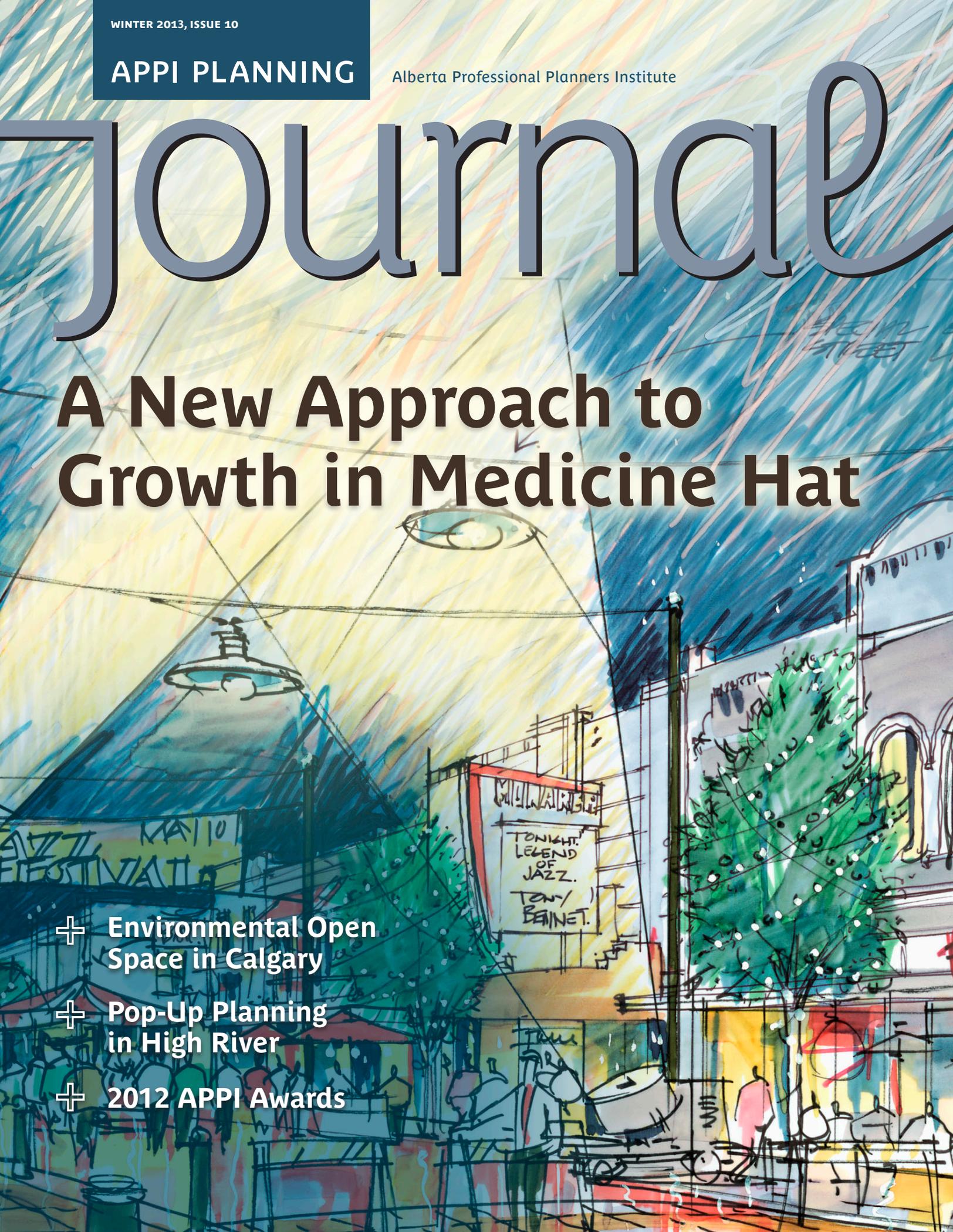


Journal

A New Approach to Growth in Medicine Hat

- ✦ Environmental Open Space in Calgary
- ✦ Pop-Up Planning in High River
- ✦ 2012 APPI Awards



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We are always looking for articles for future issues of the *Planning Journal*. Submit an article or idea at any time and a member of the *Journal* Committee will help you through the process of getting it published. Below are some examples of topic areas you may be interested in submitting an article for:

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- community development projects
- urban design
- student experiences
- innovative ideas
- successes

and any other areas that would be of value to the planning community. For more information, please contact the *APPI Planning Journal* Committee at appi.journal@gmail.com or 780-435-8716.

Acknowledgements

The *APPI Planning Journal* Committee would like to acknowledge and thank the APPI Administrative Staff, MaryJane Alanko, Executive Director and Vicki Hackl, Office Manager. Your continued assistance is greatly appreciated!

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Message from the President



APPI Council has established an MGA Review Task Force to actively participate in, and provide feedback on, the Government of Alberta's review of the Municipal Government Act. We are actively taking a role as a stakeholder and will advocate as necessary.

The question, as is always before us when we contemplate advocacy, is what will we advocate for? To figure this out, a group of practitioners with diverse experience (rural and urban, private and public, inter-affiliate, international, new to the profession and seasoned) were recruited in the fall of 2012, through an Expression of Interest offering, to serve on the Task Force:

MaryJane Alanko, Executive Director

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Karen Holz

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By the time you read this, these dedicated members of the planning profession have asked you for your pet peeves and ideas to improve the MGA. These folks, and many of you, have volunteered time to figure out what changes (and things to keep) are necessary to the MGA to best serve the public interest.

The APPI MGA Review Task Force's mandate will culminate in a report to APPI Council in the spring of 2013. This report is the foundation on which Council will determine APPI's official position as a stakeholder.

The Task Force Members, and all of you that feed information to them, have taken the initiative to share your insight in how to improve the legislative framework upon which we serve our communities. As individual practitioners, these volunteers are deepening their understanding of how the MGA works. As a collective, they are helping shape how we organize our communities to serve the public well. Those of us not intimately involved in this work will also learn from them along the way, so even if you have not volunteered, you are helping the whole of us serve our communities well.

This is a significant collective act, to see what it is we have to say, to say it, and learn along the way. But there is no need for everyone to dive into this effort. While they do this on our behalf, we serve the profession in other ways; we can't all be everywhere.

Thank you to all volunteers, wherever you are volunteering, for your work toward APPI's informed and meaningful contributions to Alberta, Nunavut and the Northwest Territories.

Beth Sanders RPP, MCIP

President

Alberta Professional Planners Institute

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Message from the Journal Committee

We move ahead by looking backwards for guidance, and forward for potential. What better time of year to reflect on the past and look to the future than now?

This is the 10th publication of the Journal since Issue #1 appeared in the winter of 2009. Shortly after that first issue came out a general membership survey was conducted, and feedback about the Journal provided the Committee with a gauge of its inaugural success. This past October the Journal Committee conducted a follow up survey to check in on APPI membership views about the Journal to date, and ideas for its future. The results, summarized in this issue, will inspire not only the content of future publications, but different ways of engaging contributors.

At first glance the articles included in this issue of the Journal may seem to be covering old ground. However, the way we manage the lands we live on and the communities we live in does not change overnight, but is constantly evolving. Articles in this edition of the Journal share information about real life examples of public engagement, open space planning, and growth management: contributing to a collective moving forward. It is fitting too that this edition includes interviews with the deans of the two new academic planning programs in Alberta and an introduction to the APPI members elected to the College of Fellows.

Celebrating our first year of working together, members of the current Journal Committee have come to appreciate the foundations laid and foresight of past committee members Riley Welden, Miguel Figueira, Janelle Wyman, Yolanda Lew, Marcus Patterson and Jagdev Shahi. We're looking forward to a new year of contributions from APPI members so that the Journal continues to reflect the insights, experience and expertise of Planners working in Alberta, the NWT and Nunavut.



Left to right — Ann Peters, Tasha Elliott, Christy Fong, Amber Nicol, Imai Welch. Missing: Susan Lamola

Committee Member Profiles

Christy Fong is a Planner with the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo. She has a wide range of experience including comprehensive, current, and subdivision planning in the public sector, with a recent focus on city redevelopment. Since joining the APPI Journal Committee in 2010 she has helped to solicit articles and currently serves as Secretary to the Journal Committee

Tasha Elliott, the Journal's Production Coordinator, is an Intern Planner with the City of Cold Lake. She attended university in Saskatchewan and Ontario before moving to Alberta and has a particular interest in environmental and emergency planning. Tasha joined the committee in January 2012.

Susan Lamola, our Treasurer and Advertising Coordinator, is a Development Officer with the Town of High River. She has a Bachelor of Science from the University of Calgary and a degree in urban planning from Ryerson University. Susan has a special interest in environmental planning and healthy communities. Susan joined the committee in January 2012.

See the remaining three Committee Member profiles in our next issue.



Environmental Open Space: A Calgary Model of Process for Uniting Conservation Policy and Legislation

SOURCE: Steven Snell

A continuous challenge for city planners is determining how to apply high level provincial and municipal policy and legislation to area-specific development plans. In the preparation of a recent Area Structure Plan (ASP), the City of Calgary Parks Department developed a particular process for integrating high level requirements into a method of land analysis and specific policy for the community development plan.

The City of Calgary has implemented a number of policies aimed at improving environmental sustainability in land use planning. In 2009 City Council approved a Municipal Development Plan (MDP) that established a new planning model for the City. A key component of this policy is its recognition of the value of nature and the need to protect and restore it. Section 2.6 of the MDP specifically sets out objectives and policies for “greening the city.” The introductory policies are as follows:

- a. All land use and transportation planning and development should seek to conserve and protect ecosystems by:
 - i. Recognizing the interconnectedness of air, land, water, climate, ecosystems habitat and people;

- ii. Reducing Calgary’s ecological footprint by using resources efficiently;
- iii. Considering and managing the cumulative impacts of development;
- iv. Protecting, conserving and enhancing water quality and quantity;
- v. Establishing, protecting and restoring native habitat and areas of biodiversity locally and regionally;
- vi. Supporting air quality that is not harmful to human health and the environment;
- vii. Reducing the demand for non-renewable resources;
- viii. Minimizing waste; and,
- ix. Promoting innovative technologies and processes to achieve environmental goals (City of Calgary, 2009).



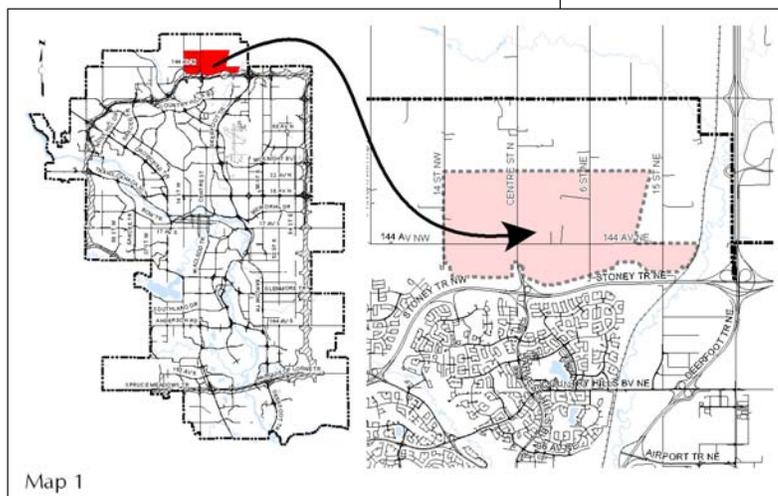
Air Photo of Plan Area
SOURCE: The City of Calgary

Broadly, the goal of these policies is to “conserve, protect and restore the natural environment”(City of Calgary, 2009).

The Keystone Hills Area Structure Plan (ASP) is a development cell on the northern periphery of Calgary totalling approximately 1080 hectares. This ASP is the first area policy initiated after approval of the MDP and therefore its development is a test-case for City Administration to apply these new broad, city-wide policies within a specific location and context.

Historically, the Calgary Parks Business Unit has been consistent in identifying areas of conservation value in local-area development plans (ASPs and Area Redevelopment Plans), but the terminology used to describe these areas has varied. Terms that have been used include Wetland Protection Area, Conservation Area, Open Space and Natural Drainage Draw, to highlight a few.¹ The Keystone Hills ASP, in its necessary alignment with the policies of the MDP, provided the opportunity for Parks to both establish terminology that would provide a consistent approach to ASP development as well as provide policy to adhere to higher order directions on environmental quality and sustainability.

The terminology adopted for the Keystone Hills ASP is found in the Open Space Plan (OSP), which was approved by Council in 2003. This document was “developed to provide a single, comprehensive and integrated source of policy on open space, and an up-to-date vision that provides cohesive direction for the system as a whole”(City of Calgary, 2003). The OSP established the term Environmental Open Space (EOS) and defines it as areas that are



Plan Area Location within Calgary
SOURCE: The City of Calgary

set aside or acquired for the purposes of preserving areas of ecological uniqueness and diversity, enhancing air, soil and water quality through groundwater and watershed protection, as well as the overall habitat and recreational value of Calgary (City of Calgary, 2003).

Simply, EOS provides policy direction for the acquisition and protection of lands having conservation value. In order to meet the policies of the MDP, EOS was used and given specific area context in the development of the Keystone Hills ASP. During development Parks analyzed existing legal mechanisms available to support the City’s policy objectives. Of the higher order legal requirements, the Municipal Government Act gives direction for the protection of natural drainage channels through the dedication of environmental

NOTES

¹ The varying use of terminology reflects several issues with respect to the application of conservation in ASPs, for example: Specific area contexts (geomorphology, biophysical features, etc) have historically offered different policy approaches; previously terminology has been modified in response to landowner concerns, for example the use of ‘study areas’ to suggest further study will be carried out at time of development application to understand the full conservation value.

reserve. The Water Act gives the province authority for the protection of water quantity and quality. The Nose Creek Watershed Water Management Plan (NCWWMP), of which the City is a signatory, gives additional direction for water quantity and quality management within the Keystone Hills area. Recognizing how to apply these legal mechanisms provided the municipality with clear authority to allocate conceptual land use to areas for the conservation of a watershed and environmentally significant land features. The Open Space Plan (OSP), with an appendix on biophysical impact assessments, was employed to give direction on a biophysical analysis of the area to map areas of environmental significance, as defined in the OSP (City of Calgary, 2003).

Having synthesized provincial and municipal legislation and guiding documents to understand jurisdictional requirements for land conservation, a specific methodology was put in place to build EOS mapping for the ASP. An analysis of features and land management practices in historic and current aerial photographs was carried out to locate areas under the influence of surface water (wetlands and water courses). A review of previously mapped water body datasets was completed. Existing biophysical inventories for the area were reviewed and reconnaissance level site visits to the Keystone Hills area were conducted. This is a consistent methodology to produce a high level map akin to the high level planning detail of an ASP. The result was an illustration of areas of conservation value to be added to both the land use concept map and a separate EOS map in the ASP. It was vitally important to ensure that EOS was clearly indicated on the land use concept map, as these areas have the potential to affect land use.² A separate EOS map delineated EOS into its constituent parts: wetlands, water bodies, escarpments and native prairie.

Upon submission of development applications, finer details about the conservation value of areas identified as EOS will be carried out through “shovel testing” lands to see if they meet specifications set out in the MGA for environmental reserve (ER) dedication. Although the MGA does not formally recognize ER as lands of environmental value, qualifying lands typically exhibit areas of conservation value. This finer resolution of detail adheres to the planning detail of development application, i.e. proposing specific land uses.

Further, in order to meet the objectives of the MDP, lands determined to qualify as EOS which are not subject to dedication as environmental reserve may be protected through other mechanisms such as the use of municipal reserve, conservation easements or outright purchase, where feasible and appropriate.

The application of EOS in the Keystone Hills ASP, in its simplest form, is the use of Council approved terminology to unite relevant municipal and provincial policy and legislation and apply it in an area-specific context. Policies are given spatial representation through mapping to give planners and land owners clear direction in land conservation during the development of new communities.

The Keystone Hills ASP was approved by Council at the July 16, 2012 public hearing. Council has, therefore, determined that the area policy, including the adoption of EOS as the standard for defining lands with conservation value, has met the objectives of the MDP and other relevant municipal policy. The next step will be the implementation of the policy through development applications.

EOS offers an exciting opportunity for understanding how higher order provincial and municipal legislation can be brought under the auspice of specific area development. In its unique way, implementing EOS policy through development applications will offer a novel insight into the success or failure of best intention conservation policies that were put in place to benefit the citizens of Calgary, Alberta and the general public at large. ■

Steven Snell is a Parks Planner for the City of Calgary and blogs on urban issues for the Calgary Herald. He holds a master's degree in Urban Design.

About the Author

The author acknowledges and thanks the following individuals for the background processes that allowed the formation of this paper: George Stalker, Chris Manderson, Keath Parker, Doug Marter, Nicole St. Arnaud, Joanne Grower, Denise Jakal and Shari Shigehiro.

Acknowledgements

NOTES

² At the Calgary Planning Commission (CPC), a motion was made to change the name of Environmental Open Space on the Land Use Concept Map and the Environmental Open Space Map to “Environmental Open Space Study Area”. This motion was approved and recommended to Council, where it was adopted.

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Open Space Plan, 2003, pg 3, The City of Calgary.
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A New Approach to Growth in Medicine Hat

Medicine Hat's population growth has averaged just under 900 new residents per year over the past twenty years, with much of this growth occurring in the city's outlying greenfield areas. In 2010, the City embarked on a comprehensive "re-think" of how future growth would be planned and managed. With Medicine Hat's population forecasted to grow from 60,000 people today to as many as 95,000 by 2040, a new approach to managing growth will place a much greater emphasis on infill and intensification as a means of accommodating future population and employment growth.

The foundation for the City's new approach to growth was established in a Smart Growth Strategy that was adopted by Council in July 2007. The objectives of this strategy are to build communities that use less energy, reduce the use of automobiles, consume less land and other natural resources, create a "walkable" environment, and provide a more vibrant place to live and work. To achieve these objectives, the Smart Growth Strategy focuses planning efforts on three broad principles:

- encouraging the design of compact, well-designed, mixed-use neighbourhoods;
- supporting growth in existing residential communities while fostering unique neighbourhood identities; and,

- fostering alternative transportation options and infrastructure systems that are sustainable.

The adoption of these principles represented a watershed moment for the city. They provided clear direction for future planning in the city at all scales. Perhaps most significantly, they established the parameters and expectations for the review and update of the City's Municipal Development Plan (MDP).

Medicine Hat's new MDP was adopted in June 2012. A strong emphasis on infill and intensification is a central theme of the new Plan. This tone is established right from the initial Vision which imagines a future in which "new development has been accommodated through an appropriate

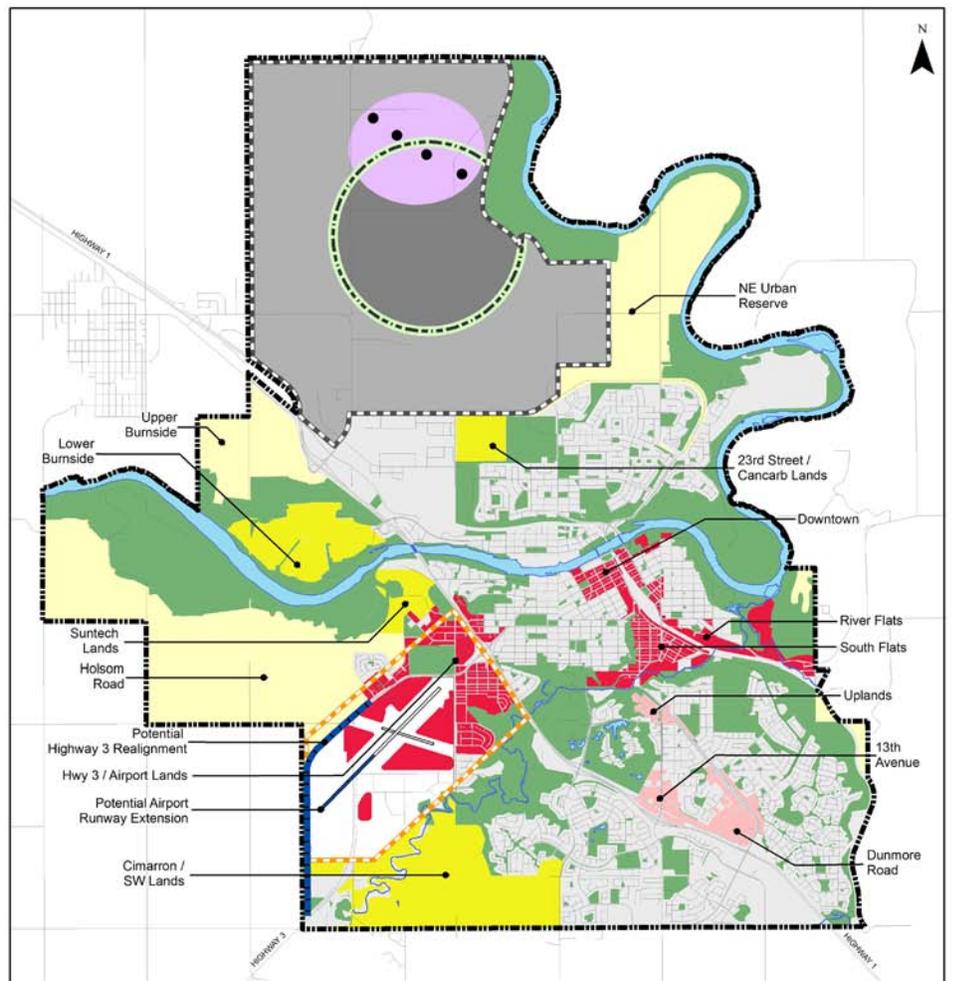
Illustration of the Entertainment District
SOURCE: MVH Urban Planning & Design Inc.
Calum Strigley

balance of sensitive infill and redevelopment in existing neighbourhoods and the development of compact new neighbourhoods on the city's edge." But the MDP goes beyond mere aspirational statements with respect to intensification. It sets out clear targets and policy directions that are intended to make this vision a reality. Most significantly, the MDP establishes a goal of accommodating approximately 40% of the city's growth over the next 50 years, or approximately 22,000 additional people, through intensification.

To support the development of the MDP, the City embarked on a Growth Management Strategy (GMS) with the consulting firm planningAlliance in 2010–2011. The GMS involved a comprehensive analysis of intensification opportunities across the city. Areas of the city that were considered appropriate for intensification were identified through:

- a review of existing and emerging planning documents to understand where intensification was desirable from the perspective of existing policy directions;

MDP Land Use Concept
SOURCE: City of Medicine Hat



- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| Priority 1 Greenfield Area | Wind Resource Development Area | Airport Runway Extension |
| Priority 2 Greenfield Area | Green Space* | Airport Vicinity Transition Area |
| Priority 1 Intensification Area | Developed and/or Area Being Developed | Area Undergoing Future Studies |
| Priority 2 Intensification Area | Water Body | Road |
| Business Development Area | Preferred Wind Turbine Location | Municipal Boundary |
| Heavy Industrial Area (0.0km-1.5km)* | Airport Runway Extension | |
| Industrial-Commercial Area* | Highway 3 Realignment | |
| Open Space + Environmentally Sensitive Area | Road | |
- *See Appendix 1 for illustration

- an analysis of the existing parcel fabric and building footprints to identify feasible intensification sites;
- identification of potential sites for redevelopment such as areas of struggling retail, aged or deteriorating housing stock, and underutilized or vacant lands; and,
- an analysis of spatial attributes of potential intensification sites, such as proximity to park space, schools, community facilities, collector and arterial roads, and transit.

This analysis resulted in the identification of seven Intensification Areas across the city, which were then prioritized based on a consideration of existing policy directions, the amount of intensification land available, the age and viability of the existing development, and the potential market demand and perceived likelihood of intensification activity.

In order to understand the potential intensification 'uplift' in these Intensification Areas, conceptual redevelopment scenarios were created. These scenarios drew on a combination of mixed-use and single-use building formats, all in a low-profile development pattern that keeps with the character of Medicine Hat.

The culmination of this analysis is found in the new Medicine Hat MDP. The MDP identifies each of the Intensification Areas in its Land Use Schedule. It also sets out an Intensification Vision for each Intensification Area that sets out the desired development types and the approximate number of additional residential units, people and jobs that are to be planned for in each area.

Any planner that has worked on an intensification project or program will know that such initiatives are often met with community fears about the impacts that will occur on existing development and adjacent properties. To address these fears, the Medicine Hat MDP sets out a series of policy directions that are directed at ensuring compatibility of future intensification development with existing neighbourhoods. For example, the MDP states that intensification will ensure an appropriate transition between low-density residential areas and more intensive multi-residential or commercial areas, and that it will complement the established character of the area and not create dramatic contrasts in the physical development pattern. The MDP also includes a strong emphasis on urban design, including specific urban design



Downtown Intensification Area
SOURCE: planningalliance



View of North Railway Street located in the River Flats intensification area
SOURCE: *planningAlliance*

policies targeted at retail areas, streets and parking areas. For each Intensification Area, the City will lead the preparation of an Area Redevelopment Plan that will include greater detail with respect to land use, density, built form, urban design, accessibility, and other issues.

While Medicine Hat’s new MDP sets out a clear and comprehensive roadmap for the new approach to growth that was first envisioned in the City’s Smart Growth Strategy, the work did not end there. The City is currently updating its Land Use Bylaw to further implement this new approach to growth.

The City is also exploring various planning initiatives, incentives and other programs to support and facilitate intensification.

An Area Redevelopment Plan has recently been completed for one of the Priority One Intensification Areas — the River Flats community. The City has also stated that it will be preparing intensification guidelines to assist landowners and developers in understanding the City’s requirements and expectations for development in existing neighbourhoods.

The City’s Downtown Development Incentive Program (DDIP) includes various incentives available to downtown property owners to assist them to redevelop or initiate new developments in the city centre, which is one of the Priority One Intensification Areas. The program is administered

through the City’s Business Support Office. Among the options available to landowners is the Live/Work Residential Development program through which property owners can access up to \$15,000 for the first residential unit and \$5,000 per suite for up to two more units at the same location, as an incentive to develop a residential living space connected to their commercial building. Additional funds are available for up to two more suites on the property if space permits.

The MDP also identifies the City’s land acquisition program as a potential tool for facilitating intensification, for example by considering opportunities for strategic acquisition of lands and properties in Intensification Areas, including brownfield sites, and undertaking site preparation and land consolidations where required.

In an era where more and more municipalities are looking to re-orient their future growth toward a greater balance between greenfield development and intensification, the City of Medicine Hat’s planning work over the past several years represents a model of the type of comprehensive approach that needs to be taken. The City’s new MDP, grounded in a detailed analysis of the “realities” of land use options and development potential, and supported by a suite of supportive programs and related planning initiatives, is the type of multi-pronged approach that is necessary to successfully promote and achieve greater rates of infill and intensification. ■

Jason Thorne RPP, MCIP is a Principal with the planning and urban design consulting firm *planningAlliance (pA)*, based in Edmonton and Toronto. He acted as lead planner for pA in the development of the new Municipal Development Plan for the City of Medicine Hat.

About the Author

The author would like to thank City of Medicine Hat Policy Planning Superintendent Jeanie Gartly for her contribution to this article.

Acknowledgments



Community Building: The Role of Open Space in the Suburban Model

The basic concept of integrating built form and open space is a universal theme that was pioneered in early civilizations and instrumental to successful community building. Open spaces provided the core and heartbeat of the community as people interacted with each other and moved through the space, with the space itself providing many community services, and a place for public forums and government buildings. Over time, European-style towns and cities evolved and saw the development of communities within suburban environments. Public open spaces, which were the fundamental building blocks of the initial town centres, were then transplanted into suburban developments in a different way.

Suburban open spaces still provided the basis for the community and its activities, but did not necessarily contain government buildings or the historic buildings found in the urban centre. Concepts such as prioritizing pedestrian activity and using built form to create enclosures and encourage “eyes on the street” (Jacobs, 1961), were transplanted into these new suburban developments. Many key open space concepts — such as that of the British Georgian square — were exported from Europe

to other parts of the world, such as Rittenhouse Square in Philadelphia seen in Figure 1. The success of these spaces was due to their central location, with the built form facing and interacting with the space. This resulted in utilization of the space by the neighbourhood and contributed to strong community building and interaction.

While Canadian suburban subdivision design followed some aspects of its European counterparts, the use and orientation of open space has traditionally differed. This article explores the use of open space in many Canadian suburban settings, as well as the ways in which such spaces can become increasingly pedestrian friendly and can inspire community building.

SOURCE: *iStockphoto*

Figure 1 Rittenhouse Square
SOURCE: *tripideas.org*



Open space is a universally defined concept and its mechanics do not vary. What do I mean by this statement? It is true that a lot of European cities have the historic elements to complement open spaces. The atmospheric presence provided by historic buildings incorporated around open spaces certainly contributes to their character and cultural charm, but it is the arrangement of the built form and streets — not just the façade of the built form typology — that delivers successful open space and inspires community building. In newer cities and towns, such as those in Canada, contemporary architecture can be just as inspirational.

The ability to separate and prioritize pedestrians over cars, as well as the use of defined built form typology to create the space, is crucial to developing successful open spaces. Further, in both

urban and suburban settings, the fronts of buildings should orientate towards the space to create an enclosure, increasing community interaction and resulting in a well-defined space. Unfortunately, in the design of many Canadian suburban neighbourhoods and subdivisions, the idea of open space is often somewhat of an afterthought.

The examples shown in Figures 2 and 3 are typical of many subdivision designs in Canada and are representative of how suburban open space is treated. If we relate this design to the idea of people entering the space and the concept of “eyes on the street”, there is a lack of clarity and legibility in the urban form because people are now entering the space from the backs of lots and the built form typology has been manipulated and is not clearly defined. The result is a watered-down design concept and the open space — traditionally the building block of the community — has been relegated to a second-tier position. As mentioned previously, building fronts should be orientated towards the space to create an enclosure. This increases community interaction and creates a well-defined, safe and useable open space. Restricting vehicular movements using cul de sacs would also strengthen the dynamics of the space.

In contrast to the Canadian examples above, the example shown in Figure 4 is a concept type design that can be found in many contemporary European suburban housing developments. Figure 5 is a design found in a contemporary Dublin

Figure 2 Canadian-Style Residential Layout
SOURCE: Farrelly, D.



Figure 3 Cold Lake, Alberta Residential Layout
SOURCE: City of Cold Lake





Figure 4 European-Style Housing Development
SOURCE: Farrelly, D.

suburban development. These examples display numerous strong qualities which relate to the working mechanics of open spaces. Having houses facing the space creates a very deliberate hierarchy and legibility, and delineates the role of the space. The legibility is defined through the position of the open space and a clear delineation of the typology in respect to the front and back of adjacent properties and how the front interacts with the space. The ability of the open space to inspire community interaction increases dramatically in these models as people engage with the space, while the presence of “eyes on the street” is strong, legible and deliberate. Creating hammerhead turns and discontinuing road connections strengthens the theme of pedestrian priority over cars. This in turn decreases the edge effect by reducing the deliberate boundary that separates urban form (Lynch, K., 1960). These designs create a safer urban environment which encourages people to interact with the space, and a result with each other. It is also important to note that public

and private spaces are very different. Public space remains accessible for public use. Unfortunately private space does not carry the same clout and it can be closed off through fencing and barriers by private individuals.

As shown in Figures 4 and 5, the layout of this type of development inconveniences the car significantly. But isn't this one of the core theories of contemporary planning and urban design? We are not removing the car from the equation; we are just creating an environment that prioritizes pedestrians. As Figure 6 shows, planners and urban designers should try to incorporate the following criteria in order of priority when considering design (Manual for Streets, Department of Transport, 2007):

The problem with an unfiltered grid (Figure 2 & 3) is that the “car is king” in these environments (Melia, S., 2012). Every road connects through and allows unlimited potential for vehicular movements, while creating real and significant edges between spaces and built form. In comparison, the filtered system (Figures 4 & 5) still provides pedestrian connectivity, while diminishing the priority of the



Figure 6 User Hierarchy

Figure 5 Dublin Housing Development
SOURCE: Farrelly, D.



Figure 7 Bristol Residential Street
SOURCE: bristol247.com



vehicle. Unfortunately, in Canada the unfiltered system is seen as somewhat standard design in terms of connectivity within neighbourhoods. But for whom are we providing the connectivity? A permeable unfiltered street system does not create pedestrian priority streets, as unlimited through traffic is allowed.

The 'Playing Out' scheme in Bristol England is a community led initiative that closes various streets to through traffic at certain times enabling children to play on them, as shown in Figure 7. Residents can still access the street to park their vehicles, but through traffic is prohibited. This is controlled by volunteer residents on duty on the street (www.bristol.gov.uk). The extended cul de sac example (Figure 8) is already used in different municipalities in Canada. This concept prohibits through traffic and only allows residents to access their properties, similar to the 'Playing Out' scheme. In summary, it has the control mechanisms built into the design.

There are numerous everyday examples of how designs such as that in Figure 8 could benefit quality of life in Canadian suburban subdivisions. For example, as I recently played a game of street hockey, I noticed the inconvenience of moving the goalie's net every three minutes as a result of vehicular activity. In Canadian neighbourhoods, inconvenience posed to a game of street hockey can be used to exemplify the importance of filtered streets and spaces. The breaking of the grid for vehicles allows street environments to thrive, thereby enhancing the pedestrian experience and community interaction. It is also important to remove the stigma that the road is "an out of bounds" location of street activities for residents. The neighbourhood street is a public space, and similar to open spaces, we, as planners, must approach their design with this in mind. By

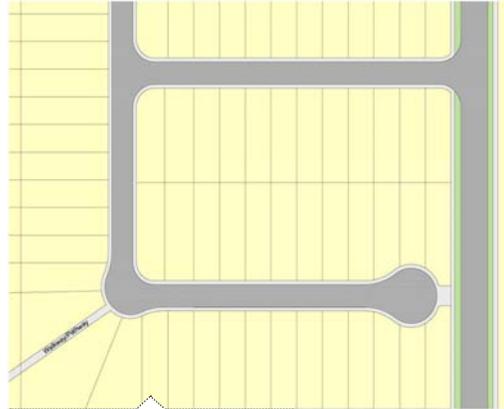


Figure 8 Extended Cul De Sac Bulb
SOURCE: *Farrelly, D.*

employing thoughtful design using the hierarchy identified in Figure 6, we can create user-friendly streets that encourage people to engage with each other. Obviously, not all streets can be designed in a filtered manner, as vehicular traffic still needs to be accommodated, but there are opportunities to add filtered streets into the design mix to bring character and flair to neighbourhood design. We must remember that the car is a visitor into our urban environments, and should be treated as such.

Ultimately, the success and workings of good open space are universal. The strategic location of the spaces is important. Building fronts should be used to define the space and whether it is European hammerhead turns or North American bulbs, street design should complement the space by limiting vehicular activity and reducing street widths. These design mechanisms all contribute to creating user-friendly open spaces, which form strong building blocks within communities, contributing to successful community building. By incorporating these strategic components into Canadian suburban design, open spaces can be more than an afterthought or leftover space, but can be the starting point of every visionary community plan. ■

Donal Farrelly is an Irish Town Planner and Urban Designer working with the MMM Group Limited in Edmonton, AB. He lectures at the University of Alberta on urban planning, urban design and economic development. He holds a BA in Economics and Geography from University College Dublin and an MSc in Urban Design from the University of Edinburgh, and is a Candidate Member of APPI.

About the Author

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Pop-Up Planning in High River

The Town of High River's Planning Services Department has taken innovative steps to help residents and business owners visualize planning opportunities. Two extremely successful "Pop-up Planning" events organized by planning staff have increased residents' awareness of an underutilized public space and inspired business owners to expand their commercial footprint beyond the boundaries of their stores.

The first Pop-up Planning event transformed Pioneer Square, a downtown public space, into an attractive park using artificial turf, trees and temporary seating. The three-day event was held during the community's annual car show in 2011, which attracts more than 10,000 participants and spectators into town. "The purpose of this exercise was to create a space that would attract residents and visitors and collect feedback on what they thought the space should look like and be used for," explained Angie Lucas, Manager of Planning Services. "The response was overwhelmingly positive and led to permanent improvements."

Based on the results of surveys and questionnaires completed by the public, the Town added sod, picnic tables and landscaping features that transformed this utilitarian courtyard into a welcoming green space in the centre of town. "It has become a much more popular outdoor venue since the changes were made," said Lucas. Residents

had also indicated that they would like to see more activities and events happening in the downtown core and so the final two Farmers Markets of the season were held in Pioneer Square and along the laneways between downtown businesses. With the positive reception of both vendors and residents, the market will be permanently relocated for the 2013 season.

Public feedback from the Pop-up Planning event provided the direction Council needed to approve a permanent transformation of Pioneer Square at minimal cost.

SOURCE: Town of High River

"Studies have shown that outdoor venues like this one contribute to the social fabric of downtown spaces, encourage interaction between citizens, and supports a more vibrant, attractive community."

The second Pop-up Planning event included creating an outdoor patio in front of Evelyn's Memory Lane Cafe, a popular downtown restaurant. Three parking stalls were fenced off and decorated with potted trees, artificial turf, and several patio tables and umbrellas. As with the Pioneer Square event, planning staff were on-hand all day to ask for feedback from the public as well as to answer questions about the project.

SOURCE: Town of High River



The Pop-up Planning outdoor patio welcomes customers outside Evelyn's Memory Lane Cafe.
SOURCE: Town of High River

"This type of patio space has been successful in other communities," explained Shlane Broomfield, the planner in charge of organizing the event. "Studies have shown that outdoor venues like this one contribute to the social fabric of downtown spaces, encourage interaction between citizens, and supports a more vibrant, attractive community."

This one-day activity also received overwhelmingly positive responses from the restaurant owner and patrons. "The owner wanted us to keep it up all summer," laughed Broomfield. "It really helped business owners visualize how they can extend their retail space without a lot of expense and inspired them to think beyond their commercial footprint."

This Pop-up Planning patio was so successful that several other businesses were inspired to apply for temporary permits and set up similar outdoor spaces during the 2012 car show.

High River is a growing community of 13,000, only 20 minutes from Calgary's southern boundary and has been experiencing a steady increase in its population, especially in the number of younger people who are choosing to move into the community. The 2011 census indicated that the median age is now 42. "As we continue to grow we want to ensure that we maintain High River's character and charm while supporting increased development," said Lucas. "Pop-up planning sessions have been an excellent way for us to share ideas with the community and for residents to get a feel for how their suggestions could be implemented."

Town council have fully supported Planning Service's innovative approach and are especially pleased with the public responses and feedback that have been generated from the downtown events. "It has really helped council get a handle on what residents and business owners are thinking about how to improve our commercial centre," said Mayor Emile Blokland.

The results from the two events will be incorporated into a new Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan that will be created starting in 2014. Plans are already underway for another Pop-Up Planning Activity in 2013. "Residents are beginning to gain an appreciation for this interactive type of activity and we're hoping to keep the momentum going," said Lucas. "They have been one of our most successful public engagement tools we have initiated and have really increased the conversation and feedback from the public." ■



Pioneer Square
SOURCE: Town of High River

Pioneer Square was transformed into a welcoming rest stop for three days using artificial turf, temporary seating and landscaping
SOURCE: Town of High River

About the Authors

Joan Pletz is the Communications Manager for the Town of High River. She holds degrees in English from the University of Saskatchewan, and Journalism and Communications from the University of Regina. She is currently completing a Masters of Arts in Communication Technology at the University of Alberta. She manages all of the external and internal communications activities for the Town including websites, intranets, social media, print materials, news releases, event planning and crisis communication.

Shlane Broomfield is a Development Officer with the Town of High River. She has a Land Agent diploma from Olds College.



The Paradox of Planning for Growth in Shrinking Communities: Comparing Two Approaches

SOURCE: iStockphoto

The oil boom of the 2000s has resulted in major population growth in Alberta. This growth has not been distributed evenly however, and there are many municipalities that have either stagnated or even declined in population. In fact, even though the population of the province grew by 10.8 percent between 2006 and 2011, 164 of its 434 census communities have experienced population declines.

Despite these realities, there is a belief within the planning practice that growth is continuous. This belief creates an important paradox for land use planners who work in communities that are either stagnating or shrinking. For those municipalities that are not growing, conventional approaches to planning predicated on assumptions of growth are unsuitable. We believe planners need to reconsider some of the conventional approaches to growth management in order to address the challenges of declining communities. The modified approaches that we propose are not exclusive to shrinking communities, but can be applied to growing communities as well.

In such situations, we believe there are two approaches to growth: regulation/liberalization and reductionism/comprehensive. Used alongside more conventional approaches, planners can become more conscious of how they address growth in their practice, so they can better adapt to effectively address local issues.

1. REGULATION VS. LIBERALIZATION

Regulation is about managing growth including where it occurs, how it happens, and the form it takes. In other words, regulation is about restricting or discouraging undesirable forms of growth and development. Regardless of whether a municipality

We believe planners need to reconsider some of the conventional approaches to growth management in order to address the challenges of declining communities.

is growing or shrinking, the Municipal Government Act requires all municipalities to develop policies and plans to manage growth. The statutory plans (Municipal Development Plans and, when they exist, Area Structure and Area Redevelopment

Plans) become important particularly for evaluating and planning subdivisions. The enforcement powers created by this approach, such as the Stop Order in Part 17 of the MGA, are useful for preventing growth that may have negative planning consequences. The Land Use Bylaw, as the one planning document required of all Alberta municipalities, is a critical document used to organise and manage day-to-day growth and change through the Development Permit system.

There is a danger of over or mis-regulation, however. Plans and Bylaws that do not properly acknowledge a variety of needs in a municipality and can create barriers for planners working in shrinking communities, or trying to manage growth through newer or differing forms of development. Although regulation can address some of the more negative effects of development, regulation will not always address many other challenges of shrinking municipalities, including the declining revenues and property values that come with a lack of development. This is where the liberalization approach, which attempts to promote growth, comes into play.

The alternative to regulation is liberalizing restrictions and encouraging growth. Many plans and Land Use Bylaws that encourage growth are influenced by Charles Lindblom's incremental method to policy and decision making, which focuses on using a community's current situation as starting point. In order to implement this approach, planners can focus on constructive capacity building through Asset-Based or Community Economic Development, both of which grow a community by building on its existing resources. Often, creativity is required

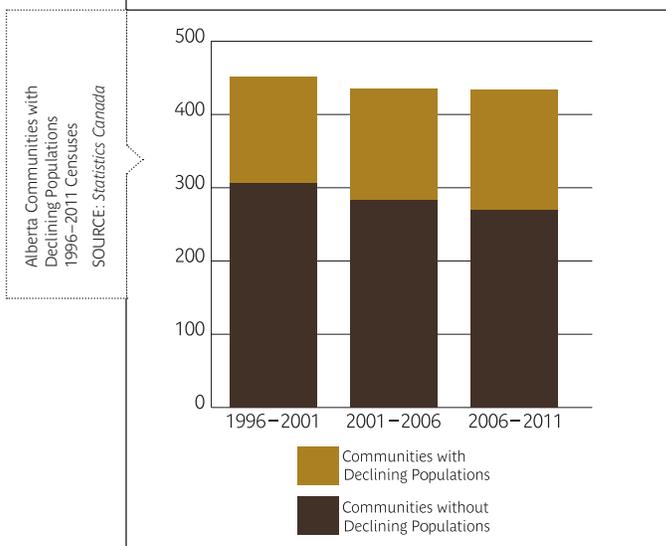
to reframe negative features as resources. For example, vacant lots, which are common in many Alberta municipalities, can be used for parks, public art, street furniture, or other amenities to attract visitors and even encourage future development.

Another way to encourage development is to reduce or carefully adjust application fees for subdivisions, bylaw/plan amendments, rezonings, and especially Off-Site Levies. While this may reverse decline, the danger is that a municipality may compromise its long term vision in order to facilitate development, to the point that special or even favoured relationships between a municipality and certain developers may be founded in order to encourage potential growth. In such cases planning and development processes begin to become tools primarily for economic development. Statutory plans and internal procedures become structured to allow for proposals that will create physical growth in a municipality, even if the specific growth may be problematic from a longer-term planning standpoint.

2. REDUCTIONIST/COMPREHENSIVE

The reductionist approach to growth focuses on a set of benchmarks to measure success. Such benchmarks can include the number of new businesses, property tax revenue, employment rates, levels of sprawl, the conversion of agricultural land to other uses, and density. This approach allows for an objective way to measure the success of growth management in a municipality, and allows a municipality to focus limited resources towards more effective planning projects. For shrinking communities, it allows planners to experiment with specific interventions and analyze their effects on reversing decline.

Planners can use this approach in a variety of ways. Focus groups, as an example, are a very basic way to identify issues, especially in the earlier stages of the planning process. Such groups can identify and address challenges that individual communities within a municipality are dealing with. Another method is to create individualised Master Plans, commonly used for parks and recreation planning, or for other local issues; the new Rocky View County Agricultural Master Plan is a very timely example. These Master Plans often become bases for comprehensive planning as found in MDPs.



A major pitfall of reductionism, however, is that a municipality can become overly focused on certain issues to the detriment of other issues that may impact the planning and long-term growth of an area. In short, issues-oriented planning can become short-term planning. It can also heighten the politicisation of the planning process, since the chosen issues can have a political motive. The other pitfall is that by concentrating too much on a given issue or issues, a municipality can suffer from a “Messiah Syndrome”, or a belief (in this context) that a municipality will grow by simply focussing on select issues.

Another challenge of an issues-oriented approach is that it can induce rigid definitions of success to planning systems. For example, one might focus solely on population growth as a success indicator, or on a specific metric created to deal with an issue-based planning policy. Instead, success can be reframed from specific issues regarding population, physical growth or the economy, to a much broader, or comprehensive, approach that considers the impacts of growth on quality of life, society and the environment. Sustainability planning, as an example of this approach, has become very common in MDPs, for example in the proposed Vegreville MDP. This MDP provides for the melding into the Plan the Town’s original Integrated Community Sustainability Plan, and the establishment of a general set of measurable indicators for sustainability, design, and development standards.

The comprehensive approach emphasizes values and principles more clearly than the reductionist and liberalisation approaches. In Alberta, the MDP has a special role to play when implementing this approach to growth management, even if a municipality is not growing. The MDP is often based on a set of principles and issues that actors decide need to be addressed together to plan a municipality for the long-term. However, one of the challenges of a comprehensive, broad approach is that success can be subjective and can be difficult to measure, because of ambiguities and vagueness, and as a result can become politicised in an unhealthy manner.

The question becomes how to manage growth in ways that move a community beyond wanting simple physical and/or economic growth, and minimise negative long-term impacts when growth is lacking.

CONCLUSION

As planners, we are trained to manage growth to achieve long term benefits. The question becomes how to manage growth in ways that move a community beyond wanting simple physical and/or economic growth, and minimise negative long-term impacts when growth is lacking. The Alberta planner in this situation will find that different approaches to growth management will be more or less appropriate for the particular planning challenges he or she faces. For shrinking communities it is important to adopt strategies which broaden and reconsider the discourse of planning. ■

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Jesse Auspitz is a Municipal Planner with the Mackenzie Municipal Services Agency in Berwyn, Alberta. Jesse specialises in working with rural municipalities, towns, and villages. He holds a Master of Planning from Ryerson University and is a Candidate Member of APPI.

Imai Welch is a planner who has worked with the Towns of Whitecourt and Strathmore and Leduc County. Imai has worked heavily in development, current, and land use planning. He holds a geography degree from the University of Lethbridge and is a Candidate Member of APPI.

About the Authors



New Planning Programs in Alberta: Nurturing Our Future

SOURCE: iStockphoto

Growing the planning Academy is an ongoing endeavor in Alberta. In 2011 the University of Alberta launched a new undergraduate planning program, and the University of Calgary re-launched its graduate degree in planning. These professional planning programs are each unique, and nurture various skills and competencies for the planning field. Dr. Robert J. Summers, the Acting Director of the planning program from the University of Alberta, and Dr. Nancy Pollock-Ellwand, the Dean of the Faculty of Environmental Design from the University of Calgary, have shared their insights on what these academic programs offer the planning profession.

What is the guiding vision and long-term plan for your recently launched planning program?

Summers We did a lot of research before we established the program. We interviewed other people who had gone to other schools and universities and we did some tracking of where students come from and what they did with their undergraduate degree. What we discovered is that a lot of programs have very narrow and very specific definitions of planning, like environmental planning or regional planning, that define themselves as one of the areas in planning. We found that a lot of graduates go to other fields than to the designated definition of the program. A lot of graduates, for example, from environmental planning programs, were doing transportation planning, social planning or other forms of land use planning. It is important

for students to get a broad education in planning. It is difficult to predict where students will end up. We have developed BA and BSc programs that share common core planning knowledge. We offer students an in-depth introduction to the core element of planning. It includes planning law, theories and ethics in planning, community engagement approaches, history of cities, transportation and environmental planning. We introduce to students a spread of approaches and practices in planning. Students won't get in-depth expertise on any one area of planning, but rather will be a graduate out of the undergraduate program with a spread of base level knowledge across planning. The expectation is that for those who want to go on and specialize will do a Master's, and those who enter the field will learn more about specific areas in the field.

Pollock-Ellwand The plan was to re-launch the planning degree that we offered for over 35 years in our faculty. We were successful in doing that after a two-year hiatus, and brought in a new class of almost 40 students in the fall of 2011 into the Master of Environmental Design (Planning) degree. More recently, we were able to receive provincial approval to change the name of the planning degree to the Master of Planning. We are very happy about that because it adds more clarity and legibility as well as an enhanced profile to the program. This new degree is conceived as a two-year course-based graduate degree, which in the province at this point is a unique offering. An accreditation visit is fast approaching in the new year, conducted by the accrediting bodies with our first graduating class in the spring. We are very confident that all will go well because we have kept very close to both the provincial and national bodies as we developed and are now delivering the new curriculum. This curriculum was conceived with the competencies that have been declared for a skilled professional planner practicing both in Alberta and in Canada. We are also very conscious that this planning degree must be one that connects design to planning — playing to our strengths in both those areas. Planners around the world would agree that our practitioners must possess an understanding of the nexus of planning and design. This is based on the observation that the policy that a planner may develop will often have profound influence on both the built and natural environment. So we are working very hard in the Faculty of Environmental Design at the University of Calgary to ensure our students not only have the competencies, skills and knowledge that are required as a planner, but also have the necessary familiarity with design that will create a well-rounded practitioner.

How does this new program work?

Summers The undergraduate degree in Planning involves four years of full time study. The Planning program offers a Bachelor of Arts (BA) Major in Planning and a Bachelor of Science (BSc) Specialization in Planning. At some point in the future, these might merge into a Bachelor of Planning. The BSc is a more specialized program that focuses primarily on environmental planning. The students in the BSc will do core courses with

the Arts students and do additional courses related to the environment, GIS and planning. There are optional courses related to subjects in biology, environmental sciences and other areas to build their scientific knowledge in planning. The BA is a broader program. It includes more general introductions to other areas of planning. Students will do a Major in Planning and have the option to do a minor in other programs. They will focus on the core of planning with a strong introduction. If students are interested in economic development issues, they can do a Planning major and minor in Economics. If students are interested in social housing and developments, they can do a Planning Major and Minor in Sociology. The program offers flexibility for students to choose across campus for planning. There are numerous opportunities for students to minor in different fields with world leading experts. Students can tailor the program according to their interests. Students are also offered an option to take a one year internship after the third year of the program.

"There are numerous opportunities for students to minor in different fields with world leading experts."



Dr. Robert J. Summers
University of Alberta

Pollock-Ellwand The great thing about our students is that they come from a broad background with four-year undergraduate degrees across a broad breadth of disciplines. They all bring this diversity to the classroom and some also have extensive work and life experiences. This creates a vibrant group of students who match the diversity of what the field of planning can be — everything from environmental and physical planning through to social and economic concerns. The Master of Planning degree (MPlan) is a two-year, course-based graduate planning program. There are three streams based on the various scales of practice and specialization that a planner will encounter, from regional landscape planning through community development to more site-specific urban design. Our students have the option to select the stream

What are the admissions profiles?

Summers Our students are coming from across Canada and some from outside of Canada. They represent different interests in planning. There is certainly no lack of demand in our Planning program. We have got a lot of students contacting us this year regarding the program who have expressed their interest to study planning.

Pollock-Ellwand It is wonderful to have students coming from a variety of background and different locations from Canada and the world. It enriches the learning experience for everyone. Students who are admitted to this program are required to have a four-year undergraduate degree. Some students already have a Master degree. Our students come from fields as diverse as biology, geography, history, architecture, and medical and biological sciences. This diversity of backgrounds is a great strength for our planning student cohort because it provides a broad perspective as we approach a broad profession from physical to social planning.

"Our students come from fields as diverse as biology, geography, history, architecture, and medical and biological sciences."

How will this new academic program contribute to the planning profession in Alberta?

they would like to specialize in within the two-year period. All students are also obliged to take an Advanced Professional Planning Project to complete the degree requirement. Being at a school with architects and environmental designers, the program is committed to an interdisciplinary approach, and makes for a rich learning environment for our students.

Summers We have spent a lot of time talking with employers across Alberta and held hundreds of conversations with them. What we have heard is a demand for larger Planning programs in Alberta. We tend to act as a training program for planners across Canada and from other countries. Alberta, with the growing and strong economy, tends to attract planners from elsewhere. People tend to work here for two or three years for experience and return home. There is a challenge in this turnover. We have a lot of people who are not familiar with the local geography and not familiar with the region they are working in. It will take two or three years to get used to the culture of working in Alberta and to be a planner. Our hope is to have students from Alberta and from the world to graduate in Alberta and stay in Alberta. Although students may come from elsewhere, they have the opportunities to live in Alberta for four years or to work through our internship program. Our goal is to generate a high quality group of planners who have good knowledge and skill sets to begin their planning career in Alberta.



Dr. Nancy Pollock-Ellwand
University of Calgary



SOURCE: iStockphoto

Pollock-Ellwand Every jurisdiction in the world has particular planning-related issues. We are located in Calgary, the fastest growing metropolitan area in Canada now. As a result we have the perspective and the opportunity to be addressing more urban centric issues across the full scale from municipal and regional plans to site-specific urban design. In addition, we have an equally important mandate, being located in Alberta, with the broader regional environmental issues that are unique to this province or shared with the rest of the globe. In response to that scale of planning our program offers such course options as resource management and regional landscape planning. We believe this new University of Calgary planning program is well suited to address different scales of planning, both regional and urban, which is the reality in Alberta.

How is this new program different from other planning programs?

Summers Like many other programs across Canada, we will be training students and educating them in the planning tradition. They will gain the core and shared planning knowledge across Canada. In terms of difference, students are engaged to take optional courses while gaining the core knowledge of planning. We also bring broader education in planning while some schools tend to specialize in one area. One of the major differences is our one year internship approach when some schools build the co-op stream as a study term. We learned from other programs within the campus. Our students want to spend a longer period of time with one employer as they get more in-depth knowledge and skill sets.

Pollock-Ellwand Within our province, we are delivering the only graduate degree in planning. A first professional graduate level degree is seen more commonly these days not only across Canada but the world. However, it is something the faculty of the Environmental Design has been involved with for over forty years. A graduate degree is different from undergraduate studies in terms of the ages of students and their diverse backgrounds and life experiences. We educate our students to become well-rounded professionals with a broad trajectory that can take them into different aspects of practice — from strategic thinking to day-to-day municipal approvals and policy development. The Master of Planning is therefore not only an important primer to the fullest breadth of professional planning practice but also equipping the graduates to bring on new innovations to the planning field. ■

Dr. Nancy Pollock-Ellwand, the Dean of the Faculty of Environmental Design from the University of Calgary, was appointed in January 2010. She has been the Head and Chair of the School of Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Urban Design, and Professor of Landscape Architecture University of Adelaide, Australia since 2006. She received her Master of Architecture from the University of Manitoba and her PhD (Planning) from the University of Waterloo. Her interest is landscape conservation at the international level.

Dr. Robert J. Summers, the Acting Director of the Planning Program from the University of Alberta, was appointed in November 2011. With an initial interest in water supply in rural areas, he gained his PhD associated with planning from the University of Guelph. He has initiated numerous research projects related to urban planning after joining the University of Alberta. His research area focus is on urban issues, including the role of retail planning, neighborhood vibrancy and sustainable community development.

Christy Fong RPP, MCIP works as a Planner for the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo and is a member of the Journal Committee. She can be reached at christy.fong@woodbuffalo.ab.ca

About the Participants

About the Author

2012 APPI Journal Member Survey Results

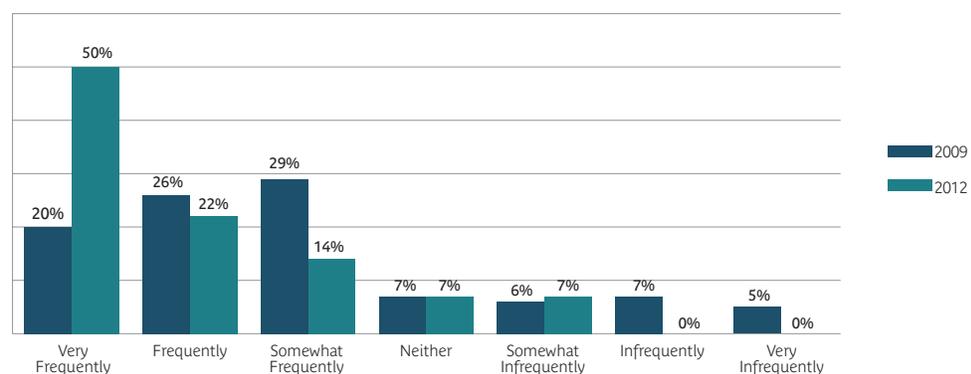
With the tenth issue on the horizon, the Journal Committee decided it was time to survey the APPI membership on the Journal. An online survey was conducted during October and November, 2012 using Survey Monkey. The survey was promoted through APPI newsletters and during the fall conference. The Committee was interested in hearing how satisfied members are with the Journal's quality and content as well as what ideas members had for future issues and for increasing submissions and content diversity. The survey questions built on the data captured through the 2009 APPI Member Survey (of which Journal-related questions were only one component) so the Committee could monitor trends over time. In total, there were 88 respondents and the committee would like to thank them for their participation.

Highlights

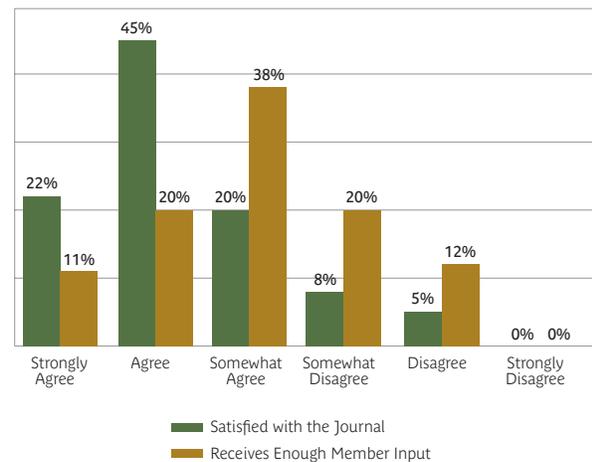
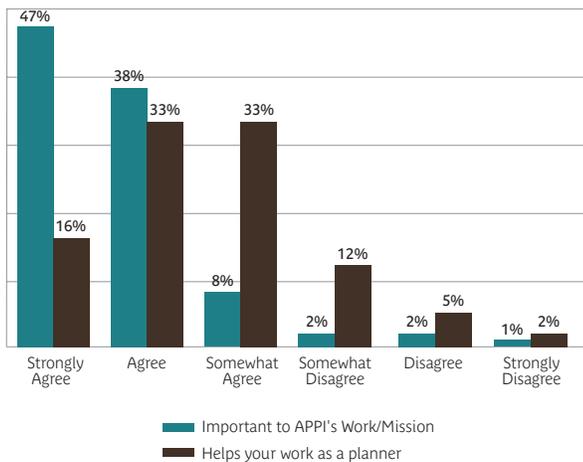
JOURNAL CONTENT & FORMAT

- Respondents generally consider the Journal important to APPI's work and mission. Over 86% 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' with this principle.
- Overall respondents were relatively satisfied with the Journal however some felt it could do more to help their work as a planner than it currently does.
- Room for improvement also was identified: one-third of respondents felt the Journal does not receive enough member input while another 40% only somewhat agreed that the Journal was receiving enough.
- The frequency with which respondents are reading Journal issues has increased since 2009. In 2012, 72% reported reading it "Very frequently/every issue" or "Frequently/almost every issue" compared with 45% in 2009.
- Over half of respondents want the Journal to be mailed to them in hard-copy format. One quarter would prefer to receive it by e-mail.
- The most commonly cited areas that respondents said they were passionate about were: city planning, urban design, current-planning, long-range planning, and development planning.

Frequency Respondents Read the Journal



Value of and Satisfaction with the Journal



SUBMITTING ARTICLES

- Approximately one-third of respondents were very likely or likely to submit an article within the next two years. This is comparable to the 2009 results.
- 'I typically don't have time' was the most comment reason respondents cited for not submitting an article. This was followed by 'I wouldn't have anything to write about' and 'submitting an article does not interest me'.
- While the Journal already has detailed submission guidelines, respondents identified the need for these to help increase submissions.
- Other ideas respondents had to increase submissions include publishing theme issues and/or topic lists, clear publication timelines, and working with potential authors to refine an article concept prior to submission.

IDEAS FOR FUTURE PUBLICATIONS

- Respondents had a range of ideas for increasing committee generated content. These included: interviews, including with planners at different stages of their careers; reviews of books and other types of media; reading lists; profiles of different areas of planning; updates from different regions; case studies/best practices; and incorporating a dialogue element (e.g. letters to editor, online forum).

- Other ideas respondents had to improve the Journal included: more geographic diversity; greater range of topics and perspectives; articles from related professional fields (e.g. law, engineering); practitioner and academic articles; and occasionally longer articles that cover a topic in depth.

Final Thoughts

Over the months ahead, the Committee will be working to incorporate this feedback into its processes. A major focus will be working to improve outreach activities to increase submissions and improve the diversity and quality of Journal content. The committee will also work to raise awareness about guidelines and submission procedures. ■

For more information on the survey results, submitting an article, or joining the Committee contact appi.journal@gmail.com.

2012 APPI Planning Awards

Each year the Alberta Professional Planners Institute recognizes exemplary planning within the planning profession. Awards acknowledge meritorious plans and projects, undertaken in whole or in part by members of the Institute, that significantly contribute to the livability of communities in Alberta, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. The following awards were presented at the APPI Annual Conference held in conjunction with the CIP annual conference in Banff in October 2012.



Award of Planning Excellence

1 **COMPREHENSIVE AND POLICY PLAN** **Wood Buffalo's MDP**

Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo (see profile included on page 29)

Amanda Haitas RPP, MCIP



Award of Planning Merit

2 **COMPREHENSIVE AND POLICY PLAN** **Agriculture Master Plan**

Rocky View County (see profile included on page 31)

Tim Dietzler, Rick Michalenko RPP, MCIP



3 **EDUCATION OR SPECIAL STUDY** **Sustainable Plan-it**

Strathcona County (see profile included on page 33)

Jamie Sarasin, Sarah Schiff RPP, MCIP



4 **COMPREHENSIVE AND POLICY PLAN** **Cultural Landscape Strategic Plan**

The City of Calgary Parks (see project profile in our next issue)

Michelle Reid RPP, MCIP



5 **SPECIAL STUDY** **Comprehensive Regional Infrastructure Sustainability Plan for the Athabasca Oil Sands Area**

Oil Sands Sustainable Development Secretariat, planningAlliance (see project profile in our next issue)

Janelle Wyman Former Project Coordinator (now with ATCO Electric)

Wayne Jackson RPP, MCIP, Oil Sands Secretariat

Tom Coyle RPP, MCIP, planningAlliance

COMPREHENSIVE AND POLICY PLAN CATEGORY

Municipal Development Plan

Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo

At the beginning of 2011, the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo (the Municipality) set out to complete the most exciting and ambitious planning project in the history of the Corporation. The result was a Municipal Development Plan (MDP) with a compelling and forward-thinking vision, founded on the principles of sustainability, and capable of providing direction for regional, urban, and rural growth. This Plan needed to build on previous municipal work, while incorporating significant provincial planning initiatives. It needed to reflect the desires of a diverse population, active local agencies and businesses, and deeply rooted Aboriginal groups. It needed to be an easy-to-use document that could be accessible by all of these groups. And it needed to account for rapid growth in the last decade while planning for even more rapid growth in the next two decades.

But that was not all. This ambitious project would be driven internally by young, energetic municipal planning staff. Over 100 people from the Corporation were involved, mobilizing and empowering staff to channel their ideas and enthusiasm into a plan for a region they truly care about. The Plan would be completed in record time and under budget, taking less than a year from initiation to Council approval.

Located in northern Alberta, the municipality covers over 63,000 square kilometres and is larger than the Province of Nova Scotia. Of the region's 104,338 residents (Municipal Census, 2010), 75 percent live in the city of Fort McMurray, with the remaining population living in rural communities and oil sands work camps.

In the midst of the world's third largest oil reserve, the municipality has been coping with rapid population growth that outstripped the capacity to accommodate or effectively plan for the future. The combination of population growth (101 percent growth since 2000 and an average age of 32), geographic area, economic prosperity (average household income is \$190,000 – twice the national average), and cultural diversity (home to over 100 nationalities) affords Wood Buffalo an unparalleled

context to imagine the future and pursue a bold vision of transformation.

The heart of the municipal planning process was the public engagement strategy. The strategy, branded as *What's the Big Idea Wood Buffalo?*, was immensely successful and resulted in over 15,000 interactions; by far the largest campaign to date in the region. Stakeholders were engaged online through various forms of social media where discussions took place around the Question of the Day, online surveys, video postings, blogs, and Facebook and Twitter activity. Residents and stakeholders were also engaged through public meetings, workshops, a speaker series and presentations that were held throughout Alberta. The Big Idea Crew also took to the streets of Fort McMurray daily with iPads to survey residents at popular locations and events. The project team's energy to reach out to residents was enthusiastically met by an equally excited public who wanted to learn more about the Plan and have a say in shaping their community's future.



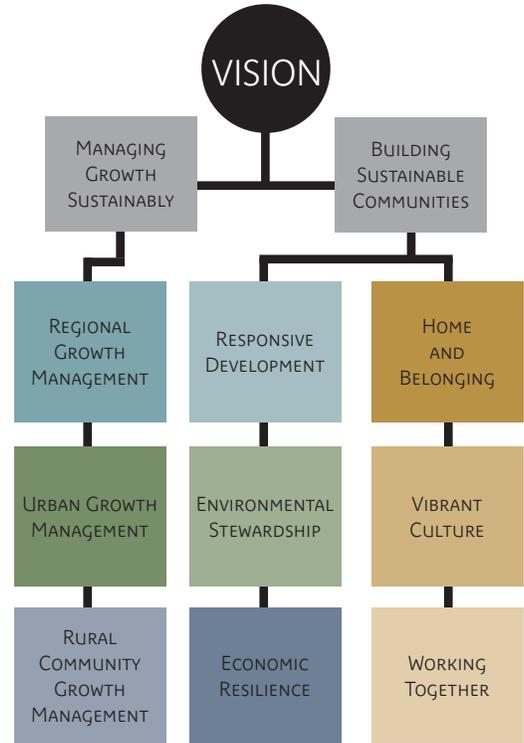
Regional Context

SOURCE: Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo

In pursuit of the municipality's vision of "A Balanced Opportunity for All," the Municipality must work toward a sustainable future, emerging as a global model for living in the North. A commitment to sustainability hinges upon a responsible growth management strategy that addresses regional, rural, and urban needs. Key considerations include making optimum use of existing infrastructure through intensification, concentrating development to promote efficient servicing, minimizing greenfield development, promoting contiguous development, and emphasizing efficient transportation networks.

Ultimately, sustainable communities in Wood Buffalo will come about through responsible development, environmental stewardship, economic resilience, a sense of home and belonging, a vibrant culture, and working together. Key considerations include developing urban and rural areas that are more community and neighbourhood centred, transit and pedestrian oriented, and have access to a greater mix of housing, commercial and retail uses. It also means respecting our natural environment, preserving open space, and offering more recreational amenities.

A successful plan turns vision into actions and results. To achieve this, an ongoing process of implementation has been established that identifies key actions that are linked to responsibilities, timelines, and budgets. The municipality's approach to implementation is a continual process of enabling, initiating, communicating and monitoring. This process will be carried out with a commitment founded on the principles of coordination, accountability, and transparency.

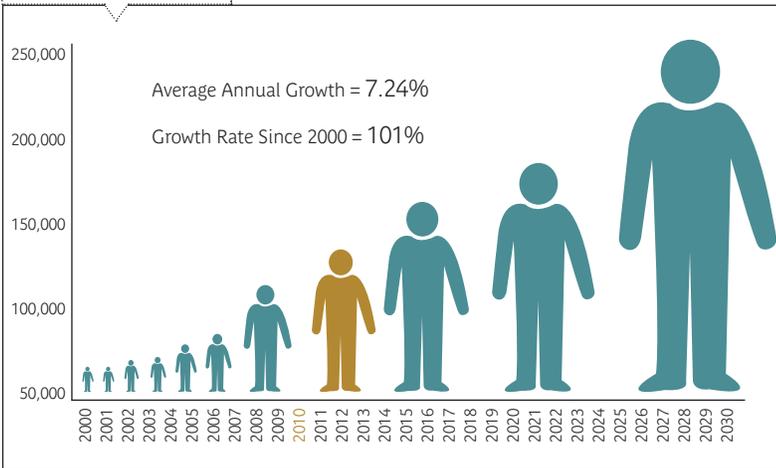


Plan Structure
SOURCE: Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo

Where the MDP identifies the 'what' we want to become, a Municipal Strategic Plan was developed concurrently to map out 'how' to achieve this. The MDP is also integrated with the 2012-2014 Departmental Business Plans and the municipal operating and capital budget to ensure the Municipality's actions and initiatives are synchronized with the Plan's vision. A number of initiatives and actions are already underway, with some of them now complete, including the Zero Waste initiative, Recreation and Culture Plan, Public Art Policy, Social Sustainability Framework, Waterfront Redevelopment Plan, Anzac Area Redevelopment Plan, City Centre Fort McMurray Area Redevelopment Plan and the supporting Land Use Bylaw.

The MDP not only gives the Municipality a foundation for planning and responsible growth management, it provides a framework for innovation, leadership, and change.

SOURCE: Municipal Census 2000 & Municipal Development Plan 2011



COMPREHENSIVE AND POLICY PLAN CATEGORY

Agriculture Master Plan

Rocky View County

Rocky View County includes nearly 1,000,000 acres of land, and abuts the City of Calgary on the west, north, and east sides. It also shares borders with six rural municipalities, two First Nation Reserves, two cities, and five towns. The pressure for growth in this economic centre of western Canada, the diversity of the landscapes, the desire to maintain an agricultural land base and economic presence, and the politically charged and diverse influences in the area create a challenging environment for land use planning. With growth strategies for the County being confirmed, the County embarked on a planning process that focused on the agriculture community and land use planning in rural areas.

The Agriculture Master Plan (AMP) is a strategic, guiding plan for agriculture in the County. The purpose of the AMP is to identify a long-term vision and policy framework for agriculture and land use planning in agricultural areas within Rocky View County. It is intended to help inform future policy development related to support, development, and diversification of the agriculture industry, and it provides direction for land use planning and integration strategies in agricultural areas.

The timing for preparation and adoption of the AMP is extremely opportune as the County is in the process of confirming its strategic growth plans through preparation of a new Municipal Development Plan (MDP). A primary purpose for the AMP is to provide direct input into the vision for this growth from the agricultural and rural perspective (Figure 1).

Seven high level plan goals were confirmed in the early stages of the plan preparation. They represent the wide range of the plan's objectives, and the general focus of support for the agriculture industry; and an emphasis on sustainable land use planning in agricultural and rural areas. The goals are:

1. To recognize and promote the importance of the agriculture industry to Rocky View County.
2. To increase public awareness and understanding for agricultural activities and uses.

3. To increase awareness and facilitate opportunities for the diversification of the agriculture industry in Rocky View County, where possible and viable.
4. To provide a policy framework that will facilitate a sustainable and viable agriculture sector by addressing conflicts and opportunities arising from growth, regional urbanization and competition for agricultural lands.
5. To acknowledge the land as natural capital and establish appropriate land use policies to preserve and enhance this investment.
6. To review County policies and regulations that are prohibitive to the agriculture business and provide recommendations for improvement.
7. To provide a priority based implementation plan for the successive measures required to implement the recommendations of the AMP.

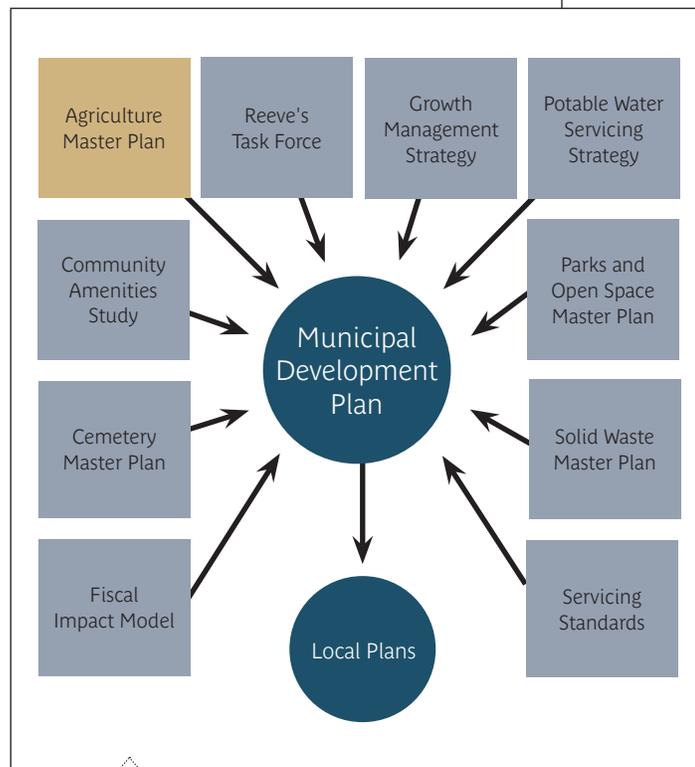


Figure 1
SOURCE: Rocky View County

Thirty-five recommendations were provided in the plan to help meet these objectives. The recommendations provide a clear direction for Council and administration to move forward towards further implementation of the plan.

The AMP includes numerous concepts that demonstrate innovation and importance to the planning profession in Alberta.

The AMP is one of the first examples in Alberta of a municipality aligning county plans and future initiatives to the Provincial Land Use Framework.

The AMP establishes a vision for the County to be a provincial leader in implementation of this important legislation and provides direction for the County to conduct further study in land use management tools including: market based incentives for agricultural land preservation and transfer of development credits.

The AMP identifies that agricultural lands have natural capital value. It defines natural capital, and indicates that the natural capital value of agricultural lands should be recognized with appropriate criteria provided for its utilization, which fairly compensates landowners for this value.

The AMP innovatively defines Smart Growth, from an agricultural perspective. This definition attempts to direct growth that promotes efficient use of the land by preserving working landscapes and the natural environment, minimizing and mitigating conflict areas, and results in new country residential sites that are fiscally responsible for the County. It also provides principles for achieving this smart growth, and conceptual examples were used to help illustrate the design concepts from a subdivision design perspective (Figures 2 and 3).

Commitment from municipal government for a project like the AMP, and its strategic focus on agriculture and food systems, is an important evolution in the planning profession in western Canada. The AMP brings agricultural land use planning to the forefront of planning issues in the County, showcasing the importance of the industry, creating a strategic plan for its advancement, and provides a framework for sustainable land use planning in agricultural areas.



Figure 2 Conceptual Example of Traditional vs Context Sensitive Subdivision Design
SOURCE: Rocky View County



Figure 3 Urban Subdivision Pattern Next to Rural/ Agricultural Lands
SOURCE: Rocky View County

EDUCATION OR SPECIAL STUDY CATEGORY

Sustainable Plan-it

Strathcona County

Sustainable Plan-it is a unique program developed and delivered by Strathcona County staff for grade six students in schools located throughout Strathcona County. The purpose of Sustainable Plan-it is to provide students with an opportunity to learn about the role of planning in building strong, sustainable neighbourhoods. The program takes an innovative approach to educating an important segment of the public on the role of planning in society and the difference neighborhood planning can make to building sustainable communities. While children are typically not included in conversations about planning issues, the Sustainable Plan-it Program recognizes that youth will shape the future of our communities and seeks to engage them on critical issues facing society.

The Sustainable Plan-it Program corresponds with the grade six social studies curriculum unit on local government. The program consists of two half-day workshops facilitated by municipal staff, with optional pre-workshop activities delivered by the teachers. Upon completion of the workshops, students will have worked in small groups to complete their own neighbourhood plan. During this process students participate in a series of activities including drawing their own neighbourhood, brainstorming physical components necessary to create a sustainable neighbourhood and voting for the components that they most value. Working in groups, the students ensure that elements of social, economic and environmental sustainability and Strathcona County's 12 themes of sustainability are incorporated into their neighbourhood plans. Each class produces three neighbourhood plans which are subsequently displayed at the Strathcona County Community Centre and on the municipal website. Students are also officially recognized for their participation with a certificate from the Mayor.

Sustainable Plan-it was developed and piloted in 2009 by a cross-departmental team of staff representing a variety of departments including Planning & Development Services, Family & Community Services and Corporate Planning & Intergovernmental Affairs. In this sense, Sustainable Plan-it is a great example of cooperation across traditional municipal administrative boundaries and has provided staff an opportunity to learn about planning, sustainability and group facilitation. From the initial pilot of one school, the program has grown each year to be offered to more schools representing both the public and Catholic school boards, as well as rural and urban schools. The program helps students think critically about neighbourhoods, helps the municipality reflect on how residents think about where they live, and helps build understanding of planning within municipal administration outside of the profession.



SOURCE: Strathcona County

2012 CIP Fellow Recognition

2012 Inductees to the College of Fellows

Election as a Fellow of the Canadian Institute of Planners is the highest award the Institute can give to a planner. It is given only to those Members who exhibit the highest professional attainment and exhibit a wide breadth of experience. Such professional attainment and experience must be significant within the Canadian or international planning context of planning.

APPI Council would like to specifically recognize and congratulate APPI Member Armin Preiksaitis RPP, FCIP.

Armin Preiksaitis is founder and president of ParioPlan, an Edmonton-based consulting firm he established in 1996. Armin's planning career spans almost 40 years and combines experience as a municipal planner and manager, president of a downtown development corporation and planning consultant. He is a strong advocate of urban redevelopment that emphasizes livability, compactness and quality urban design.

Shortly after graduating from the University of Waterloo in 1973, Armin joined the City of Edmonton. In his roles as Planner and Manager, he oversaw innovative projects that included the City's first TOD planning study and Downtown Plan. Before starting his consulting practice, Armin acquired expertise in public-private partnerships to catalyze new downtown development in his 10 years as President of the Edmonton Downtown Development Corporation.

Armin's planning expertise covers a broad spectrum that includes statutory plans, zoning bylaws, housing studies, urban design plans, rezoning applications, economic development plans and community consultation. He has prepared many award-winning redevelopment plans for municipalities throughout Alberta and Saskatchewan and has a large portfolio of private sector redevelopment projects. Armin has consulted on most of Edmonton's major infill rezoning projects in the last decade. Throughout his career Armin has hired and mentored dozens of young planners, many of whom have gone on to hold prominent positions in the public and private sectors.



Armin Preiksaitis

We congratulate all seven new members inducted into the College of Fellows:

- **Larry Bourne** RPP, FCIP (Ontario)
- **David Brown** FCIP, OUQ (Quebec)
- **Marni Cappe** RPP, FCIP (Ontario)
- **John Gladki** RPP, FCIP (Ontario)
- **Walter Jamieson** FCIP (International)
- **Earl Levin** FCIP (Manitoba)
- **Armin Preiksaitis** RPP, FCIP (Alberta)

Fellow Talk

I am very pleased to have the honour of starting what I hope will be a relevant and interesting aspect of the APPI Planning Journal.

In this first article, I believe it is important to introduce you to the Alberta Fellows and to explain what the College of Fellows is. From then on, we can provide you with more substantial articles.

By my count, there have been 111 Planners elected to the College of Fellows. Of that number, 13 have been from Alberta/NWT or are associated strongly with our Affiliate. Most of the 13 are active members of APPI and CIP. In alphabetical order they are: Bob Caldwell, Denis Cole, Bruce Duncan, Dr. Walter Jamieson, Richard Parker, Armin Preiksaitis, Bill Shaw, Dr. Peter Smith, Donald Stastny, and John Steil. While Walter, Don and John live away from Alberta, I think their connection is strong enough we can arguably “claim” them. The three other Fellows, Noel Dant, Norman Giffen and Dusan Makale are deceased.

Armin Preiksaitis and Dr. Walter Jamieson were just elected to the College in 2012 and inducted at the Banff Conference. For the curious, the full list of Fellows with the year of their election is on the CIP website.

So, what is the College of Fellows? Well, it is the group of Members of CIP that have been nominated by a Sponsor and a group of their peers, recommended by the Fellows Selection Committee and given that honour by the National Council. Nominees are not to be informed of their nomination until the entire process is complete and National Council has ratified their selection. There are no quotas for election to the College; all nominees that, in the opinion of the Selection Committee, meet the criteria are recommended for election. However, not all nominations succeed in meeting the criteria.

The CIP website summary of the criteria for election is: “The College of Fellows is a special status for Members (MCIP) developed by CIP that recognizes excellence, identifies prominent role models, promotes advances in planning practice, and draws leaders to the forefront of planning in Canada.

Election as a Fellow of the Canadian Institute of Planners is the highest award the Institute can give to a planner. It is given only to those Members who exhibit the highest professional attainment and exhibit a wide breadth of experience. Such professional attainment and experience must be significant within the Canadian or international planning context of planning.”

Members of the College use the appellation FCIP. Fellow used to be a class of membership; it is now a honorary designation used by members who have been elected to the College of Fellows.

The College itself meets infrequently; often only at the annual conference of CIP. It’s Chairman and its committees meet all year, however, often by electronic means, not unlike most of the CIP National committees. The current Chairman is Bob Lehman FCIP.

In past times, the College was not as active as today; with the election of more members and more active members in recent times that has changed. Our participation as presenters of Sessions at the Annual Conference is but one demonstration of our activity. Our role individually and as a group is mentoring Planners, but our Chairman is an active member of National Council and we are often asked by Council to undertake reviews, research and report on issues and other duties. We also sponsor a Student Travel Scholarship Fund.

Last year and this, I have the honour of being the Alberta representative on the Fellows Selection Committee, another of our busy committees. As such, I encourage members who want to nominate prospective Fellows to get their nominations in order for submission.



Bob Caldwell

The APPI Planning Journal is proud to open its pages to Alberta’s CIP Fellows by starting the Fellow Talk section in this issue. We hope that the pieces, submitted by the Fellows on a rotating basis, will spark conversations and debate amongst APPI members and friends on issues important to Alberta planning. The opinions featured in this section do not necessarily represent the views of APPI Council or Administration, or of the APPI Planning Journal Committee.

Bob Caldwell is a Fellow of CIP. He is currently the Principal of Caldwell Planning, and was elected to the College of Fellows in 2008.

About the Author

sustainability planning & design | rural planning
urban revitalization | urban design | real estate development



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