increases community engagement and instills greater pride in the community as a whole.





# TPOLOGY - COMMUNITY CONTINUED

40

Opportunities for cultural development in Hamlets and rural areas lie with youth, and urban-to-rural migrants. Youth engagement is fundamental to population retention. Efforts include workforce skill-building programs to support a workforce capable of attracting new creative industries and conversely allowing youth to remain in their own community in lieu of moving away for employment reasons.

Reports have suggested that urban-to-rural migrants act as growth as they tend to have established networks and businesses and often take a leadership role in community initiatives. Additionally, reports have highlighted that a critical factor in the success of cultural development in a rural context is the availability of broadband internet.

This digital connectivity helps attract and connect individuals working within the creative industries, supports the sharing of cultural practices, and allows for enhanced marketing tools and opportunities.

Developing areas for hamlets is needed to assist with the growth and development of the County.



# TPOLOGY - COMMUNITY CONTINUED

41



Government  
of Canada

Gouvernement  
du Canada

*"The Community Workforce Development Program puts communities at the heart of determining their economic futures. It is a pilot to test community-based approaches to workforce planning and skills training to support local economic development and growth".*

*The program encourages collaboration between employers, training providers, community organizations and others, to:  
support community workforce planning by:*

- *bringing organizations together from across industries and sectors*
- *identifying high growth areas*
- *finding local sources of labor to meet employer demand;*
- *help jobseekers and workers develop the skills needed through training and on-the-job work experiences, and*
- *support employers to fill jobs in demand"*

The County of Wetaskiwin "Joint Economic Development Initiative" would be a great asset and possible driver in the development and facilitation of such a program in the Community.



J E D I

# TPOLOGY - COMMUNITY CONTINUED

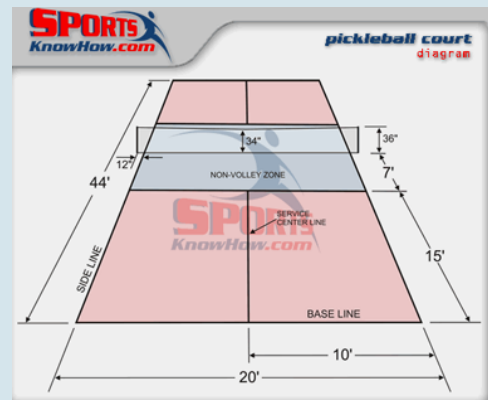
42

As most of the rural schools within the County of Wetaskiwin are situated in the Hamlets, the potential partnership and collaboration with the Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools for the development of recreational open spaces must also be considered while formalizing this strategy.

The local schools have a great supply of sports fields, outdoor arenas, and playground spaces, that if partnered could be enhanced to increase the participation of recreational activities, thus creating a stronger sense of community.

## School Open Spaces:

- Soccer Fields
- Ball Diamonds
- Outdoor Rinks
- Playground Areas
- Playground Structures







# TPOLOGY - COMMUNITY CONTINUED

43

## ACTIONS

1. Council provide Administration direction to start identifying possible open space development within the local Hamlets.
2. Proactively pursue new cost share partnerships that will enable the County to address eligible areas to develop.
3. Develop a partnership with the Wetaskiwin Regional Public School to enhance outdoor spaces to provide a safe and friendly areas to enjoy recreation.
4. Ensure that developed open spaces are inclusive and provides access to all people regardless of age, mobility range, or ethnic background for Hamlets.
5. Develop a funding strategy that continues to support partners in the planning, development, and operations of parks and recreation through Cost Share agreements on eligible initiatives.
6. Develop a Community Workforce Development Program in partnership with JEDI and local Chamber of Commerce.



# TPOLOGY - LAKES

44

The County of Wetaskiwin has several lakes and water bodies in which local residents and tourists enjoy during the summer months. The County Water access (boat launch and beach areas) exists in the following areas (see map below):



Some water access points are formalized (Mulhurst Bay) while other access is informal (Buck Lake) with no provided amenities or active management.

As we all know, the traditional water-based activities are fishing and waterskiing. Most recently, activities like kayaking and canoeing are becoming more popular throughout the Province of Alberta and Western Canada. The popularity of kayaking and canoeing has led to the development of interpretive water trails on navigable waterways such as rivers and lakes as these water trails also foster interactive recreation and educational experience. As you can see in the map above, there are an abundance of natural water bodies such as creeks, streams, and lakes that could be enjoyed by water recreationalists.

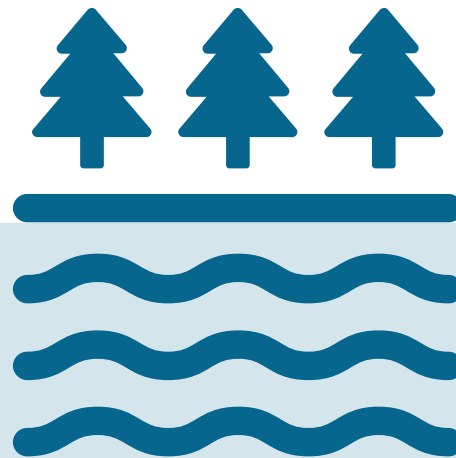
Creating safe, functional, and environmentally sensitive water access will allow residents and visitors to enjoy our lakes and streams without taking away from natural character, which after all, is one of their main points of attraction.

# TPOLOGY - LAKES CONTINUED

45

Developing the access to the lake with standardized amenities help create a regional attraction. Having desired amenities such as a parking lot, docks, garbage cans, picnic tables, toilets, and information/map kiosks are amenities most visitors expect in a developed access point. Depending on location size, playgrounds, and green space add value and an increased visitor experience.

As the County has an abundance of Lakes and water bodies, this type of open space development can lead to an additional recreational experience for locals but also boost the recreational tourism entering the community.



## ACTIONS

1. Develop and install branded signage and recognizable gateway features identifying formalized public water access points as well as enhancing public amenities.
2. Proactively pursue new cost share partnerships that can assist with the costs for development.
3. Work with County Partners to develop water trails in the County.



# LOCATION EVALUATION

46

The County of Wetaskiwin Parks and Open Space Committee identified five (5) potential areas that could possibly support trail or outdoor space development under the Typologies of Trails and Campgrounds. The Committee traveled to these areas and completed an evaluation to further guide and identify possible lands that could support the development of trails/Campgrounds.

The five (5) areas that were evaluated are listed below.

- Buck Lake Area
- Twin Lakes Area
- Battle Lake Area
- Mound Red Area
- County Quarter Area

Each area was evaluated on:

- Accessibility
- Future as a Tourism Site
- Local Attractions in Area
- Linkage to Wider Networks of Green Space
- Landscape characteristics
- Physical Elements
- Recreational Opportunities
- Potential Trail Classification

The onsite evaluations conducted by the Committee provided valuable information to assist with future planning of open spaces within the County of Wetaskiwin. The following evaluations of each site are provided below with exception of the Battle Lake area site as it has been identified as an area that can not be developed into a potential open space area due to the landscape characteristics of poor ground conditions and accessibility.

# LOCATION EVALUATION

47

## BUCK LAKE

The site described as Buck Lake, which is owned by the County of Wetaskiwin, is located within SW 12-46-6-W5M. This location is accessed from Range Road 61.

The local topography, which is consistent of that located within the Central Mixed Wood Natural Subregion, contains soft ground cover, marshy lake front with no trees or trails. Walking, hiking, mountain biking, cross country skiing, and equestrian activities have been identified as potential recreation opportunities.

The Parks and Open Spaces Committee has considered this an unlikely candidate for future recreational development. The area is close to the Hamlet of Buck Lake which contains Rodeo Grounds and a Community Centre.

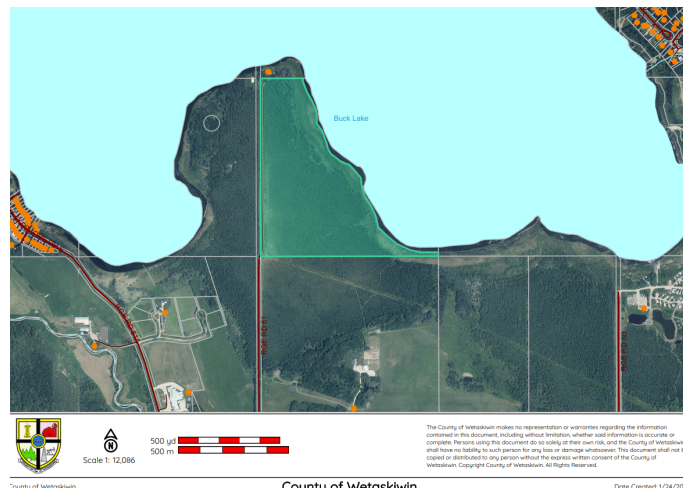
## MAP LEGEND



**Green Space**



**Water Body**



# LOCATION EVALUATION

48





## Twin Lakes

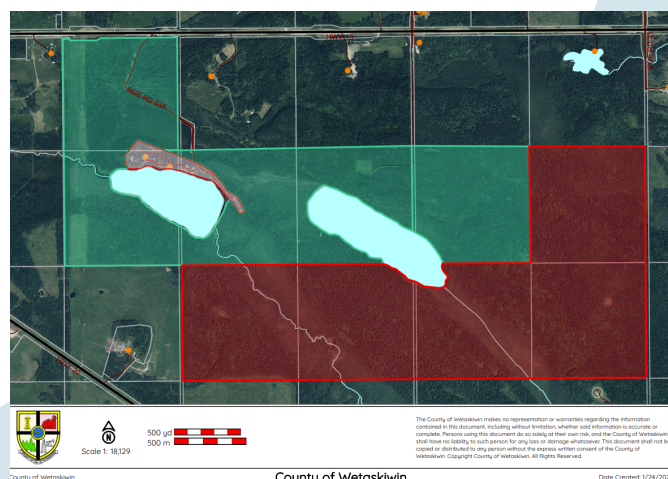
The site described as Twin Lakes, which is currently leased from the Government of Alberta, is located within SE 9-46-3-W5M and SW 10-46-3-W5M. This location is accessed directly from Highway 13, on Range Road 33 A. This area is currently a recreation lease with the Government of Alberta. The total land under this lease is 731.71 Acres and is highlighted in green in the map on the right.

The local topography, which is consistent of that located within the Central Mixed Wood Natural Subregion, contains mainly very soft ground cover, with much of the forest floor covered in moss. The area is also home to two (2) clear lakes with established trails. Walking, hiking, mountain biking, cross country skiing, and equestrian activities have been identified as potential recreation opportunities.

The Parks and Open Spaces Committee has considered this a strong candidate to continue developing as an enhanced tourism site. The area offers hamlets with modest amenities, a distillery, golf course, and other natural areas within a short drive. The lands highlighted in red are currently under control of the Province, a possible lease agreement for said lands could provide a great expansion of trails that would add to becoming a recreational destination.

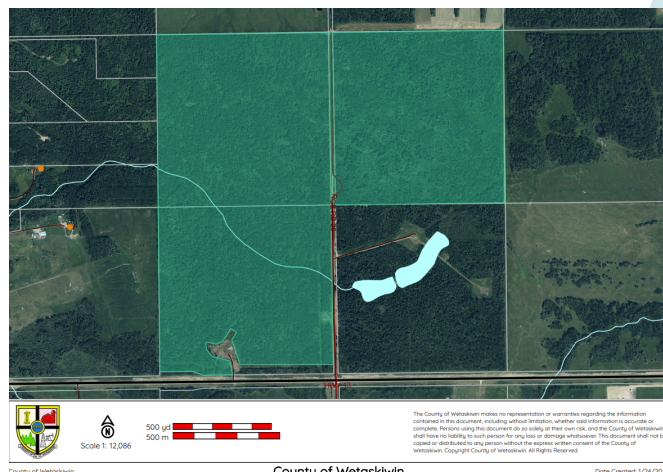
### MAP LEGEND

-  **Green Space**
-  **Campground**
-  **Potential Expansion Opportunity**
-  **Water Body**





# 49





# LOCATION EVALUATION

50

## Mound Red

The site described as Mound Red, which is currently leased from the Government of Alberta, is located within NW 11-45-28-W4M. This location is accessed from Township Road 452. The total area of Mound Red is 157.43 Acres

The local topography, which is consistent of that located within the Central Mixed Wood Natural Subregion, contains small hills, game trails, is forested and includes some berry bushes. The area is also home to a small lake, which the County of Wetaskiwin annually stocks with fish, and has a couple small viewpoints. Walking, snow shoeing, and mountain biking activities have been identified as potential recreation opportunities.

The Parks and Open Spaces Committee considers this a regional tourism site. The area offers close access to Pigeon Lake, golf courses, and a rodeo ground.

## MAP LEGEND



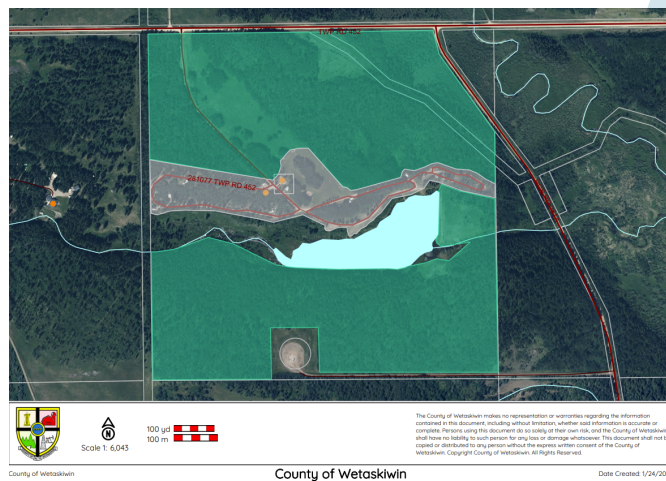
**Green Space**



**Campground**



**Water Body**



Scale 1: 6043



County of Wetaskiwin

Date Created: 1/24/2023

# LOCATION EVALUATION

51

## County Quarter

The site described as The County Quarter, which is owned by the County of Wetaskiwin, is located within SW 29-46-24-W4M. This location is accessed from Township Road 464. The total area of the Quarter is 147.72 Acres.

The local topography, which is consistent of that located within the Central Mixed Wood Natural Subregion, contains open areas, a gradual incline, game trails and some forested areas and includes some berry bushes. Walking, mountain biking, snowshoeing, and paintball have been identified as potential recreation opportunities.

The Parks and Open Spaces Committee has considered this a candidate for a regional and possible central tourism destination. The area is close to the City of Wetaskiwin, golf courses, the racetrack, rodeo grounds, arena, pool and airport.

## MAP LEGEND



**Green Space**



**County Storage Facility**



**Water Body**



County of Wetaskiwin

County of Wetaskiwin

Date Created 1/24/2



# LOCATION EVALUATION

52

## County Quarter Continued

This specific area is unique compared to the other open spaces evaluated by the committee as its location is near an urban center as the other areas are west of Highway 2 situated near water bodies or campsites. This property has the potential to provide a more urban style of open space development for multi seasonal developments on this property could be utilized to reach many different leisure activities that people in the community could enjoy.

### Summer

- Mountain Biking Trails (Extreme or casual)
- Walking
- Field House

### Winter

- Cross Country Skiing
- Snow Shoeing
- Skating Trail

Man Made Tubing Hill





# T TYPOLOGY - RECAP

53

As mentioned previously, many open spaces within the County may fit into more than one type of typology as many rural open spaces tend to be multi-functional with many different uses. To illustrate this, we have placed the visited sites by the Committee with the typologies that they could be categorized in.

	Lakes	Trails	Campground	Community
Twin Lakes	X	X	X	X
Range Rd 25 Area		X		
Mound Red	X	X	X	X
County Quarter		X		X

The chart above clearly identifies that the Twin Lakes and the Mound Red locations have the most potential when considering open space development.

# TYPOLGY - TRAIL DEVELOPMENT

Professionally designed trails reduce liability but also provide a specific plan that will address all the need. The most effective approach in developing and managing a trail system is through a visitor management program consisting of:

- Engineering & Design
- Monitoring & Evaluation
- Enforcement

For successful trail system, Policy & Bylaw development and the allocation of enforcement relating to trails and open spaces must be developed prior to the opening of trail systems on municipal lands

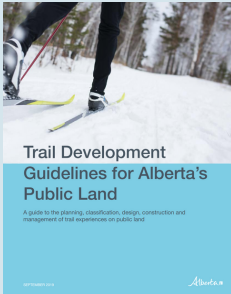


In 2009, the Government of Alberta developed the "Alberta Recreation Corridor and Trails Designation Program" to assist trail developers and operators with their planning, design and construction decisions. The classification system in the document was intended as a guideline only, but most planned trails should fit within this System. Below are the classifications of specific trails that should be considered if the County chooses to move forward with trail development.

	Trail Surface	Gradient	Tread Width	Clearing Width	Clearing Height
Primitive Walking/ Hiking Trail	Natural	up to 45%	0.3m - 1m	1m - 2m	2.5m
Primitive Cyclist Trail	Unsurfaced	up to 30%	0.2m - 1m	1m - 2m	2.5m
Equestrian	Unsurfaced	30% +	0.5m - 2m	1.5m - 2.5m	3.5m

# T TYPOLOGY - TRAIL DEVELOPMENT CONTINUED

55



In 2019, Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) revised the 2009 "Alberta Recreation Corridor and Trails Designation Program" with the Trails Development Guidelines for Alberta's Public Land.

AEP recognizes that trails and trail-based recreation are an important contributor to the quality of life for Albertans, support healthy lifestyles, help to protect environmentally significant areas, and provide opportunities to celebrate and present the heritage and culture of Alberta and Indigenous communities. AEP also recognizes that quality trails can be a significant economic driver that helps to strengthen and diversify local, regional and provincial economies. Great trail systems and trails don't "just happen". They are the result of purposeful planning, design, construction, and effective management. As trail users' quests for exceptional trail experiences continue to evolve, so must the way trails are planned, designed, constructed, and managed. At the foundation of great trails are clear and consistent guidelines for trail planning, design, construction, maintenance, and management.

HIKING	WALKING	EQUESTRIAN	MOUNTAIN BIKING	CYCLING
				



# T TYPOLOGY -

## TRAIL DEVELOPMENT

### CONTINUED



Pedestrian (Walking,  
Running, Hiking,  
Backpacking)



Equestrian (Saddle &  
Pack,  
Endurance Riding)



### Signage & Wayfinding

Signage & Wayfinding Effective signage and wayfinding systems are essential to providing memorable visitor experiences and effective trail and park management. They provide valuable information to visitors, allowing them to make informed decisions, enhance their experience, and help them stay safe. However, having too many signs can detract from the visitor experience. Signage should be used sparingly and should be appropriate for the service level and setting of the park or trail. For example, signage in backcountry areas should be limited to the most essential notices, while signage in front-country areas should be concentrated in the parking areas, trail entrances and the access points and to interpret points of interest.











# T TYPOLOGY -

## TRAIL DEVELOPMENT

### CONTINUED

57

## Signage & Wayfinding Continued

	Park/Trailhead Entrance Signage/Kiosk	Trail Wayfinding Markers	Regulatory/Responsible Use Signage	Informational Signage (Safety/Hazard/Conservation)	Interpretive Signage
Recommended Location	Near main entrance(s)/parking/staging area(s)	At trailhead and all intersections	Near main entrance/parking lot	Where there are specific hazards or conservation concerns to visitors	Near main entrance, along trails at rest areas where unique natural and cultural heritage is present
Precedent Image #1					
Precedent Image #2					

## Staging Areas

Staging areas are situated at the entrance of certain parks and trails. Staging areas create a first impression and set the tone for the recreation experience. Staging areas vary, based on the type of park or trail, location, usage level, demand, and space provided. The following matrix outlines the three different types of staging areas and the required and optional services to be provided.
























# TPOLOGY -

## TRAIL DEVELOPMENT

### CONTINUED

58

### Staging Areas Continued

Staging Type	Vehicle Parking	Handicap Parking	Bicycle Parking	Toilets	Garbage Receptacles	Map kiosk Directional	Seating
1 High Use							
2 Medium/Low Use							
3 Access Point							



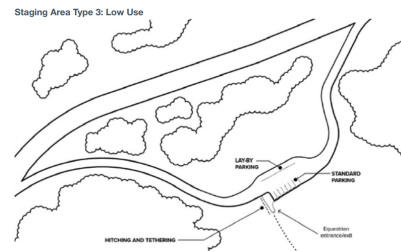
Required

Optional

<sup>1</sup> Minimum of 10 stalls

<sup>2</sup> Minimum of 5 stalls

<sup>3</sup> If trail is universally accessible



### Type 1 Staging Area - High Use

The High Use Staging area is designed for large multi or single use trails or popular parks with a high demand and substantial traffic flow.

### Type 2 Staging Area - Medium Use

The Medium Use Staging area is designed for multi or single use trails and parks and trails with intermediate demand level and less traffic flow than the high use staging area.





# T TYPOLOGY -

## TRAIL DEVELOPMENT

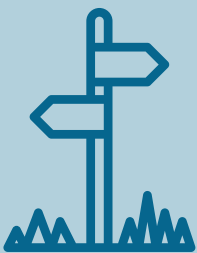
### CONTINUED

#### Type 3 Staging Area - Low Use

The Access Point Staging Area is designed for trails or parks with a low traffic flow and demand level. This trailhead may also be used at a secondary access point of a higher demand trail or as an access point to a trail where no parking is required, such as a small trail in a community neighborhood.

#### ACTIONS

1. Council to provide strategic direction to Administration to develop trails according to the Provincial Guidelines.
2. Develop a maintenance guideline manual for trails. The manual should identify the inspection, documentation procedures, enforcement and maintenance procedures for each trail .
3. Undertake the development of a signage manual to brand for the County's Trails and to ensure the consistent application of signage within the system and appropriate language to help manage and mitigate risk and liability.
4. Proactively pursue new cost share partnerships that will enable the County to address eligible areas to develop.



# GROWTH THROUGH OPEN SPACE DEVELOPMENT

60

## **Grow Recreation/Nature-Based Tourism through Open Space Development**



The development of recreation/nature based tourism is a strategy that must be explored if the County of Wetaskiwin chooses to develop open spaces in the area. The development of such a strategy along with the development of open spaces can greatly improve the quality of life for residents, increase property values as well as have an influx of tourism dollars to stimulate the economy. Many municipalities have used this approach and have been rewarded with tourism dollars going back into the community.

# GROWTH THOUGH OPEN SPACE DEVELOPMENT

61

## Grow Recreation/Nature-Based Tourism through Open Space Development



### Individual & Community Health & Well-Being

- Residents are healthier - physically and mentally.
- Community identity, spirit, and sense of belonging.



### Accessible, Diverse & Inclusive

- Every resident has easy access to a diversity of open space and recreational opportunities regardless of where they live
- Open spaces and recreation opportunities are inclusive for all.



### Connected to Nature

- Residents' connection to and appreciation of nature are recognized.
- Environmentally significant areas are identified and the community actively promotes and protect our natural landscapes.



- **Economic Growth & Tourism**
- Develop a reputation as a destination for nature based tourism experience.
- Support the attraction of new and retention of existing residents, workers and business.



# OPEN SPACE DEVELOPMENT

62

## **Grow Recreation/Nature-Based Tourism through Open Space Development**

By highlighting what makes our community authentic and memorable, tourism can be utilized to diversify and expand the local economy. Geographically, the County of Wetaskiwin offers a wide range of landscapes and lake features that many individuals from populated centers seek to explore. Nature based tourism utilizes the natural features of an area to attract visitors and our parks/campgrounds do just that by offering people unique and immersive ways to connect with nature. The investment in developing open spaces can create sustainable economic development that increase emphasis on protection of our natural areas.

## **ACTIONS**

1. Council direct Administration to create a Tourism Master Plan that:
  - Identifies target markets and market expectations;
  - Inventories existing nature based, sport and cultural tourism experiences;
  - Identifies the County's competitive advantages for nature based and cultural tourism;
  - Identifies gaps between market expectations and the current opportunities;
  - Proposes strategies to improve existing and develop new visitor experiences; and
  - Proposes strategies to improve marketing.

# CONCLUSION

63

The Open Space Committee has strived to provide a comprehensive open space strategy to guide future development, with the varying landscapes from the western boarder to the eastern border this document has identified an abundance of outdoor opportunities that fosters active living, connecting people to nature by ensuring the continued growth and sustainability of recreation services within the County of Wetaskiwin.

