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## **REPORT NAME**

Municipal Development Plan Monitoring Project Annual Update for the year 2023

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Governance and Priorities Committee receives this update for information

## **IMPLICATIONS**

**Reason:** To provide council with the annual key performance indicators report as well as the analysis of the data to date.

**Authority:** MDP Policy 10.4.0.1 requires that County will monitor and annually report plan progress to learn and adapt as needed, while Policy 10.4.0.2 directs administration to conduct the effective monitoring of the Municipal Development Plan including: baseline measures; appropriate targets and target years; and a methodology of measurement for the indicators.

**Amount of funding required:** N/A

**Funding source:** N/A

## **BACKGROUND**

The County adopted the Municipal Development Plan (MDP) in 2019. The ongoing monitoring and review policies of the plan mandated the tracking of its progress in achieving the outlined goals. This involved identifying key performance indicators (KPIs) aligned with the MDP's major objectives. Initial data collection was done in 2019 which served as a baseline, with ongoing annual data collection facilitating analysis of correlations between MDP goals and County outcomes. Since this program is the first of its kind in the County, it was expected that it would evolve over time as lessons were learned and the process refined. During the previous review from 2020 to 2022 the administration identified several KPIs that should be either modified or removed while others should be added to capture the monitoring of the MDP.

In 2023, the County initiated an update of the County MDP to align it with the Regional Agriculture Master Plan as required by section 9 of the Plan. The MDP update divided the County into two distinct areas, the Greater Nisku planned employment area, and the rural county. The Greater Nisku Area includes the major employment area, Edmonton International Airport, urban centre, and existing county residential area. The rural county was further divided into two distinct agricultural areas Agriculture Area A where prime agricultural lands predominate and Agriculture Area B, an area outside of the Prime Agriculture Area.

The updated MDP will have a significant impact on minimizing the fragmentation of agricultural lands and conserving large, contiguous tracts of prime agricultural land for intensive cropping operations. The County is also launching new enterprise permitting & licensing (EP&L) software. The new software will facilitate the creation of new and appropriate key performance indicators that will effectively capture the subdivision and development data, and better enable access to data that demonstrates the goals and objectives of the MDP are being met.

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**Submitted by:** Ata Muhammad, Planner

**Reviewed by:** Jordan Evans, Manager, Regional and Long-Range Planning

**Date:** 10/01/24

## **Municipal Development Plan Goals:**

### **Protect Agricultural Land and Support Diversity in Agriculture**

The MDP update has significant implications for the agricultural goals and policies, and it is anticipated that some new KPIs will be required to reflect those changes. The MDP update now has two distinct areas and an overlay as opposed to the previous MDP where the agricultural lands were designated in four distinct areas. The new designations are aligned with Regional Agriculture Master Plan and the prime agriculture lands were determined by using the Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) technical analysis. These new designations are Prime Agriculture Area (Area A), and area outside of the Prime Agriculture Area (Area B). To support diversification of agriculture on smaller lots, an agriculture smallholding overlay was also created.

There were three KPIs used in the previous reports: Amount of Lands with a Canada Land Inventory (CLI) rating of Class 1, 2, or 3 in ha, number of unfragmented quarter sections and number of agribusinesses operating in the agriculture area. The CLI ratings show that from 2019 to 2023, approximately 12,873 ha of land went through subdivisions. The number of unfragmented quarter sections previously reported were 1,301 in agriculture designated areas, however, this figure will change as the new data which takes into consideration the entire County that include Area A and Area B is 1,834 quarter sections. Staff is of the opinion that the new EP&L software for permitting, and subdivisions will help in capturing accurate data to determine the policy outcome of those new policies related to subdivisions and employment uses in agriculture and protection of agricultural operations. Detailed information is provided in the attached Schedule “A” MDP Monitoring Report 2023.

### **Develop Complete Communities**

The MDP defines a complete community one that includes housing for all ages and income levels, provides residents with easy access to jobs, local amenities, services, and community facilities. The elements of a complete community will vary depending on the size and scale of the community. The County has been using the percentage of development within comprehensively planned areas (areas under statutory plans). In 2021 it was 39% which increased to 48.17% in 2022 and 48.87% in 2023. Most development is taking place within the urban areas of the Greater Nisku Area, especially in RU2 – Residential Urban 2 districts. Staff has also added another KPI which shows the water metre Installations within the Greater Nisku Area. This KPI will also help in understanding the proximity of development to local services and community infrastructure.

### **Promote Responsible Use of Natural Resources**

In the MDP, natural resources are defined as a material source of wealth, such as gravel, sand, soil, oil, and gas, which occurs in a natural state and has economic value. The MDP goal is to support the responsible use and extraction of natural resources as a means of economic development. The last report to council mentioned that since the County does not have authority over the provincially regulated reclamation activities, this policy section of the MDP will be removed from the monitoring. Staff is of the opinion that within the new permitting system the development data regarding natural resource extraction permits will be monitored depending upon the number of applications the County receives each year. In addition to that, staff will strive to obtain data from secondary sources regarding various provincial approvals for natural resource extraction within Leduc County.

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**Date:** 10/01/24

### **Promote and Enhance the Natural Environment**

Leduc County values the environment and is committed to ensuring its long-term health and viability. The KPIs used to examine the implementation of MDP policies were development permits within or adjacent to environmentally significant areas (ESAs), development permits issued within Beaver Hills, percentage of development permits issued close to water courses/wetlands and energy efficiency. In 2023, there were 137 development permits issued near ESAs; up from 126 in 2022. Development permits in the Beaver Hills Protection area rose from 25 in 2022 to 33 in 2023. Similarly, the development permits issued near water bodies increased from 0 to 59 in 2023. This data indicates that in the past year, development near ESAs, protected areas, and watershed areas has been increased.

### **Identify and Act on Opportunities for Recreation and Tourism**

The MDP supports recreation and tourism throughout the County as a way of enhancing the quality of life for residents and visitors. In the previous monitoring reports, two KPIs were used to monitor the implementation of MDP policies towards recreation and tourism. These KPIs included the development of open spaces/recreation corridor development and the amount of land adjacent to water bodies that is protected for public use. The data for the open space/corridor development was not available; however, GIS data is available for protected lands near waterbodies. In 2023, the amount of land protected for public use was 296.91 ha.

### **Develop Efficient and Cost-Effective Transportation and Utility Service Infrastructure**

The MDP encourages new developments to be located in close proximity to existing development and infrastructure, to maximize municipal service delivery efficiencies and to promote cost effective development patterns. The focus of this policy is also to improve local and regional transportation connectivity and invest in infrastructure that promotes development near upgraded infrastructure. The key performance indicator used in this regard is the number of infrastructure projects that have started or were completed in 2023. In 2023, the County Engineering & Utilities department started construction of Township Road 510 along with a shared use pathway. This project will be completed in 2024. This transportation corridor will improve uninterrupted traffic from the City of Beaumont to Nisku Business Park, will provide easy access to residential development in the East Vistas, and will spur development in the future 510 Local Area Structure Plan area. In 2023, the County Engineering & Utilities Department under the Bridge Maintenance and Replacement Program started work on eleven (11) bridges. The culvert replacement and general maintenance will improve the water flow, control erosion and prolong the overall life of those bridges.

### **Collaborate and Seize Opportunities to Create Efficiencies**

Since 2019, staff has been using two key performance indicators to monitor collaboration with various stakeholders that include intermunicipal neighbours, regional partners, commissions, EIA, and other levels of government to ensure decisions are based on dialogue, good governance and detailed information.

Two key performance indicators are being used; one is intermunicipal planning such as; Intermunicipal Development Plans (IDPs), Intermunicipal Collaboration Frameworks (ICF)s and the Intermunicipal Planning Framework (IPF), and the other is participation in EMRB projects and initiatives. In 2022 the percentage of completed intermunicipal agreements was 100% which reduced to 73% in 2023 due to delay in the review of the IDPs and ICFs between Leduc County and the Summer Villages. In 2023, the County attended thirty-two (32) meetings arranged by EMRB. Staff are also considering adding a few KPIs and monitoring the yearly data through the new EP&L software regarding the referrals from Leduc County as well as the referrals received from other municipalities.

### **IMPLEMENT THE POLICIES OF THE MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

MDP policies support consistent and equitable implementation of the Municipal Development Plan to achieve desired goals. With regards to implementation, three key performance indicators have been used that include: number of statutory plans reviewed since adoption of the MDP, land use bylaw updates/amendments, and MDP monitoring. In 2023, four statutory plans were updated/adopted that included three Local Area Structure Plans, and one Area Structure Plan. Since 2019, 50% of the County's statutory plans have been updated. In addition to the updates of statutory plans, a comprehensive update of Land Use Bylaw will also be completed in early 2025.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Schedule A "MDP Monitoring Report 2023
2. MDP Monitoring Infographics
3. Power Point Presentation