

Official Community Plan

Bylaw No. 2026-10

RM of Mervin No. 499, Saskatchewan



Prepared By:



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BYLAW NO. 2026-10

A Bylaw of the Rural Municipality of Mervin No. 499 to adopt an Official Community Plan. The Council of the Rural Municipality of Mervin No. 499, in the Province of Saskatchewan, in an open meeting assembled enacts as follows:

- 1) Pursuant to Section 29(1) of *The Planning and Development Act, 2007* the Council of the Rural Municipality of Mervin No. 499 hereby adopts the RM of Mervin No. 499 Official Community Plan, identified as Schedule "A" to this Bylaw.
- 2) The Reeve and Administrator of the Rural Municipality of Mervin No. 499 are hereby authorized to sign and seal Schedule "A" which is attached to and forms part of this Bylaw.
- 3) That Bylaw No. 94-3 known as the "Basic Planning Statement", and all amendments thereto, are hereby repealed.
- 4) This Bylaw shall come into force on the date of final approval by the Minister of Government Relations.

Read a first time the _____ day of _____, _____

Read a second time the _____ day of _____, _____

Read a third time the _____ day of _____, _____

Adoption of Bylaw this _____ day of _____, _____

RM Reeve

Certified a True Copy of the Bylaw adopted by
Resolution of Council On the _____ day of
_____, of the year _____.

RM Administrator

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The RM of Mervin No. 499 is very appreciative for all the RM ratepayers, businesses, agencies, and organizations for their insight and contributions which formed the basis of the Official Community Plan. The information gathered throughout all the public engagement opportunities has provided valuable information which has inspired and influenced the visions and policies outlined in the Official Community Plan.

The RM of Mervin No. 499 would like to acknowledge it is situated on Treaty 6 lands and the traditional territory of the Cree and Saulteaux, Blackfoot, Métis, Dene, and Nakota Sioux.

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Organization of the RM of Mervin's Official Community Plan

The following is intended for information only and does not form part of the RM's Official Community Plan.

The Official Community Plan (OCP) establishes the vision for the RM of Mervin No. 499 with objectives and policies to guide the RM's growth and development now and into the future. This document provides Council with a means of evaluating development proposals and formulating decisions.

This Plan is organized into six (6) sections:

Section 1.0 contains basic information on the purpose of this OCP, legislative authority, and the Plan structure.

Section 2.0 provides information regarding the RM of Mervin No. 499 in its existing form and the local planning context.

Section 3.0 presents the findings from the public engagement opportunities and lists the community priorities generated from the findings.

Section 4.0 contains the community vision statement along with key principles. Furthermore, this section provides the objectives and policies for future growth.

Section 5.0 contains specific land use policies for general development and specific land use types such as residential, recreational, agricultural, commercial, industrial, etc.

Section 6.0 discusses the various planning tools available to use for the implementation of this OCP.

What Happens if You Can't Meet the Requirements in the Official Community Plan?

Sometimes it is not possible to meet all the requirements in the Official Community Plan and therefore, a permit or approval cannot be issued. What would be the next steps? Firstly, you could review and revise your development plans in order to meet all the requirements in the Official Community Plan. The Official Community Plan is a living document. If there is no possibility of revising the development plan, then you should discuss with the Municipality the other options that may be available such as an application to amend the Official Community Plan or Future Land Use Map.

1ST READING

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1. Introduction

1.1. Area Covered by the Plan

This Official Community Plan (hereinafter referred to as the “OCP” or the “Plan”) applies to the Rural Municipality of Mervin No. 499 (hereinafter referred to as the “RM”), encompassing all land within RM boundaries. The Plan serves as a guiding document for land use planning through policies that will enable development to occur strategically in a manner that is in line with the vision, goals, and objectives as outlined in this Plan.

1.2. Enabling Legislation

The Planning and Development Act, 2007 (PDA), along with its past and future amendments, provides the legislative framework for Saskatchewan municipalities to prepare, and adopt an Official Community Plan. An OCP is a comprehensive policy framework consisting of goals, aspirations for orderly growth, and development of all lands within the municipality, including hamlets. This policy framework outlines how the municipality will exercise its power to regulate items such as transportation, utilities, land use, and recreation. Section 32 of the PDA requires that an OCP contain current statements of policy with respect to:

- Sustainable current and future land use and development in the municipality;
- Current and future economic development;
- The general provision of public works;
- The management of lands that are subject to natural hazards, including flooding, slumping, and slope instability;
- The management of environmentally sensitive lands;
- Source water protection;
- The means of implementing the Official Community Plan;
- The co-ordination of land use, future growth patterns and public works with adjacent municipalities;
- Inter-municipal development agreements and implementation of such agreements;
- The provisions of municipal reserve for school purposes; and
- The management of lands that are in proximity to existing or proposed railway operations.

In addition, Section 8 of the PDA provides that every OCP must be consistent with *The Statements of Provincial Interest Regulations* (SPI) which address the following:

- Agriculture and Value-Added Agribusiness;

- Biodiversity and Natural Ecosystems;
- First Nations and Métis Engagement;
- Inter-Municipal Cooperation;
- Mineral Resource Exploration and Development;
- Public Safety;
- Public Works;
- Recreation and Tourism;
- Residential Development;
- Sand and Gravel;
- Shore Lands and Water Bodies;
- Source Water Protection;
- Transportation;
- Community Health and Well-being; and,
- Economic Growth.

1.3. Purpose of the Official Community Plan

The OCP outlines the community's vision for the future. It guides decisions relating to planning and development in the RM. It provides a framework for the physical, environmental, economic, social, and cultural development of the RM through the vision statement and subsequent policies, reflecting the vision and strategy. It is intended to guide the RM for a period of about twenty years; however, should be updated every 5 years to remain relevant.

This OCP will provide goals, objectives, and policies to help guide the use of land and future development. Goals are general statements of desired outcomes of the community are long term, and therefore usually have no completion date. Objectives have an achievable outcome that will help the RM progress towards the goal. Policies create a course of action to achieve the objective and ultimately fulfill the goal. All development shall conform to the goals, objectives, and policies contained within this Bylaw. The OCP is implemented through the regulations in the Zoning Bylaw.

Site specific details and requirements, such as development standards, permitted and discretionary uses in certain areas, will be provided in the RM's primary implementation tool, the Zoning Bylaw (ZB). The ZB will support and implement the policies and intent of this OCP. Another important aspect of this Plan is the RM Future Land Use Map (Appendix A), which establishes land uses for the entire RM and forms part of this OCP. This map serves as a high-level overview of the spatial relationships between a wide variety of future land uses and activities.

1.4. Plan Structure

The OCP is divided into the following six (6) sections:

1. INTRODUCTION

Contains basic information on the purpose of this OCP, legislative authority, and the Plan structure.

2. PLAN CONTEXT

Provides information regarding the RM in its existing form and the local planning context.

3. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

Presents the findings from the public engagement opportunities and lists the community priorities generated from the findings.

4. VISION, KEY PRINCIPLES & GROWTH

Contains the community vision statement along with key principles. In addition, this section provides the objectives, and policies for future growth.

5. LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

Contains specific land use policies for general development and specific land use types such as residential, commercial, recreational, agricultural, industrial, etc.

6. PLANNING TOOLS & STRATEGIES

Discusses the various planning tools available to use for the implementation of this OCP.

REFERENCE MAPS

A series of reference maps attached in Appendix A provides supplementary information. These maps may be updated periodically following the carrying out of a public consultation process to consider the proposed alterations. Council must approve of any changes to the maps, and all changes and updates are subject to approval by the Ministry of Government Relations.

Maps are included to help readers navigate the physical spaces indicated in this plan. All Reference Maps are approximate and are subject to change. Reference maps are conceptual only and should not be used to make site specific decisions.

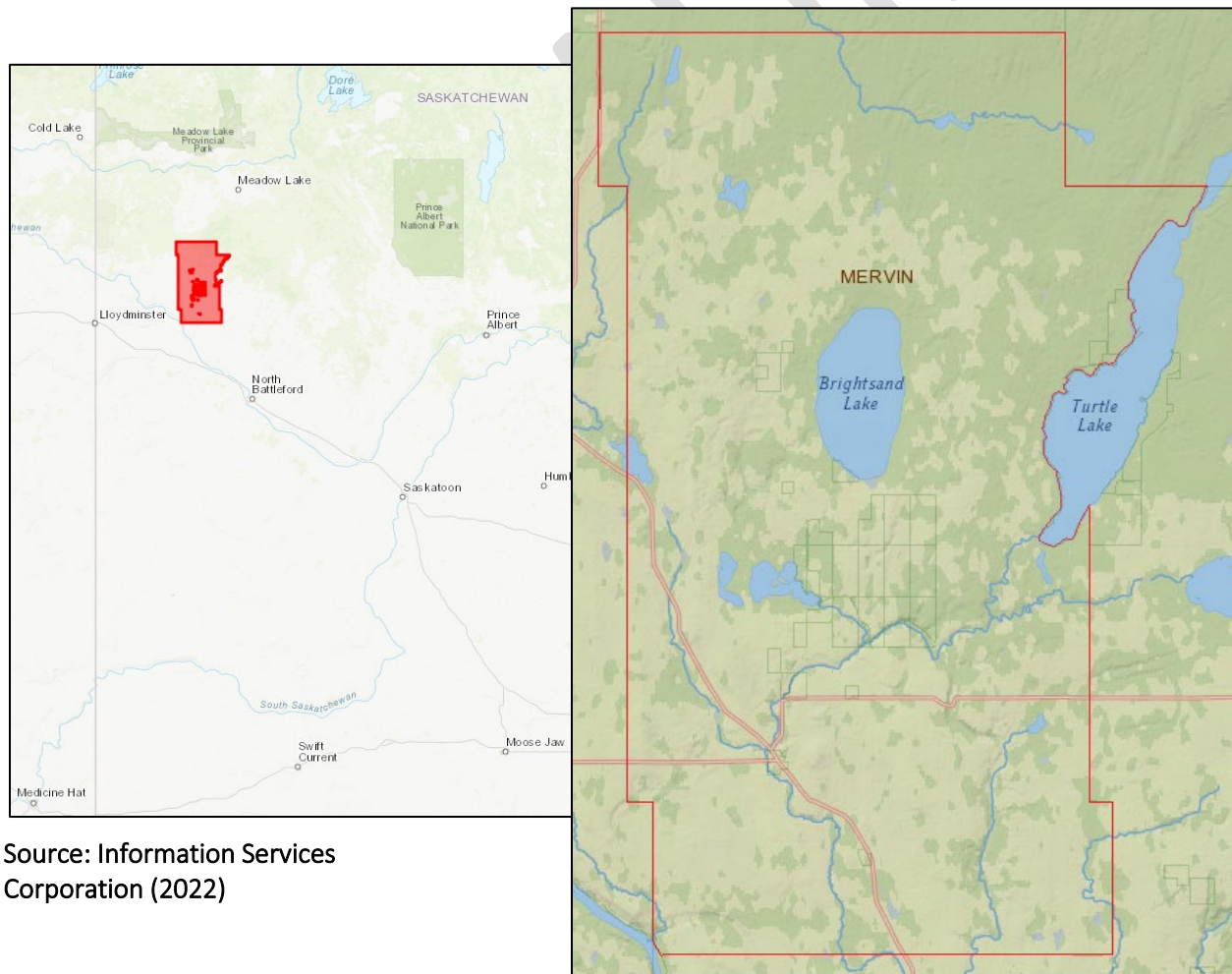
2. RM of Mervin Today

This section provides a summary of the entire community and our various resources. The location, natural environment, built environment, population, infrastructure, current land uses, and regional planning context function as a baseline for the OCP. Future land use requirements are derived from this data, along with policies that support responsible, sustainable growth, and development within the RM, but also to attract businesses to enhance the economic sector.

2.1. Location and Regional Context

The RM is located in northwest Saskatchewan and was incorporated in 1913. In 1990, the RM joined the RM of Greenfield No. 529 (originally incorporated as the RM of Brightsand No. 529) making it the 27th largest RM in the province. The RM is approximately 90 kilometres east of the City of Lloydminster and 86 kilometres northwest of the City of North Battleford. The RM is situated on Treaty 6 lands and the traditional territory of the Cree and Saulteaux, Blackfoot, Métis, Dene, and Nakota Sioux.

Figure 1: RM of Mervin No. 499



Source: Information Services Corporation (2022)

The RM municipal boundary surrounds the Town of Turtleford, Village of Mervin, Resort Village of Kivimaa-Moonlight Bay, Thunderchild First Nation, and Brightsand Lake Regional Park. Within the RM's boundaries are twelve organized hamlets and six unorganized hamlets. The RM shares borders with the RM of Turtle River No. 469, the RM of Eldon No. 471, the RM of Parkdale No. 498, the RM of Frenchman Butte No. 501, the RM of Loon Lake No. 561, the RM of Meadow Lake No. 588, and the Resort Village of Turtle View.

2.1.1. Historical Context

The RM of Mervin No. 499 boasts a rich history rooted in the pioneering spirit of the early settlers who shaped the region. Established as a municipality in the early 20th century, the RM is situated in Treaty 6 territory, with a history that stretches far beyond European settlement. For thousands of years, the area was home to Indigenous communities whose traditions, culture, and connection to the land remain a vital part of its identity.

With the arrival of settlers, the RM became an essential hub for agriculture, and trade, serving the growing needs of homesteaders in the region. Railroads played a key role in connecting the municipality to larger markets, while the fertile soils and abundant natural resources fostered a thriving agricultural economy.

Over time, the RM has evolved to support a diverse community while maintaining its rural charm and agricultural roots. Its history is a testament to the resilience and dedication of its people, who have contributed to its growth and development, making the RM of Mervin No. 499 a vibrant and welcoming place to call home, visit, conduct business, or enjoy the outdoors.

2.2. Natural Environment

The RM is characterized by a diverse and picturesque natural environment spanning prairie, parkland and boreal landscapes. This setting includes open agricultural fields, rolling hills, mixed woodlands, lakes, wetlands and small streams, all of which contribute to the municipality's scenic and ecological value.

The RM is home to several prominent lakes, including Turtle Lake and Brightsand Lake, which are important for recreation, tourism, wildlife habitat and the identity of surrounding communities. Turtle Lake is located within the Mid-Boreal Upland Ecoregion and relies primarily on local precipitation, runoff and groundwater inputs. As a result, the lake and its watershed are particularly sensitive to drought, changing climatic conditions and land-use activities that affect drainage and runoff.

The 2025 Turtle Lake water quality assessment found that the lake's overall water chemistry remains generally good, with no evidence of systemic nutrient overloading or bacteriological contamination. However, increasingly severe late-summer algae blooms and changes within the lake's biological food web demonstrate that the lake remains environmentally sensitive. These findings emphasize the importance of continued water-quality monitoring, responsible shoreline development and the protection of natural shoreline vegetation.

Wetlands throughout the RM provide important environmental functions, including water storage, groundwater recharge, natural filtration and wildlife habitat. At Turtle Lake, the northern marsh and South Bay outlet wetlands act as important biological filters by capturing agricultural and residential runoff before it enters the main lake basin. Natural shoreline and forest vegetation also intercept runoff, stabilize banks, reduce erosion and slow the movement of nutrients into lakes and waterways.

The RM contains productive agricultural soils that support crop production and livestock grazing. Soil and drainage conditions vary throughout the municipality, particularly near lakes and wetlands. Around Turtle Lake, some low-lying shoreline areas contain poorly drained organic and gleysolic soils that may present limitations for buildings, roads and private wastewater systems. These physical conditions should be considered when evaluating future development.

Forested areas contribute to the natural beauty of the RM while providing habitat for deer, moose, birds and other wildlife. Undisturbed forests and shoreline areas are especially important for nesting, spawning and other sensitive habitat functions. The Turtle Lake watershed supports a variety of fish and wildlife species, including species of conservation concern, further emphasizing the importance of protecting environmentally sensitive areas from incompatible development.

The RM recognizes the importance of environmental stewardship and the protection of its natural resources. Municipal land-use decisions should consider water quality, shoreline and riparian health, wetland functions, soil and drainage limitations, wildlife habitat and the cumulative effects of development. Through responsible land-use planning, ongoing environmental monitoring and sustainable agricultural and development practices, the RM will work to ensure that its natural environment remains a cornerstone of the community for generations to come.

2.3. Population

Over the last five decades, the RM has experienced fluctuating population trends reflective of broader rural and economic patterns in Saskatchewan. Like many rural areas, the RM has seen shifts influenced by agricultural mechanization, urban migration, and changing economic opportunities.

2.3.1. 1970s and 1980s: Population Stability and Rural Prosperity

In the 1970s, the RM of Mervin No. 499 maintained a steady population, supported by a thriving agricultural economy. The community consisted primarily of farming families, with multi-generational households being a common feature. Local schools, churches, and community centers served as the focal points for the RM's social and cultural life. During this period, rural Saskatchewan experienced moderate population stability, though early signs of urban migration began to emerge.

2.3.2. 1990s: Population Decline and Urbanization

The 1990s marked a period of decline for many rural municipalities. Advances in farming technology reduced the labor required in agriculture, leading to a decrease in farm-based employment. Younger generations increasingly moved to urban centers such as North Battleford or Lloydminster in search of education and employment opportunities, resulting in a demographic shift toward an aging population.

2.3.3. 2000s: Population Stabilization Through Recreation and Tourism

The early 2000s brought some stabilization to the RM's population, spurred in part by its proximity to popular recreational areas like Turtle Lake and Brightsand Lake. The growth of lakefront and seasonal properties attracted new residents, including retirees and visitors. This influx helped offset declines in the traditional agricultural population and contributed to a diversification of the local demographic.

2.3.4 2010s: Growth in Recreational Communities

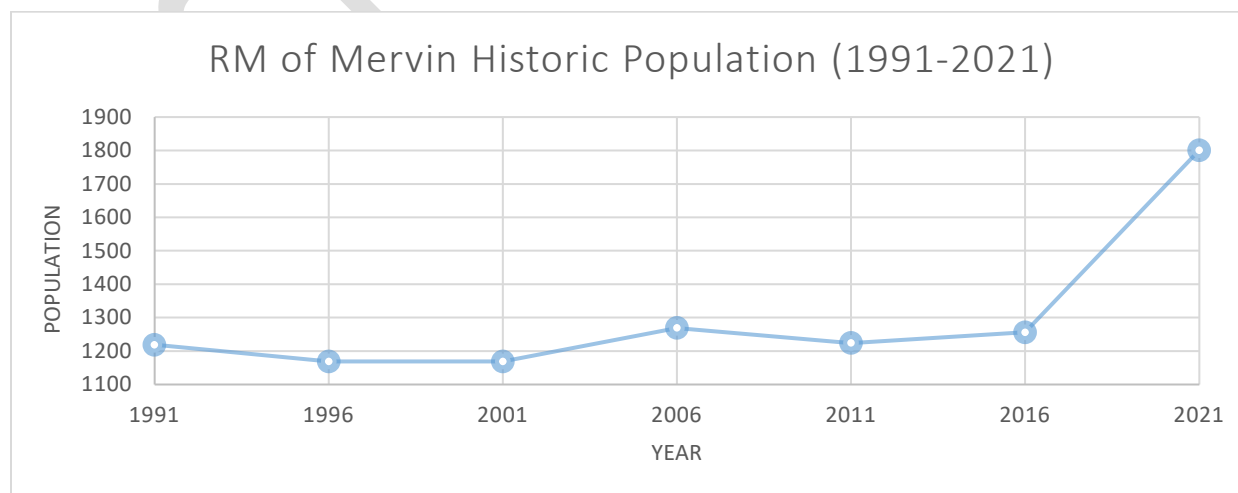
During the 2010s, the RM of Mervin No. 499 began to see moderate growth as its reputation as a recreational destination solidified. Investments in infrastructure and services around Turtle Lake and Brightsand Lake contributed to a rise in permanent and seasonal residents. Younger families and retirees seeking a quieter, rural lifestyle with access to amenities became an increasingly popular demographic.

2.3.4. Current Trends

According to the 2021 Canadian Census, the RM reported a population of 1,801 permanent residents (Figure 2), living in 827 private dwellings, and an average household size of 2.2. The population has risen by approximately 47.7% since the 1991 census when 1,219 people were reported to be living full time in the RM; and a 43.4% increase from the 2016 Census when 1,256 people were reported to be living in the RM. This is attributed to both in-migration of retirees, and second-home buyers, as well as a resurgence of interest in rural living following shifts in work-life balance trends during the COVID-19 pandemic. Seasonal residents remain a notable component of the local demographic, especially during the summer months.

Despite these positive trends, challenges such as an aging population, and the need to attract younger residents remain. The RM is committed to creating opportunities for growth through community development, support for small businesses, and fostering a balance between agricultural roots and its growing role as a recreational centre.

Figure 2: RM of Mervin Historic Population (1991-2021)



Source: Statistics Canada (2021)

2.4. Infrastructure

The RM of Mervin No. 499 is committed to maintaining and enhancing its infrastructure to meet the needs of residents and support growth. The following sections detail the key infrastructure components in the municipality.

2.4.1. Utility Services

Utility services in the RM of Mervin No. 499 are provided by provincial and private service providers. SaskPower, SaskEnergy and SaskTel provide electricity, natural gas and telecommunications services to residents and businesses. Access Communications Co-operative installed fibre-optic infrastructure in the Organized Hamlet of Horseshoe Bay during 2024 and 2025 and may expand its fibre-optic network to additional areas of the RM as service demand, feasibility and infrastructure investment permit. Swift-Net, Starlink and other wireless or satellite providers offer additional internet and communication services throughout the RM.

2.4.2 Water Distribution System

Water distribution in the RM of Mervin No. 499 is handled through a combination of four Public Utility Boards (Clover Lake, Crystal Bay Sunset, Sunrise & Cottage Water Cooperative Inc. and Sunset View Beach), three municipal systems in Livelong, Spruce Lake, and Evergreen Acres, and private wells. Several areas, particularly near lakefront communities, benefit from shared water systems that draw from local aquifers or surface water sources. The RM emphasizes the importance of protecting groundwater resources through careful monitoring and management ensuring sustainable use and availability of water for all residents.

The Livelong waterworks is supplied by one well that was approved and permitted in 1994. Water distribution consists of two individual water mains that supply the hamlet. Neither the water supply line nor the service line is metered. The Organized Hamlet of Livelong consumes approximately 5,500 m³ of water annually. Much of the Livelong waterworks may require an upgrade or replacement in the next 5-10 years.

The Organized Hamlet of Spruce Lake waterworks system is a hygienic (non-potable) system that is supplied by Spruce Lake. Water is pumped from Spruce Lake to the Hamlet Water Treatment Plant where it undergoes chemical injection, coagulation/flocculation, sedimentation, filtration, and chlorine disinfection. The water is distributed from a storage reservoir by a pressurization system. The community of Spruce Lake consumes approximately 6,800 m³ of water annually. The water treatment plan was upgraded in 2003 but may require upgrades or replacement in the next 5-10 years.

The Organized Hamlet of Evergreen Acres water system is fed by two metered raw water intakes from Well #1 and Well #2. This system serves a population of approximately 150 people during the peak summer months. The community of Evergreen Acres uses approximately 6,000 m³ of water annually. The Evergreen Acres waterworks completed infrastructure upgrades and expansion in 2009 and remains in good condition.

2.4.3 Wastewater Disposal System

The RM's wastewater disposal systems include a mix of private septic systems and municipal lagoons. Communities near Turtle Lake, and Brightsand Lake rely on shared lagoon systems for treatment, and/or disposal while rural residents often utilize individual septic solutions.

There are several sewage lagoons operated by the RM and the organized hamlets that utilize the waste water facilities.

The first, located in the SE ¼ 34-51-19-W3M, immediately west of the Organized Hamlet of Livelong consists of two cells. This lagoon is intended to be pumped out twice per year and is discharged to the west, and south. The Livelong lagoon underwent significant upgrades in 2022.

South of the Organized Hamlet of Spruce Lake in the NW ¼ 31-52-21-W3M is a second lagoon that consists of two cells. This lagoon is intended to be pumped out twice per year and is allowed to discharge to the south in the Spruce Lake drainage system. Infrastructure upgrades are encouraged at this location.

The third lagoon is located in the NW ¼ 30-52-18-W3M near Evergreen Acres. This two-cell lagoon is pumped out twice per year and is presently released to the south through a bottom drainpipe in Cell 2, and an eight head sprinkler system. The system is designed to provide maximum oxygenation. Due to the age, upgrades are encouraged at this lagoon.

The fourth lagoon, located in the NE ¼ 32-52-19-W3M, roughly splits the distance between Turtle Lake, and Brightsand Lake in half. This facility is operated as a two-stage lagoon which is discharged twice annually. The effluent is presently being discharged out of the south end of Cell 2 and drains to the east. This lagoon also feeds an irrigation system on 160 acres. Upgrades could be considered at this lagoon to decrease treatment time.

2.4.4 Storm Water Conveyance

The RM of Mervin No. 499 utilizes a combination of natural and engineered systems to manage stormwater effectively, ensuring the protection of properties, roadways, and natural watercourses.

- **Natural Drainage Systems:** The RM of Mervin No. 499 relies heavily on its natural topography for stormwater management. Rolling hills, a network of wetlands, and streams provide natural pathways for water flow during periods of heavy rainfall or snowmelt. These natural systems help reduce the risk of flooding by acting as buffers and storage areas for stormwater.
- **Engineered Stormwater Infrastructure:** In higher-density areas, such as lakeshore communities, urban municipalities, and hamlets within the RM, engineered systems have been developed to manage stormwater. These include culverts, ditches, and storm drains that direct water away from homes and infrastructure to designated outflow areas, such as wetlands or retention ponds. Engineer recommended regular maintenance of these systems and infrastructure improvements is a priority to ensure their functionality during peak storm incidents.

- **Flood Prevention Measures:** The RM of Mervin No. 499 has invested in measures to mitigate flooding risks, including the reinforcement of drainage channels and installation of erosion control features. These measures are particularly important in areas near Turtle Lake and Brightsand Lake, where seasonal storms can cause water levels to rise rapidly.
- **Future Planning and Improvements:** As the municipality grows and climate patterns shift, the RM is committed to improving stormwater management. This includes the assessment of existing systems and the development of new infrastructure to accommodate increased runoff from expanding communities. All new developments require engineered drainage plans. The RM also encourages sustainable practices, such as the use of permeable surfaces and rainwater harvesting, to reduce the burden on stormwater systems.

Effective stormwater conveyance is crucial for maintaining the RM's infrastructure and protecting its ratepayers, ensuring the municipality remains resilient to weather-related challenges.

2.4.5 Solid Waste Collection

In partnership with the West Yellowhead Waste Resource Authority Inc. (WYWRA), the RM has a Solid Waste Transfer Site south of Brightsand Lake located in the SE ¼ 34-52-20-W3M available for ratepayers. Recycling sites are also located in the Town of St. Walburg, Town of Turtleford, the Hamlet of Livelong, the Hamlet of Spruce Lake, and at the RM Transfer Site.

2.4.6 Protective Services

Protective services in the RM of Mervin include police services, emergency medical response, and volunteer fire departments. The RM holds membership in the Town of Turtleford and RM of Mervin Fire Association and the St. Walburg and District Fire and Rescue Association Inc. ensuring coverage across the municipality. Police services are provided by the RCMP detachment in Turtleford, while emergency medical services are available through regional health authorities.

The RM of Mervin No. 499 is one of several municipal sponsors of Northwest Community Safety Services Inc. (NWCSS), a regional, not-for-profit organization that provides Community Safety Officer services to its partner municipalities. NWCSS supports community safety through a visible community presence, regular patrols, public education, traffic-safety initiatives, municipal bylaw enforcement and the enforcement of designated provincial legislation. Community Safety Officers may also respond to non-emergency complaints and assist the RCMP within the authority of their appointments. This cooperative regional service model is intended to strengthen community safety and provide accessible, professional enforcement services throughout participating rural municipalities.

2.4.7 Road Network

The RM of Mervin No. 499 maintains more than 800 kilometres of municipal roads supporting agricultural, industrial, commercial, recreational and residential transportation needs. Gravel roads form most of the municipal road network, while paved and treated roads serve certain higher-traffic areas, including routes near lakeshore communities. The RM prioritizes regular maintenance and strategic

upgrades, particularly where agricultural activity, industrial development, residential growth or seasonal tourism increases traffic volumes. Grading and snow-removal services are provided to support year-round accessibility, subject to municipal priorities, weather conditions and available resources.

Provincial Highways 3, 26, 303 and 795 pass through the RM and are under the jurisdiction of the Saskatchewan Ministry of Highways. The RM works with the Ministry regarding matters affecting provincial highways and their connections with the municipal road network.

The RM also participates in the North Central Transportation Planning Committee to support regional transportation planning, intermunicipal coordination and advocacy concerning transportation infrastructure and investment priorities.

Ongoing infrastructure planning and development are guided by the RM's commitment to responsible and sustainable service delivery. The RM seeks to ensure that utility services, water and wastewater systems, and transportation networks respond to the needs of ratepayers, support economic and community development, and protect the natural environment.

2.5. Existing Land Use

Land use planning in the RM balances agricultural and resource priorities with residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational needs to support sustainable growth and maintain its natural beauty.

Appendix A includes a Current Land Use Map showing the location of all land use groups as they existed in 2026. Parcels without an assigned land use category are considered vacant.

RM of Mervin No. 499 – Current Land Use Areas 2026		
Category	Hectares	Percentage
Agriculture	136,201	79.24
Forest	27,158	15.80
Conservation	5,776	3.36
Residential	1,071	0.62
Resources	533	0.31
Lakeshore Development	478	0.28
Tourism and Recreation	358	0.21
Vacant	106	0.06
Dedicated Lands	81	0.05
Community Services	76	0.04
Industrial	26	0.01
Commercial	18	0.01
Total	171,882	100

2.5.1. Agriculture

Agricultural land uses dominate the total land base in the RM of Mervin No. 499 occupying approximately 136,201 hectares or roughly 79 percent (79%) of all lands in the RM. The Municipality continues to conserve and acknowledge agriculture as a primary economic activity within the municipality and surrounding area. The primary agricultural uses include grain farming, mixed grain/livestock operations, farm residences, intensive agricultural uses, and agricultural related commercial developments.

2.5.2. Forest

Forests make up the second largest area within RM boundaries with approximately 27,158 hectares or just shy of 16 percent (16%) of the total land mass. Most of these lands are provincial forests located in the northern portion of the RM. These forests host forestry uses, trapping, hunting, angling, wildlife management areas, conservation areas, and recreational land uses.

2.5.3. Conservation

Conservation lands make up the third largest area within RM boundaries with approximately 5,776 hectares, or just over of 3 percent (3%) of the total land mass. The conservation lands surround Turtle Lake, Brightsand Lake, Spruce Lake, and Miller Lake. Existing agricultural uses, recreational uses, afforestation projects, forest management, silviculture, wildlife, wildfowl habitat and conservation projects, low density residential, and several commercial uses exist with conservation lands.

2.5.4. Residential

Residential land use in the RM of Mervin No. 499 includes a combination of acreages, residential yard sites, and hamlet lots scattered throughout the RM, occupying a total of approximately 1,071 hectares and roughly 0.6 percent (0.6%) of the total land mass. Most residential properties consist of single-detached homes on large lots.

The RM supports residential development that aligns with sustainable land use practices, ensuring adequate infrastructure while minimizing impacts on the surrounding environment.

2.5.5. Resources

The Mervin East Waseca Oil Pool was discovered in 1996 with an estimated reserve of 31.08 million barrels. Since this discovery, the oil and gas industry has played an important role in the RM's economy providing employment opportunities and revenue. Micro-refineries and thermal plants exist within the RM's boundaries occupying approximately 533 hectares or 0.3 percent (0.3%) of the total land mass within the RM of Mervin No. 499.

2.5.6. Lakeshore Development

Lakeshore development in the RM of Mervin includes a combination of permanent, and seasonal residences, occupying a total of approximately 478 hectares and roughly 0.3 percent of the total land mass. The recreational communities surrounding Turtle Lake and Brightsand Lake offer amenities and picturesque settings that are attractive for both seasonal and year-round residents. Most residential

properties consist of single-detached homes on large lots, although higher-density developments, such as cottage communities and retirement properties, have become more prevalent in recent years.

2.5.7. Tourism and Recreation

The RM of Mervin is a premier destination for recreation and tourism, capitalizing on its natural beauty and attractions such as Turtle Lake, Brightsand Lake, and other scenic locations. These areas draw thousands of visitors annually, offering activities like boating, fishing, camping, and hiking, as well as winter sports such as snowmobiling and ice fishing. Recreation and tourism are key drivers of the RM's economy and contribute significantly to its vibrant community life. Tourism and Recreation land uses make up 358 hectares or 0.2 percent of the RM's land base.

Although not included in the current land use calculations, the RM is also home to Brightsand Regional Park. Spanning 647 hectares across the entire north end of Brightsand Lake, the park offers campsites, beaches, golfing, disc golf, fishing, boating, and trails.

2.5.8. Vacant Land

There are 106 hectares (0.06 percent) of land considered vacant in the RM of Mervin, providing opportunities for future development while preserving the area's rural character. These parcels are distributed throughout the municipality, with significant portions located near existing residential and commercial areas. Vacant lands are often used for agricultural purposes until they are developed, ensuring they remain productive. The RM actively encourages strategic planning for the development of vacant land to align with community growth objectives.

2.5.9. Dedicated Lands

Dedicated lands within the RM are set aside for public use, environmental protection, and heritage preservation. These include green spaces, wetlands, and cultural or historical sites. Recreational trails, conservation areas, and natural habitats are examples of how dedicated lands enhance the RM's quality of life while preserving its natural environment. There are approximately 81 hectares of dedicated lands representing 0.05 percent of overall lands. The RM is committed to protecting these lands and ensuring their sustainability for future generations.

2.5.10. Community Service

Overall, there are approximately 76 hectares or 0.04 percent (0.04%) of community service lands in the RM, that are dedicated to public amenities and infrastructure that support the well-being of residents. These include community halls and recreational facilities. Parks and playgrounds are integral to fostering a sense of community and providing spaces for leisure activities.

Recreational areas, such as those near Turtle Lake and Brightsand Lake, offer facilities for sports, camping, and events, appealing to both residents and visitors. These spaces are vital for supporting the social and cultural fabric of the RM.

2.5.11. Industrial

There are approximately 26 hectares or 0.01 percent (0.01%) of land mass of industrial lands in the RM of Mervin are primarily designated for agricultural processing, equipment storage, and public works operations. These areas are typically located on the outside of residential and commercial zones to minimize disruption while ensuring efficient access to primary transportation routes. Industrial developments play a crucial role in supporting the RM's agricultural economy and infrastructure needs.

2.5.12. Commercial

Commercial land uses occupy the smallest proportion of land within the RM, comprising approximately 18 hectares, or 0.01 percent (0.01%) of its total land area. These uses support businesses and services that serve ratepayers, agricultural producers, seasonal residents and visitors. Commercial development is generally located adjacent to provincial highway corridors, along other higher-traffic routes and near lakeshore communities, where it benefits from visibility and convenient access. Existing commercial uses include retail establishments, fuel and convenience services, and tourism- and recreation-related businesses. The RM supports appropriately located commercial development that complements the municipality's agricultural, recreational and tourism sectors, is compatible with surrounding land uses, and can be adequately serviced.

2.6. Heritage and Cultural Resources

2.6.1. Heritage and Cultural Resources in the RM of Mervin

The RM of Mervin has heritage and cultural resources that reflect its deep historical roots and the vibrant contributions of its ratepayers. These elements are vital to the community's identity, connecting the present with the past, and fostering a sense of pride among ratepayers.

2.6.2. Indigenous Heritage

Situated on Treaty 6 territory, the RM of Mervin acknowledges the deep connection of Indigenous peoples to this land. The Cree, Saulteaux, Blackfoot, Dene, Nakota Sioux and Métis peoples have long histories in the area, contributing invaluable cultural and historical significance. This heritage is reflected in traditional place names, cultural practices, and the region's natural landscapes.

2.6.3. Historical Sites

The RM is home to numerous historical landmarks that showcase its settlement history. Early homesteads and community halls are physical reminders of the pioneers who shaped the region. The historical significance of railroads and agriculture is woven into the landscape, with artifacts and restored sites serving as focal points for education and tourism.

Brooksdale School is a municipal heritage property designated under *The Heritage Property Act*. One of the few remaining typical country schools in the area. Brooksdale School is valued for its role in promoting to the educational and social life of the district. In 1919, the newly organized Brooksdale School District called for tenders for a schoolhouse that measured 26 x 26 feet with a full basement. At a cost of \$2,000, this typical one-room schoolhouse with hip roof and window wall was completed that

summer and opened in September. Over the next 40 years, the school served over 200 students and was the focal point for much social activity, such as Christmas concerts, school picnics, box socials, and plays. Though the school closed in 1959 and classes ceased, the building continued to be used. For over 30 years, it held Sunday School classes during the summer months and remained an important place for community gatherings. Located on its original site (SE ¼ 5-51-19-W3M), Brooksdale School is a landmark in the community.

2.6.4. Heritage Sensitivity

According to the Provincial government's Developer's Online Screening Tool there is a significant amount of land that is designated sensitive or conditionally sensitive. Conditionally sensitive and sensitive lands are those containing or likely to contain archaeological resources.

A Cultural and Heritage Resources Map is included in Appendix A showing the location of all sensitive, conditionally sensitive, and non-sensitive heritage lands as they exist in 2026.

2.6.5. Community Institutions and Events

The RM supports community institutions, organizations and events that celebrate local heritage and strengthen community spirit. Seasonal festivals, farmers' markets, craft fairs and other community gatherings bring residents together and provide opportunities to showcase local traditions, products and talents. Museums, historical organizations and local archives preserve artifacts, records and stories that provide residents and visitors with an understanding of the area's history. Through partnerships, promotion and other forms of municipal support, the RM recognizes the important contribution these organizations and events make to community identity and quality of life.

2.6.6. Volunteerism and Community Spirit

Volunteers play a crucial role in sustaining the RM's cultural and heritage resources. Community members actively contribute to preserving landmarks, organizing events, and promoting local history. This volunteer-driven effort ensures that cultural heritage remains a living and accessible part of the RM's identity.

2.6.7. Preservation and Future Plans

The RM of Mervin is dedicated to protecting its cultural and heritage resources for future generations. Through land use planning, heritage designation programs, and partnerships with historical societies, the municipality aims to safeguard sites of significance. The RM also encourages the integration of heritage awareness into educational and tourism initiatives, to promote a broader appreciation of its cultural legacy.

Heritage and cultural resources are central to the RM of Mervin's character, enhancing the community's sense of belonging and connection to its history. By fostering a culture of respect and preservation, the RM ensures its rich past continues to inspire and enlighten its future.

2.7. Local Planning Context

The RM of Mervin's local planning context reflects its commitment to fostering a vibrant and sustainable community. Planning efforts aim to balance economic growth, community well-being, and respectful relationships with neighbouring communities.

2.7.1. Economy

The economy of the RM of Mervin is rooted in its agricultural base, complemented by tourism and recreational activities. Grain farming and cattle ranching remain the primary drivers of the local economy, with many ratepayers directly involved in agricultural production. The area's proximity to Turtle Lake and Brightsand Lake has also bolstered the tourism sector, attracting visitors and seasonal residents who contribute to the local economy through recreation, lodging, and service-oriented businesses.

The RM has witnessed a shift toward diversification, with opportunities emerging in small-scale manufacturing, oil and gas, retail, and home-based businesses. This economic diversification aligns with broader rural development trends and supports long-term community resilience.

The Mervin East Waseca Oil Pool was discovered in 1996 with an estimated reserve of 31.08 million barrels. Since this discovery, the oil and gas industry has played an important role in the RM's economy providing employment opportunities and revenue. Numerous oil and natural gas wells, pipelines, processing facilities, thermal production facilities and related infrastructure are located throughout the RM. These facilities are owned and operated by various oil and gas producers, pipeline companies and utility providers, including Cenovus Energy Inc., TransGas Limited and other industry operators. The energy sector contributes to the RM's economy and influences land use, transportation, infrastructure and municipal service requirements.

A significant portion of the RM's employed labour force commutes to workplaces outside the municipality. However, advances in telecommunications technology, expanding broadband access and changing workplace practices have increased opportunities for remote and flexible work. These trends may benefit the RM by allowing residents to access employment opportunities without leaving the community on a daily basis. As employers continue to offer remote and hybrid working arrangements, the RM may attract individuals and families seeking affordable housing, larger properties and the rural and recreational lifestyle available within the municipality.

The RM is supportive of planned economic growth. Through effective land use and fiscal planning, the RM is committed to building an economically viable community for its people today and in the future.

2.7.2. Commercial and Industrial Investment

Commercial and Industrial investment in the RM of Mervin is a vital component of its growth strategy. The municipality actively encourages new commercial ventures that align with its unique strengths, such as agriculture, tourism, and recreation. Industrial operations are anchored by the oil and gas sector and agriculture.

The RM supports commercial and industrial investment through strategic land-use planning, infrastructure improvements, and partnerships with local business organizations. Efforts to streamline development processes and provide incentives for investors emphasize the RM's commitment to fostering a business-friendly environment.

Key areas for commercial development include suitable locations near neighbouring urban municipalities, established commercial areas, and provincial highway or major transportation corridors that provide high visibility and safe access. Commercial development serving Turtle Lake, Brightsand Lake and other recreational areas should generally be directed toward existing commercial nodes or appropriate off-lake locations where development can be adequately serviced and will not adversely affect water quality, natural shorelines, environmentally sensitive areas or residential uses. The RM supports appropriately located commercial and industrial hubs that serve ratepayers, agricultural and resource industries, seasonal residents and visitors while complementing the municipality's rural character.

Opportunities exist in the RM for the development of the forest and oil related industries. Policies will guide the growth and development of these industries as well as minimize the negative impacts of commercial and industrial development on the environment, residential, and agricultural uses.

2.7.3. Regional Planning Context

The RM shares borders with the RM of Turtle River No. 469, the RM of Eldon No. 471, the RM of Parkdale No. 498, the RM of Frenchman Butte No. 501, the RM of Loon Lake No. 561, the RM of Meadow Lake No. 588, and the Resort Village of Turtle View and surrounds the Town of Turtleford, Village of Mervin, the Resort Village of Kivimaa-Moonlight Bay, Thunderchild First Nation, and Brightsand Lake Regional Park. The RM has a positive working relationship with these communities and will continue to consult with them on regional planning matters including subdivision and development applications potentially impacting these communities, or on shared boundaries, and with regional environmental studies such as the recent and historical Turtle Lake Water Study and Brightsand Lake Study.

2.7.4. Relationships with Local First Nations Bands

The RM of Mervin No. 499 is located within Treaty 6 territory and the Homeland of the Métis. The RM recognizes the cultural and historical significance of these lands to Indigenous peoples and supports mutually respectful relationships with First Nations and Métis communities. Where appropriate, the RM will consider opportunities for communication and cooperation on matters of shared interest, including land use, environmental stewardship, community development and economic development.

3. Public Engagement and Community Priorities

3.1. Public Engagement Summary

Public Engagement was identified as a key priority of the Official Community Plan project. Connecting with the community to gather input, comments, and feedback ensures that the Plan accurately reflects the needs, wants, and future aspirations of the RM. A public engagement summary is an integral part of, and supplemental to, the OCP and ZB.

3.1.1. Objectives

A consultation plan was developed to reach a broad and diverse audience of stakeholders including, but not limited to ratepayers, businesses, and tenants. All comments were considered and have been utilized to strengthen both the OCP and ZB to ensure the values of the various communities are reflected in the policies and regulations. The results of the Public Engagement Report may be found in Appendix B. The consultation strategy focused on three priorities:

- 1) To create an overall community awareness of the proposed changes and the intention of those changes;
- 2) To collect information from the public and stakeholders on issues within the community; and,
- 3) Establish priorities that align with the community's vision.

3.1.2. Methodology

A multifaceted public engagement process was undertaken to provide residents, ratepayers, community organizations and other stakeholders with opportunities to contribute to the preparation of the OCP and Zoning Bylaw. Engagement activities included an online and paper survey, three public open houses and five stakeholder interview sessions conducted between August and October 2024. Feedback gathered through these activities helped identify community priorities, land-use concerns and matters requiring consideration in the planning process. Additional engagement activities undertaken during the preparation and review of the planning documents are summarized in the sections that follow.

3.1.3. Survey

The RM received 158 responses to the public survey conducted between August 9 and September 13, 2024. Approximately 58% of respondents identified themselves as recreational ratepayers, and many respondents indicated a long-standing connection to the municipality. Participation was also open to individuals from surrounding communities.

The survey gathered feedback on existing OCP objectives, community services, agricultural land, residential development, seasonal businesses, lake protection and development standards. The complete survey results are included in the Public Engagement Report in Appendix B.

3.1.4. Public Open House

A total of 47 people attended the three public open houses held in August of 2024 and 2025. Participants were invited to identify aspects of the existing OCP and Zoning Bylaw that they supported, opposed or found unclear. Much of the feedback was consistent with the survey results, with particular attention given to development around Turtle Lake and the protection of lake health.

The RM also received eight written submissions during or following the open houses. Several submissions requested that an updated Turtle Lake study be completed and used to inform the new OCP and Zoning Bylaw. The study was subsequently completed and considered during the preparation of the planning documents. Open-house feedback and written submissions are summarized in the Public Engagement Report in Appendix B.

3.1.5. Stakeholder Comments/Meetings

Five stakeholder interview sessions were conducted between October 9 and 16, 2024, with representatives of adjacent municipalities, organized hamlet boards and community interests. These interviews provided an opportunity for more detailed discussions about rural and lakeside living, recreational vehicles, residential development, lake development capacity, commercial opportunities, short-term rentals, and the clarity of municipal planning requirements.

Interview participants expressed differing perspectives on some matters, including development timelines and appropriate limits on new lakeside development. Common interests included maintaining the RM's rural and recreational character, protecting Turtle Lake, supporting appropriate commercial development and making the OCP and Zoning Bylaw easier for the public to understand. A summary of the stakeholder feedback is included in the Public Engagement Report in Appendix B.

3.1.6. Key Themes and Priorities

The following themes emerged across the public survey, open houses, written submissions and stakeholder interviews. These themes informed the principles, objectives and policies of the OCP and the development standards contained in the Zoning Bylaw.

3.1.6.1. Environmental Stewardship of the Lakes

Participants expressed a strong interest in protecting Turtle Lake, Brightsand Lake, and other natural areas within the RM. Concerns focused particularly on the cumulative effects of shoreline development, lake development capacity, water quality and the retention of natural shoreline areas. Participants requested that updated scientific information about Turtle Lake be used to guide future land-use and development decisions.

3.1.6.2. Rural Charm

The RM's quiet rural setting, agricultural landscape and lakeside communities were consistently identified as valued community characteristics. Participants emphasized that future growth and development should respect and maintain these qualities.

3.1.6.3. Support for Existing OCP Objectives

Participants generally supported the direction of the existing OCP. This feedback indicated a preference for maintaining successful existing planning objectives while updating policies to respond to current conditions, emerging issues and new information.

3.1.6.4. Aging in Place

Participants identified access to healthcare, education, housing, care services and local businesses as important to the long-term sustainability of the RM and surrounding communities. Appropriate commercial development and community services were viewed as opportunities to help residents remain in the area through different stages of life.

3.1.6.5. Maintain Residential Character of RM

Participants generally preferred single-detached dwellings, ready-to-move homes and cabins as the primary forms of residential development. Feedback also addressed the use of recreational vehicles on vacant properties, timelines for constructing permanent dwellings and the regulation of short-term rental accommodations. Participants generally sought clear standards that protect neighbouring properties and community character while recognizing a range of housing and recreational needs.

3.1.6.6. Development Capacity and Growth Management

Participants expressed concern about the amount and pace of development around Turtle Lake. Suggestions included reviewing the use of vacancy rates when considering new subdivision and ensuring that environmental capacity, servicing, infrastructure and cumulative development effects are considered before additional lakeside growth is approved.

3.1.6.7. Commercial and Economic Development

Participants supported appropriate commercial development and the revitalization of existing commercial areas. Commercial opportunities that serve residents, agricultural producers, seasonal residents and visitors were generally viewed positively when compatible with surrounding land uses and the RM's rural and recreational character.

3.1.6.8. Clear and Accessible Planning Regulations

Participants indicated that portions of the existing OCP and Zoning Bylaw were difficult to interpret. There was support for using plain language, clearly defined terms and development standards that can be readily understood and consistently administered.

4. Strategic Direction

4.1. Vision, Mission, and Values

The RM's adopted Vision, Mission, and Values establish the overall direction for the municipality. They provide the foundation for the objectives and policies of this OCP and guide land-use, development, and infrastructure decisions.

4.1.1. Vision

To be a dynamic and sustainable community that preserves its agricultural heritage while offering diverse opportunities for commerce, tourism and recreation, fostering a high quality of life for residents and visitors alike.

4.1.2. Mission

The RM of Mervin is dedicated to supporting its agricultural identity while promoting balanced growth in the commercial, oil and gas, tourism and recreational sectors. We strive to improve social, economic and environmental conditions, ensuring the long-term sustainability of our lakes and natural resources for future generations.

4.1.3. Values

Sustainability: We are committed to long-term environmental, economic and social sustainability, ensuring that growth and development are balanced with the protection of natural resources.

Agricultural Heritage: We value and support the agricultural foundation of our community, recognizing its importance to our identity and economy.

Quality of Life: We aim to enhance the well-being of our residents by promoting recreational opportunities, economic prosperity and a vibrant community.

Environmental Stewardship: We are dedicated to preserving our lakes and natural landscapes, ensuring their protection for future generations while supporting responsible development.

Collaboration: We foster a multijurisdictional, cooperative approach to decision-making and development, involving ratepayers, First Nations communities, adjacent municipalities, other levels of government and stakeholders in building a thriving and sustainable community.

4.2. Key Principles

The objectives and policies of this OCP are guided by the following principles:

- 1) **Agricultural Heritage**
Protect and support the RM's agricultural land base, rural economy and agricultural way of life.
- 2) **Environmental Stewardship**
Protect lakes, wetlands, groundwater, natural shorelines, wildlife habitat and other environmentally sensitive areas through responsible land-use and development decisions informed by current environmental information.
- 3) **Responsible Growth and Development**
Direct growth to appropriate locations where development is compatible with surrounding land uses and can be supported by existing or planned infrastructure, services and environmental capacity.
- 4) **Rural and Residential Character**
Maintain the RM's rural and recreational character while supporting a range of residential opportunities appropriate to different locations and stages of life.
- 5) **Economic Opportunity**
Encourage agricultural, commercial, industrial, oil and gas, tourism, recreational and seasonal business opportunities in suitable locations that contribute to the local and regional economy.
- 6) **Quality of Life and Community Well-Being**
Consider the needs of residents of all ages and abilities and advocate for access to healthcare, education, housing, care services, recreation and other amenities that support residents throughout their lives.
- 7) **Compatible and Equitable Development**
Support development that provides community benefit while avoiding unacceptable land-use conflicts, environmental impacts or unreasonable burdens on existing ratepayers, municipal infrastructure and future generations.
- 8) **Sustainable Lakeside Development**
Manage lakeside and recreational development according to environmental conditions, infrastructure and servicing capacity, public access, community character and the cumulative effects of development.
- 9) **Regional and Indigenous Relationships**
Support mutually respectful communication and, where appropriate, cooperation with neighbouring municipalities, other levels of government, and regional organizations including First Nations and Métis communities, on matters of shared interest.

10) Intermunicipal Cooperation

Pursue opportunities for coordinated land-use planning, shared services, infrastructure and facilities where cooperation can improve service delivery, reduce costs or limit land-use conflicts.

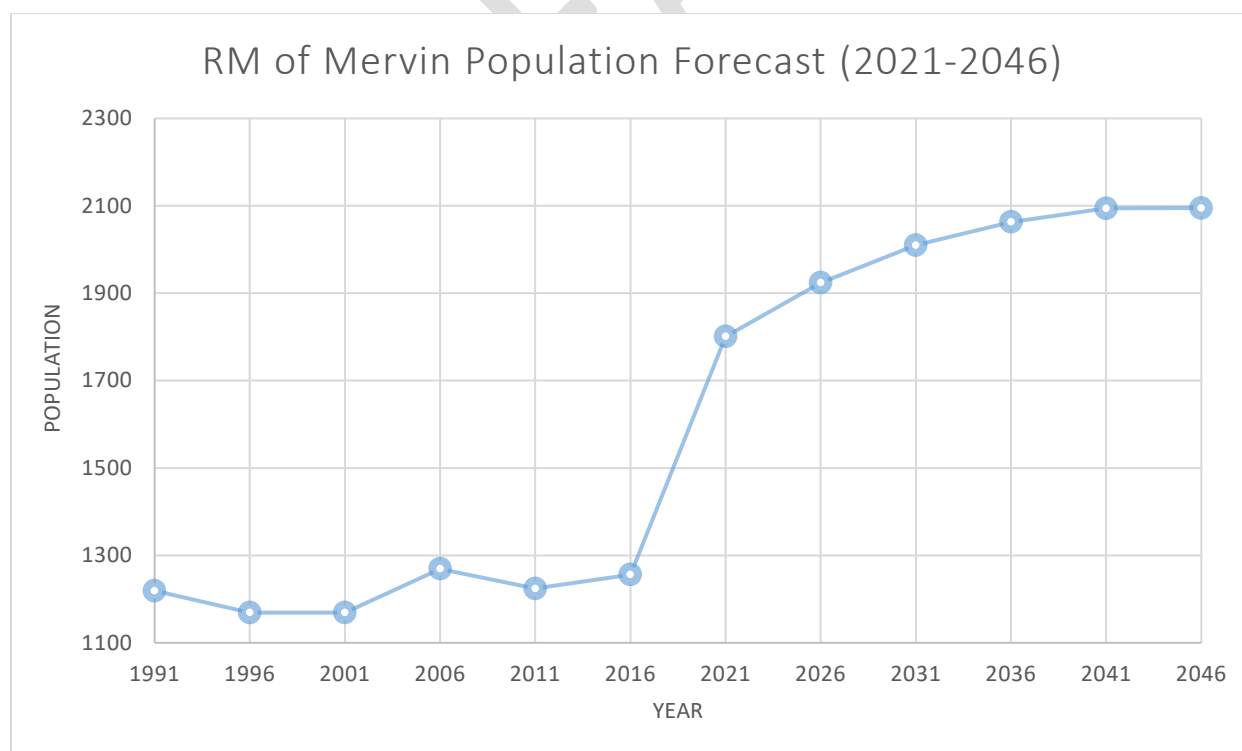
11) Responsible Infrastructure and Public Lands

Plan and manage municipal infrastructure, utilities, waste-management facilities, wastewater systems, municipal reserves, public recreation areas and cemeteries in a manner that protects public health, natural resources and long-term community interests.

4.3. Population Projection

Population projections over a 25-year period (2021-2046) were completed for the RM using the Cohort Survival method. This approach considers survivorship rates, fertility rates, and immigration rates when projecting the population over 5-year intervals. Mervin is expected to see a moderate population growth from 1,801 residents in 2021 to 2,094 residents in 2041 before plateauing around 2,095 residents from 2041 – 2046. Like many communities in Saskatchewan and throughout the country, a large proportion of the population is a part of the “baby-boomer” generation. As time passes, this generation will make up a lower proportion of the population resulting in a more even distribution among the age cohorts.

The OCP is intended to provide direction and a framework for the future growth of the RM of Mervin. The population forecast should be updated every 5 years to coincide with the latest Statistics Canada Census.



4.4. Future Land Use Requirements

Since the RM may experience modest population growth over the 2021-2046 horizon, it is important to ensure there is a suitable supply of lands for new ratepayers and businesses to establish in the RM of Mervin. Land Use forecasts have been completed for residential, resources, lakeshore development, tourism and recreation, dedicated lands, community service, industrial, and commercial land use requirements. Forecasts have been compared against the amount of existing land in each major land use category to determine whether there is a surplus or deficit of land over a 20-year planning horizon. The future land use map shows existing land uses as well as the future land use requirements in each land use category. These land use forecasts and population projections should be updated every 5 years to account for the latest trends and changes in population/business growth as a result of the policies within the OCP.

4.4.1. Calculating Land Use Requirements

Table 1 represents the net demand in hectares for residential, resources, lakeshore development, tourism and recreation, dedicated lands, community service, industrial, and commercial land uses over the next 20 years. The following assumptions were held:

- Permanent Population projection of 2,095 people in year 2046;
- Average residential land requirement of 0.595 ha/person;
- Average resource land requirement of 0.296 ha/person;
- Average lakeshore development land requirement of 0.265 ha/person;
- Average tourism and recreation land requirement of 0.199 ha/person;
- Average dedicated lands requirement of 0.045 ha/person;
- Average community service land requirement of 0.042 ha/person;
- Average industrial land requirement of 0.014 ha/person;
- Average commercial land requirement of 0.010 ha/person;
- Market contingency factor equivalent to 10 percent of the demand for land to accommodate normal vacancy requirements and provide for normal fluctuations in the pace of economic development relative to the forecast.

Table 1: Net Estimate of Demand Area by Generalized Land Use Categories (hectares)

	<i>Residential</i>	<i>Resource</i>	<i>Lakeshore</i>	<i>Tourism</i>	<i>Dedicated</i>	<i>Service</i>	<i>Industrial</i>	<i>Commercial</i>
A. Demand	1,371	682	611	459	104	97	32	23

Table 2: Net Estimates of Demand and Supply Area by Generalized Land Use Categories (hectares)

	<i>Residential</i>	<i>Resource</i>	<i>Lakeshore</i>	<i>Tourism</i>	<i>Dedicated</i>	<i>Service</i>	<i>Industrial</i>	<i>Commercial</i>
A. Demand	1,371	682	611	459	104	97	32	23
B. Supply								
<i>Existing Land Use (2026)</i>								
	1,071	533	478	358	81	76	26	18

4.4.2. Supply of Existing Land

Table 2 shows the net demand and supply in hectares for residential, resources, lakeshore development, tourism and recreation, dedicated lands, community service, industrial, and commercial land uses. The existing land use is the amount of land in each category in the year 2026.

4.4.3. Deficit/Surplus of Land

Based on the foregoing analysis and as summarized in Table 3, the RM is forecast to require additional land over the 20-year planning horizon. The projected land deficits are approximately 300 hectares for residential development, 149 hectares for resource development, 133 hectares for lakeshore development, 101 hectares for tourism and recreation, 23 hectares for dedicated lands, 21 hectares for community services, 6 hectares for industrial development and 5 hectares for commercial development. The Future Land Use Map should identify sufficient suitable land to accommodate these projected needs. Land may subsequently be rezoned as development opportunities arise and servicing, compatibility, environmental conditions and other applicable planning considerations are addressed.

Table 3: Net Estimates of Demand, Supply and Surplus Area by Generalized Land Use Categories (hectares)

	<i>Residential</i>	<i>Resource</i>	<i>Lakeshore</i>	<i>Tourism</i>	<i>Dedicated</i>	<i>Service</i>	<i>Industrial</i>	<i>Commercial</i>
A. Demand	1,371	682	611	459	104	97	32	23
B. Supply								
<i>Existing Land Use (2026)</i>								
	1,071	533	478	358	81	76	26	18
C. Surplus (Supply-Demand)	(300)	(149)	(133)	(101)	(23)	(21)	(6)	(5)

4.5. Future Growth

The RM will manage growth and development in an environmentally, socially and fiscally responsible manner that benefits existing and future ratepayers, businesses and visitors. Coordinated and orderly

planning will support economic opportunities, make efficient use of existing and planned services, promote compatibility among land uses, maintain viable land parcels and protect natural resources.

Future growth will seek to balance new development with the enhancement of existing communities, the protection of agricultural land and natural ecosystems, and the maintenance of the RM's rural and recreational character. Development will be directed toward locations that are suitable for the proposed use and can be supported by appropriate access, infrastructure and services.

Around Turtle Lake and other environmentally sensitive areas, planning decisions will consider natural carrying capacity, water quality, shoreline and riparian protection, wetlands and wildlife habitat, soil and drainage conditions, infrastructure and wastewater servicing capacity, and the cumulative effects of development. Where appropriate, growth will be directed toward existing development areas and suitable off-lake, multi-tiered or clustered locations.

The RM's existing land-use pattern and long-term growth strategy are illustrated on the Future Land Use Map in Appendix A. The map identifies areas that may be considered for development during the 20-year planning horizon but does not provide an automatic entitlement to rezoning, subdivision or development. Each proposal will be evaluated according to this OCP, the Zoning Bylaw, site-specific conditions and other applicable requirements.

The RM will monitor development activity, land availability, infrastructure and servicing capacity, environmental information and changing community needs. The OCP and Future Land Use Map may be amended as new information becomes available and municipal conditions and priorities evolve.

4.5.1. Residential

Future residential growth will be encouraged in locations that provide safe and suitable building sites, efficient access to municipal infrastructure and services, and compatibility with agricultural, resource, recreational and other surrounding land uses. Growth should generally be directed toward existing settlements, organized hamlets, established residential areas and other locations identified on the Future Land Use Map.

Residential development should maintain the RM's rural and recreational character, provide opportunities for residents at different stages of life and avoid the unnecessary fragmentation of agricultural land. The form and density of development will reflect local servicing capacity, road access, environmental conditions and the character of the surrounding area.

4.5.2. Resource

The RM will support the responsible development of oil and natural gas, aggregate, forestry and other resource-based activities in appropriate locations. Resource development should contribute to the local and regional economy while minimizing land-use conflicts, environmental impacts, and unreasonable demands on municipal roads and services.

New resource developments will be evaluated with consideration for surrounding agricultural, residential, recreational, and environmentally sensitive lands. Proponents may be required to address road access,

traffic, drainage, emergency response, setbacks, site reclamation, and other site-specific matters. Resource development should also be coordinated with applicable provincial agencies and regulatory approval processes.

4.5.3. Lakeshore Development

Future growth around Turtle Lake, Brightsand Lake and other water bodies will be carefully managed to protect water quality, natural shorelines, wetlands, wildlife habitat, public access and the recreational character of lakeside communities.

Consistent with the findings of the Turtle Lake study, future development decisions around Turtle Lake will consider natural carrying capacity, cumulative development effects, shoreline and riparian conditions, soil and drainage limitations, wastewater servicing, road capacity and recreational use. Growth should generally be directed toward existing development areas and suitable off-lake, multi-tiered or clustered locations rather than further linear shoreline development.

Future development decisions around Brightsand Lake may consider a single-row lakefront development pattern as a means of maintaining the area's recreational character and limiting the intensity and inland expansion of development. The suitability of this approach will be evaluated in relation to water quality, natural shoreline protection, environmental conditions, public access, road capacity, wastewater servicing, drainage and other infrastructure requirements. Development approaches recommended specifically for Turtle Lake will not automatically be applied to Brightsand Lake without consideration of Brightsand Lake's distinct physical conditions, existing development and servicing capacity.

Land identified for potential lakeshore growth on the Future Land Use Map will require further site-specific assessment before rezoning, subdivision or development is approved. The RM may limit, defer, stage or redirect development where environmental conditions, cumulative effects, infrastructure or servicing capacity indicate that additional growth cannot be sustainably accommodated.

4.5.4. Tourism and Recreation

The RM will support tourism and recreational development that builds upon its lakes, natural landscapes, agricultural heritage, and rural character. Appropriate opportunities may include accommodations, campgrounds, trails, parks, golf and outdoor recreation, seasonal businesses, and other visitor-serving use.

Tourism and recreational development should be directed to locations that have suitable access, can be adequately serviced, and are compatible with neighbouring properties. Development near lakes and environmentally sensitive areas must protect water quality, natural shorelines, wildlife habitat, and public access and avoid placing additional pressure on areas with limited environmental or infrastructure capacity.

Where possible, the RM will encourage tourism and recreational opportunities in established nodes and suitable off-lake locations that provide community and economic benefits without compromising the natural features on which the tourism sector depends.

4.5.5. Dedicated Lands

Dedicated lands—including municipal reserve, environmental reserve, public reserve, and other lands provided through the subdivision process—will be planned and managed to support recreation, public access, environmental protection, and community needs.

The location and amount of land dedication will be determined according to provincial legislation, the characteristics of the proposed development, and the long-term needs of the surrounding area. Priority may be given to lands that protect sensitive shorelines, wetlands, drainage features and wildlife habitat; provide public access to lakes and recreational areas; connect parks and trails; or support community facilities.

The RM may consider money in lieu of land dedication where this would better support the acquisition of land for public use or the development, upgrading, or replacement of public parks and recreational facilities, in accordance with provincial legislation.

4.5.6. Community Service

The RM will support the development and expansion of community services and institutional uses that contribute to the health, safety, and quality of life of residents. These may include healthcare and care services, education, emergency services, community halls, places of worship, cemeteries, public works facilities, and other municipal or community-serving uses.

Community service development should be located where it is accessible to the population served, compatible with surrounding land uses and supported by appropriate roads, utilities, and infrastructure. Where practical, these uses should be directed toward existing communities, established service centres or locations that allow facilities and services to be shared on a regional basis.

The RM will continue to cooperate with neighbouring municipalities, community organizations, service providers, First Nations, and other levels of government where opportunities exist to improve access to services, coordinate infrastructure or make efficient use of public facilities.

4.5.7. Industrial

The RM will support industrial growth in locations that provide suitable access to provincial highways, major municipal roads, or other transportation infrastructure and that can accommodate the proposed use without creating unacceptable conflicts with residential, agricultural, recreational, or environmentally sensitive lands.

Industrial development should generally be directed toward existing industrial areas, resource activity areas, and other locations identified on the Future Land Use Map. Where appropriate, the grouping of compatible industrial uses will be encouraged to make efficient use of roads, utilities, and municipal services and to reduce scattered development and land fragmentation.

Proposals will be evaluated according to their transportation and infrastructure requirements, water supply and wastewater management, drainage, environmental risks, emergency-service needs and

potential effects such as noise, dust, odour, lighting, and heavy-truck traffic. Appropriate setbacks, buffers, access controls and site-development standards may be required to protect neighbouring properties, public infrastructure and the natural environment.

4.5.8. Commercial

The RM will support commercial growth that serves ratepayers, agricultural and resource industries, seasonal residents, and visitors while contributing to the local and regional economy. Commercial development should generally be directed toward established commercial areas, locations near neighbouring urban municipalities, and provincial highway or major transportation corridors that provide high visibility and safe access.

Commercial uses serving Turtle Lake, Brightsand Lake, and other recreational areas should generally be directed toward existing commercial nodes or suitable off-lake locations where development can be adequately accessed and serviced. Commercial development near water bodies must be compatible with surrounding residential and recreational uses and must protect water quality, natural shorelines, wetlands, public access, and environmentally sensitive areas.

Commercial proposals will be evaluated according to land-use compatibility, road and highway access, traffic generation, parking, water and wastewater servicing, drainage, visual appearance, and environmental conditions. The RM will encourage commercial development that complements its agricultural, resource, tourism, and recreational strengths while maintaining its rural and lakeside community character.

5. Land Use Policies

5.1. General Land Use and Development Policies

The primary focus of this section is to address general policies which apply to a wide variety of different land use types within the RM. These general land use and development policies are encouraged to improve the community's physical, economic, and social well-being.

The following objectives and policies apply to all areas of development within the RM.

<i>Conformance with the Official Community Plan</i>	The RM shall evaluate all development proposals in conformance with the OCP along with associated maps. Proposals should align with the vision, mission, values, goals, and objectives as outlined in the OCP and ZB.
<i>Conformance with The Statements of Provincial Interest Regulations, 2012 (SPI)</i>	Municipal planning decisions shall be consistent with the SPI. Development permit decisions shall be consistent with the SPI. Planning decisions will consider the long-term local and regional implications of land use decisions as they relate to economic, social, cultural and environmental objectives.
<i>Comprehensive Planning Review</i>	New Development proposals shall be guided by the objectives, policies, and maps in the OCP. New development proposals shall consider land use compatibility and environmental constraints, infrastructure and servicing needs, stormwater management requirements and transportation planning.

<i>Development Levy and Servicing Agreement</i>	Applicants may be required to enter into a Servicing Agreement, Development Agreement and/or Development Levy Agreement with the municipality to address infrastructure, facility, and servicing needs for the proposed development and any other matters related to the development.
<i>Legal and Physical Access</i>	New Developments shall be required to have legal and physical access. New single-lot developments shall be encouraged to be located along transportation networks. Development that requires the use of large or heavy vehicles, or increased passenger vehicle usage shall be required to be situated along roadways designed and constructed to accommodate the vehicle activity. Required construction or upgrades of any roadway will be at the expense of the applicant.
<i>Source Water Protection</i>	Ensure drinking water is safe to consume for RM ratepayers and business owners. Confirm, before approval, that there is an established or proven supply of water capable of servicing the needs of a proposed development. Development must be managed in a way that does not compromise local, regional, or downstream inter-provincial water resources used for human consumptive or hygienic use.

<i>Environmental Stewardship and Design</i>	The RM shall promote environmental stewardship by encouraging developers or proponents to include features in their development proposals that present long-term sustainability, encourage energy efficiency, or reduce negative environmental impacts of waste.
<i>Pedestrian Focused Landscaping</i>	Recommending designs of new residential areas to be pedestrian friendly and connected to serve pedestrian and cycling traffic in addition to automobile traffic. Continue to support the pedestrian landscape in existing residential and commercial areas by ensuring there are trails and pathway connections throughout the community.
<i>Consultation</i>	Provincial Ministries, Municipalities, First Nations and Metis Communities, or other stakeholders may be consulted as required when evaluating and assessing development proposals. Planning decisions will balance the interests of stakeholders while examining the implications of development decisions on economic, social, built, and natural environments. The Ministry of Highways shall be consulted whenever any developments have the potential to cause impacts on provincial highways or future highway upgrades/expansion.

5.2. Agricultural Land Use

5.2.1. Discussion

Agriculture is a foundational component of the RM's identity, economy and land-use pattern. Agricultural activities include grain production, livestock and mixed farming operations, farm residences, agricultural services, value-added agribusinesses, and agriculture-related commercial and industrial uses.

The RM seeks to maintain a viable agricultural land base by limiting unnecessary fragmentation, reducing conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural uses and directing non-agricultural development to appropriate locations. Agricultural land capability is an important consideration; however, lower-capability land may contain wetlands, drainage features, wildlife habitat, or other environmentally sensitive areas and will not automatically be considered suitable for development.

The RM supports the continued operation, growth and diversification of agriculture while recognizing the need to protect water quality, soil resources and the natural environment. Within the Turtle Lake and other lake watersheds, agricultural and non-agricultural development decisions should consider drainage, runoff, wetlands, riparian areas and potential cumulative effects on downstream water bodies.

5.2.2. Objectives

- 1) To maintain agriculture as a principal land use and an important component of the RM's identity and economy.
- 2) To conserve prime and viable agricultural land for continued agricultural production.
- 3) To minimize the fragmentation and premature conversion of agricultural land.
- 4) To protect agricultural operations from avoidable conflicts with non-agricultural development.
- 5) To support the growth, diversification and expansion of agricultural operations, agricultural services and value-added agribusiness.
- 6) To accommodate intensive agricultural uses in suitable locations where land-use conflicts and environmental impacts can be appropriately addressed.
- 7) To direct non-agricultural development toward locations that are compatible with agricultural operations and suitable in terms of access, servicing and environmental conditions.
- 8) To support agricultural practices and development that promote soil conservation, responsible drainage, water quality and environmental sustainability.
- 9) To accommodate farm residences, agricultural workers' accommodations and compatible home- and farm-based businesses.
- 10) To coordinate municipal requirements with applicable provincial regulatory and approval processes.

5.2.3. Policies

General Agricultural Development Policies

- 1) The development and operation of farms for crops, pasture, and non-intensive livestock operations shall be encouraged to continue throughout the municipality.
- 2) Agricultural land capability, parcel configuration, existing land use, environmental conditions, and surrounding development will be considered when evaluating non-agricultural development. Lower-capability agricultural land will not automatically be considered suitable where wetlands, drainage features, wildlife habitat, groundwater vulnerability or other environmental constraints are present.

- 3) The continuation of crop production, pasture, and non-intensive livestock operations will be supported throughout the Agricultural District, subject to applicable federal and provincial legislation, municipal bylaws, and requirements intended to protect public health, safety, infrastructure, and the environment.
- 4) Consolidation of smaller parcels to create larger holdings for the purpose of cohesive agricultural operations will be encouraged.
- 5) Rural and agriculture related tourism operations shall be regulated specifically through the Zoning Bylaw.
- 6) An array of agricultural activities and value-added agribusinesses will be listed as either permitted or discretionary uses in the Zoning Bylaw.
- 7) The Future Land Use Map and Zoning Bylaw will identify the RM's general long-term land-use pattern. Agricultural operations and value-added agribusiness may be considered in locations where they are compatible with surrounding uses and supported by suitable access, servicing, and environmental conditions.
- 8) Where development is expected to place additional demands on municipal roads or infrastructure, the RM may require a servicing agreement, development levy agreement, road maintenance agreement, or other agreement authorized by legislation to assign the costs of required improvements or maintenance.
- 9) Developments generating significant heavy-truck traffic should be located near provincial highways, established heavy-haul routes, or roads capable of accommodating the proposed use. Where existing municipal roads are inadequate, the developer may be required to undertake or fund necessary improvements.
- 10) To reduce land use conflicts, incompatible land uses will be separated through zoning, with non-agricultural development being directed away from agricultural land.
- 11) Agricultural operations and value-added agribusiness will be encouraged to locate in areas where existing or planned services meet the needs of development.
- 12) Agricultural operations are encouraged to follow normally accepted agricultural practices and all applicable requirements of *The Agricultural Operations Act* and other provincial legislation.
- 13) Site-specific conditions that may limit agricultural or value-added development – including wetlands, flood-prone areas, sensitive habitat, incompatible neighbouring uses and inadequate road access – will be considered during the applicable development review.

Intensive Agricultural Uses

- 14) Intensive livestock operations will be regulated through the Zoning Bylaw and considered in accordance with *The Agricultural Operations Act* and all applicable provincial regulations, standards, and approval criteria.
- 15) Where provincial approval is required, the applicant must obtain approval from the responsible provincial ministry and/or agency. The applicant is responsible for demonstrating compliance with provincial requirements relating to matters such as manure storage and management, mortality management, water protection, drainage, environmental safeguards, and separation from neighbouring land uses.
- 16) Provincial approval does not remove the requirement to obtain any applicable municipal rezoning, discretionary-use approval, development permit, building permit, or other municipal authorization. Municipal approval does not constitute or guarantee provincial approval. Both provincial and municipal requirements must be satisfied before development proceeds.
- 17) When reviewing a proposed new or expanding intensive livestock operations, Council will consider:
 - a. Compliance with applicable provincial legislation, regulations, and approval criteria;
 - b. Separation from residences, urban municipalities, organized/unorganized hamlets, recreational areas, and other potentially incompatible uses;
 - c. Proximity to lakes, watercourses, wetlands, groundwater sources, and environmentally sensitive lands;
 - d. Drainage, runoff, manure management, and potential effects on water quality;
 - e. Prevailing winds, odour, noise, dust, and other potential land-use impacts;
 - f. Road access, traffic generation, and the capacity of municipal infrastructure;
 - g. The potential for future expansion of the operation; and
 - h. Compatibility with surrounding agricultural and non-agricultural land uses.

Agricultural Related Commercial and Industrial Uses

- 18) Reciprocal separation distances and other municipal development standards will be established in the Zoning Bylaw to reduce potential land-use conflicts. These standards are intended to complement applicable provincial requirements and will not replace any greater separation distance, environmental protection measure, or other condition imposed through the provincial approval process.

Farm Residences

- 19) One principal farm dwelling may be permitted on an agricultural operation in accordance with the Zoning Bylaw. Additional dwelling may be considered where they are accessory to and necessary for the operation, including accommodation for farm workers or family members

involved in the operation. Approval of an additional dwelling will not constitute approval for a future subdivision.

Council may only consider a reduction to the municipal separation distance as authorized by the Zoning Bylaw and applicable legislation. Any reduction must not conflict with provincial requirements or an approval issued by the Province, and Council must be satisfied that potential impacts have been appropriately addressed.

- 20) Secondary activities such as home-based businesses or additional agricultural related business may be permitted on an agricultural site when the proponent can display that such activity is secondary to the agriculture operation, have little impact on roadways, and that any potential adverse impacts to the environment or neighbouring property owners will be mitigated.

Agricultural Subdivision Policy

- 21) The fragmentation of agricultural lands is not encouraged. However, subdivision of land into parcels smaller than a quarter section for agricultural purposes will be permitted where:
- a. It is fragmented from the balance of the quarter section by either natural (river, creek, coulee, etc.) or man-made (roadway, railway, etc.) barriers.
 - b. It is intended to be consolidated under one title with adjacent land, in accordance with *The Land Titles Act*, to create a more viable agricultural unit.
 - c. It is located within an area identified for future growth and is consistent with the Future Land Use Map and applicable OCP policies.
 - d. It will accommodate the purchase or lease of Crown land.
 - e. Road widening may be required as part of any subdivision along a municipal road.
 - f. The land use is either permitted or discretionary and complies with the development standards outlined in the Zoning Bylaw.
 - g. The land use is supported by the policies contained herein and the Future Land Use Map.
- 22) A proposed subdivision or development must have legal and physically suitable access appropriate to its intended use. Where existing access or municipal roads are inadequate, the developer may be required to construct or upgrade a road or approach to RM standards.
- 23) Development and subdivision must not cause adverse drainage impacts on neighbouring lands, municipal infrastructure, wetlands, or downstream water bodies. Where drainage may be altered, the RM may require a drainage assessment or comprehensive drainage plan prepared by a qualified professional. Necessary approvals from the Water Security Agency and/or other authorities remain the responsibility of the applicant.
- 24) Development may be limited, redirected, or subject to conditions where necessary to protect wetlands, riparian areas, groundwater, wildlife habitat, heritage resources, or other environmentally or culturally sensitive features.

- 25) The Zoning Bylaw shall make provisions for a subdivision to accommodate existing or proposed yard site subdivisions.
- 26) The Zoning Bylaw shall make provisions for home and farm-based businesses to encourage a diversified economic base within the municipality and ensure that the agricultural character or land value is not diminished.
- 27) Applications for multiple-lot country residential development within the Agricultural District may be considered where:
- a. The site is identified as suitable for future residential growth on the Future Land Use Map or an amendment to the OCP is approved;
 - b. The development avoids unnecessary fragmentation and conversion of productive agricultural land;
 - c. Potential conflicts with agricultural and resource operations are avoided or appropriately mitigated;
 - d. The site has suitable legal access, road capacity, drainage, and water/wastewater servicing;
 - e. Wetlands, riparian areas, wildlife habitat, and other environmentally sensitive features are protected;
 - f. The development will not create unacceptable municipal servicing or infrastructure costs; and
 - g. The proposal conforms to all other applicable provisions of the OCP and Zoning Bylaw.

Approval of an OCP amendment, rezoning, subdivision, or development application remains at the discretion of the applicable approving authority.

5.3. Residential Land Use

5.3.1. Discussion

The RM of Mervin No. 499 offers a range of rural, agricultural, recreational, and lakeside living opportunities. Its natural amenities, agricultural economy, proximity to regional employment and expanding telecommunications services may contribute to continued interest in residential development.

As demographics, household needs, and working arrangements evolve, the RM recognizes the importance of providing appropriate housing opportunities for different ages, incomes, and stages of life. Residential growth must be balanced with the protection of agricultural land, lakes and natural areas, and with the municipality's ability to provide roads, emergency response, and other services.

Residential development will be directed toward suitable locations where it is compatible with surrounding land uses and can be supported by appropriate access, infrastructure, water supply, and wastewater servicing. Development around Turtle Lake, Brightsand Lake, and other water bodies will also be guided by the lakeshore development policies of this OCP.

5.3.2. Objectives

- 1) To encourage a range of residential opportunities that respond to difference ages, incomes, household needs, and lifestyles.
- 2) To direct residential growth towards locations identified for existing or future residential use.
- 3) To ensure that residential development is compatible with agricultural, resources, industrial, commercial, and recreational land uses.
- 4) To minimize the fragmentation and conversion of productive agricultural land.
- 5) To ensure that residential development can be adequately accessed and serviced without creating unreasonable municipal costs.
- 6) To protect residents and property from natural hazards, environmental constraints, and incompatible land uses.
- 7) To ensure that single-parcel and multiple-lot country residential development proceeds in an orderly and comprehensively planned manner.
- 8) To support appropriate housing options that allow residents to remain within the community through different stages of life.
- 9) To support compatible home-based businesses that maintain the residential character of the property and surrounding area.
- 10) To accommodate recreational vehicles as a discretionary use through a one-time development permit process and applicable annual municipal service-fee requirements, while encouraging the construction of permanent dwellings where practical and financially feasible.
- 11) To protect water quality, groundwater, wetlands, natural drainage, and environmentally sensitive lands when considering residential development.

5.3.3. Policies

General Residential Policies

- 1) The Zoning Bylaw will accommodate a range of housing forms appropriate to the character and servicing capacity of each residential district.
- 2) Secondary suites, garden suites, garage suites, care homes, and other supportive housing forms may be accommodated in accordance with the Zoning Bylaw and applicable building, health, logistical, and safety requirements.
- 3) Ready-to-move, modular, and manufactured homes may be accommodated in appropriate residential district where they comply with applicable development, access, and building standards.

- 4) Residential development will be directed away from incompatible industrial, resource, and intensive agricultural uses and from locations affected by unacceptable noise, odour, dust, traffic, or other hazards.
- 5) Residential development will not be supported on land subject to flooding, erosion, slope instability, inadequate drainage, groundwater vulnerability, or other hazards unless the risks can be safely and sustainably mitigated.
- 6) Residential growth should generally be directed toward established communities and areas identified for residential consideration on the Future Land Use Map. Identification on the map does not provide an automatic entitlement to rezoning, subdivision, or development.
- 7) Rezoning applications will be evaluated according to this OCP, site suitability, servicing and infrastructure capacity, environmental conditions, land-use compatibility, and the Zoning Bylaw.
- 8) Residential development must comply with the Zoning Bylaw, Building Bylaw, and all applicable provincial legislation, codes, regulations, and approval requirements.
- 9) The RM will periodically review population trends, residential land availability, development activity, and servicing capacity to determine whether additional land should be identified for residential growth.
- 10) The RM will seek to maintain an appropriate supply of residential land capable of accommodating different lot sizes, housing forms, and household needs.
- 11) Reciprocal separation distances between residential and potentially incompatible land uses will be established in the Zoning Bylaw. These distances are intended to reduce, but may not eliminate, potential land-use conflicts.
- 12) A reduction to a municipal separation distance may only be considered where authorized by the Zoning Bylaw and applicable legislation. An agreement between affected landowners may be considered but will not, by itself, require Council to approve the reduction.
- 13) Country residential development along provincial highways shall meet all of the regulations of the Ministry of Highways with respect to setbacks, location and access and the Developer is solely responsible for obtaining any, and all permits or approvals from the Ministry.
- 14) Country residential development in proximity to railway lands shall be carried out in accordance with the development standards outlined in the Zoning Bylaw, which are guided by *Guidelines for New Development in Proximity to Railway Operations*.
- 15) Residential development should entertain energy-efficient design, water conservation, low-impact drainage, and other measures appropriate to the scale and location of the development.

- 16) Residential subdivisions must be designed to protect wetlands, riparian areas, natural drainage features, significant vegetation, wildlife habitat, and habitat connections wherever reasonably possible.

Hamlet Residential Policies

- 17) Residential and compatible commercial infill may be considered within Livelong and Spruce Lake. Proposals for substantial subdivision or expansion within or adjacent to an organized hamlet may require a concept plan addressing land use, roads, servicing, drainage, dedicated lands and compatibility with existing development. Council will consult the applicable Hamlet Board before considering the concept plan.
- 18) The RM may support the consolidation of vacant registered lots in Cleeves with adjacent parcels where this would improve parcel configuration, reduce servicing obligations or facilitate an appropriate agricultural or rural use.

Single Parcel Country Residential Policies

- 19) Single-parcel country residential subdivisions may be considered where:
 - a. the proposed parcel is consistent with the density and subdivision standards established in the Zoning Bylaw;
 - b. unnecessary fragmentation of productive agricultural land is avoided;
 - c. the site has legal and physically suitable road access;
 - d. water supply and wastewater disposal can be provided in accordance with provincial requirements;
 - e. the development is compatible with nearby agricultural, resource, and industrial uses;
 - f. emergency services can reasonably access the property; and
 - g. the proposal is consistent with the Future Land Use Map and other applicable OCP policies.

Recreational Vehicles and Permanent Dwellings

- 20) Council recognizes that recreational vehicles provide an accessible seasonal or residential accommodation option and that constructing a permanent dwelling may not be practical or financially feasible for every property owner. The following policies apply wherever recreational vehicle accommodation is identified as a discretionary use under the Zoning Bylaw, including applicable single-parcel and multiple-lot residential districts.
- 21) The use of a recreational vehicle as a principal accommodation use will be classified as a discretionary use in the applicable zoning districts. The use will require discretionary-use approval by Council and the issuance of a development permit in accordance with the Zoning Bylaw.

- 22) An approved recreational vehicle use will require a one-time development permit. The permit will remain valid for the approved site and use unless:
- a. the use is discontinued for the period specified in the Zoning Bylaw;
 - b. the recreational vehicle is replaced either by a different recreational vehicle or a permanent dwelling;
 - c. the use is expanded or materially altered;
 - d. the property no longer complies with the conditions of approval or applicable bylaws; or
 - e. a new approval is otherwise required under the Zoning Bylaw.
- 23) Properties approved for recreational vehicle accommodation will be subject to the applicable municipal bylaw establishing annual service fees for recreational vehicles. Payment of a service fee does not replace the requirement for discretionary-use approval or a development permit and does not authorize any use or development that contravenes the OCP, Zoning Bylaw, or other applicable requirements.
- 24) When considering a recreational vehicle as a discretionary use, Council will consider:
- a. compatibility with neighbouring properties and the character of the area;
 - b. the number and placement of recreational vehicles and accessory structures;
 - c. legal and suitable road access;
 - d. water supply and wastewater management;
 - e. drainage, flooding, and environmental conditions;
 - f. fire protection and emergency access;
 - g. screening, site appearance, and outdoor storage; and
 - h. compliance with applicable municipal and provincial requirements.
- 25) The RM will continue to encourage the construction of permanent dwellings that comply with applicable development, building, water, and wastewater requirements. However, approval of a recreational vehicle use will not require the owner to construct a permanent dwelling within a prescribed period unless a time limitation is imposed as a site-specific condition of discretionary use approval.
- 26) Approval of a recreational vehicle as a discretionary use does not provide an entitlement to subdivision, additional recreational vehicles, permanent residential development, or other uses not included in the approval.
- 27) Detailed requirements respecting recreational vehicle use – including site standards, permitted accessory structures, wastewater management, servicing, screening, and conditions of approval – will be established in the Zoning Bylaw and other applicable municipal bylaws.

Multiple Lot Country Residential Policies

28) Multiple-lot country residential subdivisions should be located:

- a. in an area identified for potential residential growth on the Future Land Use Map;
- b. where suitable legal and physical road access, built to the RM standards, exists or will be provided by the developer;
- c. where utilities and services have sufficient capacity or can be provided at the developer's expense;
- d. where emergency services can reasonably access the development;
- e. outside lands subject to flooding, slope instability, inadequate drainage, or other hazards;
- f. where fragmentation and conversion of productive agricultural land are minimized;
- g. where wetlands, riparian areas, habitat, and natural drainage features can be protected; and
- h. where conflicts with agricultural, resource, industrial, and other surrounding uses can be avoided or mitigated.

29) Development and Design:

- a. Multiple-lot subdivisions may be required to proceed in phases. Approval of subsequent phases will depend on demonstrated demand, completion of required infrastructure, servicing capacity, compliance with the approved concept plan and the municipality's ability to accommodate additional development.
- b. The permitted density and maximum extent of a multiple-lot country residential development will be established through the applicable zoning district and approved concept plan. Density will reflect water and wastewater servicing, road capacity, emergency access, drainage, environmental conditions, compatibility, and the character of the surrounding area.

30) Concept Plan – To ensure that new multiple-lot residential subdivisions complement existing and future development, Council will require, in the interests of ensuring a comprehensive and planned approach to development, the preparation of a concept plan for the entire development area and submission of supporting documentation, where appropriate, as follows:

- a. Existing and proposed land uses.
- b. Agricultural and resource capability.
- c. Wetland and habitat information.
- d. Water and wastewater servicing.
- e. Stormwater and drainage management.
- f. Dedicated lands and public access.
- g. Phasing and Infrastructure responsibilities, which include fire protection and onsite storage.
- h. Cumulative effects where located near a lake.
- i. Reports, prepared by professionals certified to assess relevant factors: assess geotechnical suitability of the site, susceptibility to flooding or other environmental

hazards, together with any required mitigation measures. These measures may be attached as a condition for a development permit approval.

- j. Engineering reports to address concerns such as availability of water supply, surface water drainage, and sewage treatment and disposal.
- k. The concept plan shall provide an integrated layout for the total residential subdivision envisioned, showing road layout and access to external municipal roads, phasing of development and public access to dedicated lands. Once the concept plan has been accepted by Council, and the subdivision and development commence, no subsequent subdivision that is inconsistent with the approved concept plan and with all applicable policies in this Official Community Plan will be permitted without acceptance of a revised concept plan by Council.

31) Services:

a. Water:

- Every multiple-lot residential subdivision must demonstrate that a safe and sustainable water supply, wastewater system, stormwater management system, and solid-waste service can be provided. All systems must comply with applicable provincial requirements and receive approvals from the responsible authorities.

b. Sewer:

- Communal systems may be required where individual systems would create unacceptable risks to public health, groundwater, surface water, or long-term servicing.

c. Solid Waste:

- The developer will be responsible for the design, approval, and construction of required systems and for establishing an acceptable arrangement for their long-term ownership, operation, maintenance, and replacement.

32) Servicing Agreement – where subdivision is proposed, the RM may require the subdivision applicant to enter into a servicing agreement in accordance with *The Planning and Development Act, 2007*. The agreement may address roads, including snow removal; approaches; water; wastewater; drainage; solid waste; utilities; emergency access; dedicated lands; and other infrastructure and municipal services required to serve the development. Unless otherwise approved by Council, the developer will be responsible for all development-related infrastructure costs. Where development does not involve subdivision, development-related capital costs may be addressed through a development levy and development levy agreement only where authorized by an approved Development Levy Bylaw and applicable legislation.

33) The Zoning Bylaw will establish appropriate districts and development standards for single-parcel and multiple-lot country residential development. Standards may vary according to the location, intended density, lot size, servicing method, site coverage, building setbacks, and character of the development. The applicable density and development standards will reflect:

- a) agricultural land capability and fragmentation;
- b) compatibility with surrounding land uses;
- c) road access, traffic, and emergency service requirements;
- d) water supply and wastewater servicing capacity;
- e) drainage, groundwater, and environmental conditions;
- f) municipal infrastructure and servicing costs; and
- g) the approved concept plan, where required.

Home Based Business Policies

- 34) The Zoning Bylaw will provide for home-based businesses that diversify the local economy while remaining secondary to the principal residential use.
- 35) Home-based businesses must be compatible with the surrounding area and comply with applicable standards concerning employees, traffic, parking, outdoor storage, signage, noise, and other potential impacts.

5.4. Lakeshore Development

5.4.1. Discussion

Turtle Lake, Brightsand Lake, and the RM's other water bodies are important environmental, recreational, residential, and tourism assets. They provide fish and wildlife habitat, support local businesses and recreational activities, and contribute significantly to the identity and quality of life of lakeside communities. Wetlands, riparian areas, and natural shoreline vegetation support water quality by filtering runoff, stabilizing shorelines, and providing habitat.

The 2025 Turtle Lake Lakeshore and Watershed Management Study found that the lake's overall water chemistry remains generally good but that increasingly severe late-summer algae blooms and changes within the aquatic food web demonstrate significant biological sensitivity. The study also identified cumulative shoreline development, loss of natural shoreline, wastewater infrastructure, surface runoff, soil and drainage limitations, and recreational pressure as matters requiring coordinated management.

Future development around Turtle Lake will be guided by the study's findings and will consider natural carrying capacity, cumulative development effects, infrastructure and wastewater servicing, shoreline and riparian protection, road capacity, and recreational use. Growth should generally be directed toward existing development areas and suitable off-lake, multi-tiered, or clustered locations rather than additional linear shoreline development.

Development decisions around Brightsand Lake will reflect its distinct physical conditions, existing development pattern, and servicing capacity. A single-row lakefront development pattern may be considered as one means of limiting development intensity and inland expansion, subject to site-specific environmental, access, and servicing considerations.

Development around all water bodies will be carefully managed to protect water quality, natural shorelines, wetlands, wildlife habitat, public access, and the recreational character of lakeside communities.

5.4.2. Objectives

- 1) To protect and, where appropriate, encourage preservation of water quality, natural shorelines, riparian areas, wetlands, fish habitat, and wildlife habitat.
- 2) To ensure that lakeshore and lake-related development proceeds in an orderly, environmentally responsible, and comprehensively planned manner.
- 3) To manage development according to natural carrying capacity, cumulative effects, infrastructure and servicing capacity, road access, and recreational use.
- 4) To protect public access to lakes, municipal reserves and other public recreational lands.
- 5) To direct future development toward locations that are environmentally suitable and compatible with existing lakeside communities.
- 6) To support seasonal and year-round recreational living while maintaining the character and environmental quality of lakeside communities.
- 7) To minimize municipal infrastructure and servicing costs associated with lakeshore development.
- 8) To support appropriate tourism, recreation, home-based businesses, and commercial services that are compatible with surrounding development and lake protection objectives.
- 9) To accommodate recreational vehicles as a discretionary use through a one-time development permit process and the applicable annual municipal service-fee bylaw, while encouraging permanent dwellings where practical and financially feasible.
- 10) To engage and consult for lake and watershed planning with neighbouring municipalities, provincial agencies, and community organizations.
- 11) To monitor lake and watershed conditions, development activity and servicing capacity and periodically review relevant studies, policies, and development standards as new information becomes available.

5.4.3 Policies

General Lakeshore Development Policies

- 1) Residential building forms appropriate to lakeside communities will be accommodated through the applicable zoning districts. All buildings must comply with the Zoning Bylaw, Building Bylaw, and applicable provincial legislation, codes, and approval requirements.

- 2) Development will be directed away from lands subject to flooding, erosion, slope instability, inadequate drainage, groundwater vulnerability, or other hazards unless those risks can be appropriately mitigated.
- 3) Lakeshore development should generally be directed toward existing development areas and locations identified for consideration on the Future Land Use Map. Identification on the map does not provide an automatic entitlement to rezoning, subdivision or development.
- 4) Council may consider an amendment to the OCP or Zoning Bylaw, where the applicant demonstrates that the proposed development is consistent with lake-protection objectives and can be sustainably accessed and serviced.
- 5) The RM will use the most current environmental, development, and infrastructure information available when evaluating lakeshore growth. The Turtle Lake Lakeshore and Watershed Management Study will inform planning decisions around Turtle Lake. Development around Brightsand Lake and other water bodies will be evaluated according to available information and may require additional site-specific or lake-wide study where warranted.
- 6) The RM may apply adequate buffer zones between seasonal recreational areas, non-residential areas, natural protected areas, highways, railways, pipelines, and other incompatible uses.
- 7) The Zoning Bylaw will contain reciprocal separation distances between seasonal recreational development and non-residential development. Separation distances will be maintained and are intended to reduce, not eliminate, potential nuisances.
- 8) A reduction to a municipal separation distance may only be considered where authorized by the Zoning Bylaw and applicable legislation. An agreement between affected owners may be considered but will not, by itself, require Council to approve the reduction.
- 9) As a condition of a development permit or servicing agreement for a residence within 400 metres of a provincial highway or a main arterial road, Council may require the developer to carry out a Noise and Vibrations Study to determine the potential noise impacts of the highway on the proposed development. Based on the results of the Noise and Vibrations Study, sound attenuation in the form of a sound barrier, a solid wall or other method may be required at the discretion of Council.
- 10) Seasonal Recreational development in proximity to railway lands shall be carried out in accordance with the development standards outlined in the Zoning Bylaw, which are guided by *Guidelines for New Development in Proximity to Railway Operations*.
- 11) Development should incorporate water conservation, low-impact drainage, energy efficiency and other environmentally responsible design measures appropriate to the site.

- 12) Development must be designed to protect wetlands, riparian areas, natural drainage features, significant vegetation, wildlife habitat and habitat connections.
- 13) The removal of natural shoreline and riparian vegetation will be minimized. Where removal is necessary for approved access, utilities, structures, public recreation or ecological management, disturbance must be limited to the minimum area reasonably required and appropriate restoration or mitigation may be required. Council may require a riparian health assessment, environmental site assessment, vegetation-retention plan, or restoration plan where development could affect a lake, wetland, or shoreline.
- 14) Municipal reserve, environmental reserve, public reserve and any required environmental reserve easements will be addressed in accordance with provincial legislation and the characteristics of the proposed subdivision. Priority will be given to protecting sensitive shoreline areas, maintaining public access and creating connected public open spaces where feasible.

Concept Plans for Lakeshore Development

- 15) Council may require a Concept Plan before considering:
 - a) a multiple-lot lakeshore or lake-related subdivision;
 - b) a substantial rezoning or expansion of an existing lakeside development;
 - c) development within or adjacent to an organized hamlet or established lakeside community;
 - d) development near a lake, wetland, riparian area, or other environmentally sensitive feature; or
 - e) development that may create significant infrastructure, servicing, transportation, or recreational impacts.
- 16) A Concept Plan must address the entire area proposed for development, including all anticipated phases, and demonstrate how the proposal will be integrated with existing and potential future development. The Concept Plan must include where applicable:
 - a) existing land ownership, parcel boundaries, and land uses;
 - b) proposed land uses, lot layout, density, and development phasing;
 - c) road layout, legal access, traffic generation and connections to municipal and provincial transportation networks;
 - d) emergency access and fire protection considerations;
 - e) existing and proposed water, wastewater, stormwater, solid-waste, and utility services;
 - f) soil conditions, drainage, groundwater, flooding, erosion, slope stability, and other natural hazards;
 - g) lakes, wetlands, riparian areas, natural shorelines, vegetation, wildlife habitat, and other environmentally sensitive features;
 - h) measures for avoiding, minimizing, or mitigating environmental impacts;

- i) municipal reserve, environmental reserve, public access, parks, trails, and other dedicated lands;
 - j) effects on nearby hamlets, residential areas, recreational amenities, and agricultural or resource uses;
 - k) beach use, boating activity, parking, and other recreational-capacity considerations including storage;
 - l) anticipated demands on municipal roads, infrastructure, and services; and
 - m) any additional information Council considers necessary to evaluate the proposal.
- 17) A Concept Plan must demonstrate the proposed development:
- a) is consistent with this OCP and the Future Land Use Map;
 - b) can be safely and sustainably accessed and serviced;
 - c) is compatible with surrounding land uses and community character;
 - d) protects water quality, natural shorelines, wetlands, riparian areas, and habitat;
 - e) will not create unacceptable environmental, infrastructure, servicing, or recreational impacts; and
 - f) provides an appropriate arrangement for the construction, operation, maintenance, and replacement of required infrastructure.
- 18) For development within the Turtle Lake watershed, the Concept Plan must address the findings and recommendations of the most current Turtle Lake study, including natural carrying capacity, cumulative development effects, shoreline and riparian conditions, wastewater servicing, soil and drainage limitations, road capacity, and recreational use.
- 19) For development around Brightsand Lake, the Concept Plan must consider the lake's distinct physical conditions, existing development pattern and servicing capacity. Where a single-row lakefront development pattern is proposed, the Concept Plan must demonstrate how that pattern will limit development intensity and inland expansion while protecting natural shorelines, environmental features, and public access.
- 20) Council may require supporting studies to be prepared by qualified professionals, including:
- a) environmental and riparian assessments;
 - b) geotechnical and flood-hazard assessments;
 - c) hydrogeological or water-supply studies;
 - d) wastewater servicing assessments;
 - e) drainage and stormwater management plans;
 - f) traffic impact assessments;
 - g) recreational and/or boating capacity assessments; and
 - h) other studies relevant to the scale, location, and potential effects of the development.

- 20) Council's acceptance of the Concept Plan does not constitute approval of an OCP amendment, rezoning, subdivision, discretionary use or development permit. All subsequent applications remain subject to the applicable municipal and provincial approval processes.
- 21) Subdivision and development must substantially conform to the accepted Concept Plan. A revised Concept Plan may be required where the proposed land use, density, servicing, road layout, environmental effects, or phasing materially differs from the accepted plan.
- 22) Development may be required to proceed in phases. Consideration of subsequent phases will depend on completion of required infrastructure, available servicing capacity, compliance with the accepted Concept Plan, current environmental information, and the RM's capacity to accommodate additional development.
- 23) The preparation and review costs of a Concept Plan and its supporting studies will be the responsibility of the applicant unless Council agrees otherwise.

Resort Hamlet Policies

- 24) Organized hamlets and other established communities around Turtle Lake and Brightsand Lake serve important residential, recreational and tourism functions.
- 25) Council will consult the affected Hamlet Board when considering substantial rezoning, subdivision, or development within or adjacent to an organized hamlet or established community.

Lakeshore Development Policies

- 26) Lakeshore and lake-related development may be considered where the site is suitable, the proposal is compatible with surrounding uses and environmental, access, servicing, infrastructure and recreational-capacity requirements can be satisfactorily addressed.
- 27) Lakeshore development may be permitted at Brightsand Lake where vacant lots may accommodate demand.
- 28) Development around Brightsand Lake will be evaluated according to its distinct environmental conditions, existing development pattern, land availability, road access, and servicing capacity. A single-row lakefront development pattern may be considered where it would limit development intensity and inland expansion, protect environmental features, and provide appropriate public access.
- 29) Approval of future development will require site-specific evidence that water supply, wastewater disposal, drainage, access and environmental impacts can be appropriately managed.
- 30) Future development around Turtle Lake will be evaluated using the most current environmental and development information, including the Turtle Lake Lakeshore and Watershed Management

Study. Historical shoreline-capability classifications will not, by themselves, establish an entitlement to development.

- 31) Further linear shoreline development will generally not be supported. Appropriate growth should be directed toward existing development areas and suitable off-lake, multi-tiered or clustered locations.
- 32) Development may be limited, deferred, staged or redirected where cumulative effects, environmental conditions, wastewater servicing, infrastructure capacity or recreational use indicate that additional growth cannot be sustainably accommodated.
- 33) Environmentally sensitive or constrained lands may be placed within a Conservation District. Permitted and discretionary uses will be limited to those compatible with the protection of the area's environmental functions and development constraints.
- 34) Lakeside residential development may consist of registered surface parcels or other legally authorized forms of land tenure. The proposed form must provide acceptable arrangements for access, roads, utilities, dedicated lands, servicing, and long-term maintenance.
- 35) Commercial uses serving lakeside communities and visitors may be considered within established commercial nodes or suitable off-lake locations. Such uses must be compatible with surrounding residential and recreational uses and must protect water quality, natural shorelines, public access, and environmentally sensitive areas.
- 36) The Zoning Bylaw will establish appropriate lakeshore development districts and standards. Density, lot size, site coverage and setbacks will reflect environmental conditions, servicing capacity, road access, community character and the approved concept plan.
- 37) Recreational vehicle accommodation may be considered as a discretionary use in applicable lakeshore districts. Each approved use requires a one-time development permit and remains subject to the applicable recreational vehicle service fee bylaw, the conditions of approval and all relevant site, servicing, and wastewater requirements.

The RM will encourage permanent dwellings where practicable and financially feasible but recognizes that permanent construction may not be feasible for every property owner.

Home Based Business Policies

- 38) The Zoning Bylaw will provide for home-based businesses that diversify the local economy while remaining secondary to the principal residential or recreational use.
- 39) Home-based businesses must maintain the character of the area and comply with standards addressing employees, traffic, parking, outdoor storage, signage, noise, and other potential impacts.

5.5. Tourism and Recreational Development

5.5.1. Discussion

The RM of Mervin is an important regional destination for recreation and tourism. Turtle Lake, Brightsand Lake, regional parks, campgrounds, and other natural and community amenities support boating, fishing, camping, hiking, snowmobiling, ice fishing, and other seasonal and year-round activities. These opportunities contribute to the local economy, community identity, and quality of life of residents and visitors.

The RM supports the maintenance and responsible development of recreational amenities, tourism services, and visitor accommodations. Tourism and recreational development should be located where it can be safely accessed and adequately serviced and where it will be compatible with surrounding land uses and environmental conditions.

Around lakes and environmentally sensitive areas, tourism and recreational development must protect water quality, natural shorelines, wetlands, wildlife habitat, and public access. Opportunities should generally be directed toward existing recreation and commercial nodes or suitable off-lake locations where additional activity can be sustainably accommodated.

The RM will support cooperation among community organizations, businesses, tourism operators, neighbouring municipalities, and other interested parties to strengthen tourism and recreation while maintaining the municipality's rural, agricultural, and lakeside character.

5.5.2 Objectives

- 1) To support tourism and recreational development that contributes to the local economy and quality of life.
- 2) To ensure that tourism and recreational development occur in an orderly and environmentally responsible manner.
- 3) To avoid or minimize conflicts with agricultural, residential, resource, and other surrounding land uses.
- 4) To protect lakes, natural shorelines, wetlands, wildlife habitat, public access, and other environmental and recreational assets.
- 5) To support the maintenance, improvement, and appropriate expansion of existing recreational amenities.
- 6) To encourage seasonal and year-round recreation and tourism opportunities compatible with the RM's rural and lakeside character.
- 7) To support appropriate accommodations, campgrounds, cabins, and short-term rentals where access, servicing, and environmental conditions can be satisfactorily addressed.

- 8) To improve connections among communities, recreational areas, and tourism services through appropriate roads, trails, pathways, and signage.
- 9) To support accessible and inclusive recreational opportunities where practical.
- 10) To support partnerships with businesses, community organizations, neighbouring municipalities, Indigenous communities, and other levels of government where opportunities for cooperation exist.
- 11) To recognize and promote the RM's natural, agricultural, cultural, and historical features.
- 12) To monitor tourism trends, recreational demand, and land availability when reviewing future land-use needs.

5.5.3 Policies

General Recreation and Tourism Policies

- 1) Subject to applicable legislation and municipal priorities, money received in lieu of municipal reserve may be used for the acquisition, improvement, or development of public parks, recreational lands, and related facilities.
- 2) The RM will support tourism and recreational development that protects natural areas, minimizes environmental impacts, and can be appropriately accessed and serviced.
- 3) During the subdivision process, proposed municipal reserve lands will be evaluated according to their recreational, environmental, public-access, and community value. Money in lieu may be considered where land dedication would not advance the RM's long-term public objectives.
- 4) The Zoning Bylaw will identify the districts in which tourism and recreational uses may be considered and establish appropriate development standards.
- 5) The RM may engage and collaborate with community organizations, regional parks, and other facility operators for maintenance and improvement of municipally owned recreational facilities where Council determines that a broader community benefit exists.
- 6) Development adjacent to parks, open spaces, trails, and recreational or tourism facilities will be evaluated for compatibility. Appropriate setbacks, buffers, screening or other measures may be required to minimize conflicts.
- 7) Recreational or tourism development may be limited, redirected, or subject to conditions where necessary to protect sensitive habitat, species at risk, heritage resources, culturally significant areas or important natural features.
- 8) The RM will support, where appropriate, cooperation with neighbouring municipalities, tourism organizations, community groups, businesses, and Indigenous communities.

- 9) The RM recognizes the contribution of volunteers, community organizations, and businesses in organizing events and providing recreational and tourism opportunities.
- 10) New public recreational facilities should incorporate accessibility and inclusivity design considerations where practical.
- 11) Low-impact activities that allow residents and visitors to experience the RM's natural environment will be supported in appropriate locations.
- 12) Campgrounds, cabins, resorts, short-term rentals, and other visitor accommodations may be considered in appropriate locations where land-use compatibility, access, parking, water, wastewater, drainage, emergency response, and environmental impacts can be satisfactorily addressed.
- 13) Regular updates to population projections and tourism trends will inform the RM's land use planning and ensure recreational and tourism needs are met.
- 14) The RM will seek to protect significant natural and scenic areas and, where appropriate, support opportunities for public access.
- 15) The RM may support trails, pathways, signage and other connections where they provide a public benefit and can be developed and maintained safely and sustainably.
- 16) The RM may cooperate with businesses, community organizations and tourism partners to promote local recreational, agricultural, cultural and historical attractions.

Parks and Multi-Site Developments

- 17) The individual recreational vehicle accommodation policies in Section 5.3 apply throughout the RM wherever a recreational vehicle is identified as a discretionary use. The following policies apply specifically to multi-site recreation vehicle developments that include campgrounds.
- 18) Multi-site recreational vehicle development may be considered in areas suitable for tourism, recreation, or residential growth. Identification on the Future Land Use Map does not provide an automatic entitlement to rezoning, subdivision, or development.
- 19) Multi-site recreational vehicle development will be evaluated according to:
 - a. compatibility with surrounding agricultural, residential, recreational, commercial, and resource uses;
 - b. road access, traffic generation, and emergency access;
 - c. proposed density, site layout, and phasing;
 - d. water supply, wastewater servicing, and drainage;
 - e. solid-waste collection and storage;
 - f. fire protection;
 - g. parking, landscaping, screening, and outdoor storage;

- h. recreational amenities and public access;
 - i. natural hazards and environmentally sensitive features; and
 - j. cumulative effects on lakes, municipal infrastructure, and nearby communities.
- 20) Multi-site recreation vehicle developments may consist of leased sites, individually titled parcels, condominium units, or other legally authorized arrangements. The proposed ownership or occupancy structure must provide acceptable arrangements for roads, utilities, common areas, services, and long-term operation and maintenance.
- 21) Council will require a Concept Plan for a proposed multi-site recreational vehicle development. In addition to the general Concept Plan requirements of this OCP, the plan must identify:
 - a) the number, dimensions, and arrangement of recreational vehicle sites;
 - b) internal roads and emergency access routes;
 - c) visitor and occupant parking;
 - d) water and wastewater systems;
 - e) washrooms and other common facilities, where proposed;
 - f) drainage and stormwater management;
 - g) garbage and recycling storage;
 - h) recreational and open-space areas;
 - i) landscaping, screening, and buffers;
 - j) fire protection measures;
 - k) proposed development phases; and
 - l) arrangements for long-term operation and maintenance.
- 22) Every multi-site recreational vehicle development must demonstrate that safe and sustainable water, wastewater, drainage, and solid-waste services can be provided. All systems must comply with applicable provincial requirements and receive approval from the responsible authorities. Communal systems may be required where individual systems would create unacceptable risks to public health, groundwater, surface water, or long-term servicing.
- 23) A multi-site recreational vehicle development may be required to proceed in phases. Consideration of subsequent phases will depend on completion of required infrastructure, servicing capacity, use of earlier phases, compliance with the accepted Concept Plan, current environmental information, and the RM's ability to accommodate additional development.
- 24) Where subdivision is proposed, the RM may require the subdivision applicant to enter into a servicing agreement in accordance with *The Planning and Development Act, 2007*. The agreement may address roads, including snow removal; approaches; water; wastewater; drainage; solid waste; utilities; emergency access; dedicated lands; and other infrastructure and municipal services required to serve the development. Unless otherwise approved by Council, the developer will be responsible for all development-related infrastructure costs. Where

development does not involve subdivision, development-related capital costs may be addressed through a development levy and development levy agreement only where authorized by an approved Development Levy Bylaw and applicable legislation.

- 25) The Zoning Bylaw will establish appropriate districts and development standards for multi-site developments that include campgrounds. Standards may address density, site area, setbacks, site coverage, accessory structures, servicing, parking, screening, outdoor storage, fire protection, and recreational amenities.
- 26) A reduction to a municipal separation distance may only be considered where authorized by the Zoning Bylaw and applicable legislation. An agreement between affected owners may be considered but will not, by itself, require Council to approve the reduction.
- 27) Multi-site recreational vehicle developments shall be designed and developed in a manner that limits the loss of habitat and wildlife corridors by retaining and incorporating natural features of the site.
- 28) Municipal reserve, environmental reserve and easements, and public reserve will be addressed in accordance with provincial legislation, site conditions, and the public access and environmental objectives of this OCP.
- 29) Council will consult the affected Hamlet Board when considering substantial rezoning, subdivision, or development within or adjacent to a hamlet.
- 30) Multi-site recreational vehicle development may be considered where the site is suitable, and the proposal can address land-use compatibility, environmental protection, access, servicing, and infrastructure requirements.
- 31) Multi-site recreational vehicle developments may consist of individually titled parcels, leased sites, or other legally authorized arrangements. The proposed form must provide acceptable arrangements for roads, utilities, services, common areas, and long-term maintenance.
- 32) Services:

Every multi-site recreational vehicle development must demonstrate that safe and suitable water, wastewater, drainage, and solid-waste services can be provided. All systems must comply with provincial requirements and receive approval from the responsible authorities. Communal water or wastewater systems may be required where individual systems would create unacceptable public health, groundwater, surface water, or long-term servicing risks.
- 33) Servicing Agreements:

Where subdivision is proposed, the RM may require the subdivision applicant to enter into a servicing agreement in accordance with *The Planning and Development Act, 2007*. The agreement may address roads, including snow removal; approaches; water; wastewater; drainage; solid waste; utilities; emergency access; dedicated lands; and other infrastructure and municipal

services required to serve the development. Unless otherwise approved by Council, the developer will be responsible for all development-related infrastructure costs. Where development does not involve subdivision, development-related capital costs may be addressed through a development levy and development levy agreement only where authorized by an approved Development Levy Bylaw and applicable legislation.

- 34) The Zoning Bylaw will establish appropriate districts and standards for recreational vehicle parks, campgrounds, subdivisions and individual RV accommodation. Standards may address density, site area, setbacks, site coverage, accessory structures, servicing, parking, screening, outdoor storage, fire protection and recreational amenities.

5.6. Industrial and Commercial Development

5.6.1. Discussion

Commercial and industrial development contributes to employment, municipal services, and the diversification of the RM's economy. Opportunities exist in agriculture and value-added processing, oil and gas, forestry, transportation, construction, tourism, retail, and other service industries.

Commercial development is generally suited to established commercial areas, locations near neighbouring urban municipalities, and provincial highway or major transportation corridors that provide visibility and safe access. Commercial uses serving lakeside communities should generally be directed toward existing commercial nodes or suitable off-lake locations where they can be adequately serviced without adversely affecting water quality, natural shorelines, or surrounding residential and recreational uses.

Industrial development should generally be directed toward existing industrial or resource areas and other locations with suitable transportation access, infrastructure, and separation from incompatible uses. The RM will support commercial and industrial development that contributes to the local and regional economy while minimizing land-use conflicts, environmental effects, and unreasonable demands on municipal infrastructure.

5.6.2. Objectives

- 1) To support timely, transparent, and consistent consideration of commercial and industrial development applications.
- 2) To support a diverse commercial and industrial sector that serves ratepayers, agricultural and resource industries, seasonal residents, and visitors.
- 3) To direct commercial and industrial development toward locations with suitable access, infrastructure, and servicing capacity.
- 4) To encourage the gathering of compatible commercial and industrial uses where this will improve servicing efficiency and reduce land-use conflicts.

- 5) To minimize the fragmentation and conversion of productive agricultural land.
- 6) To avoid or mitigate conflicts with residential, agricultural, recreational, and environmentally sensitive lands.
- 7) To direct development generating substantial heavy-truck traffic toward provincial highways, established heavy-haul routes, and municipal roads capable of supporting the proposed use.
- 8) To ensure that development-related infrastructure and servicing costs are appropriately assigned and do not create an unreasonable burden on existing ratepayers.
- 9) To protect water quality, drainage, groundwater, wetlands, habitat, and other environmental features.
- 10) To support commercial and industrial development which compliments the RM's agricultural, resource, tourism, and recreational strengths.
- 11) To encourage environmentally responsible design, operation, and site reclamation.
- 12) To coordinate municipal development requirements with applicable provincial and federal regulatory processes.

5.6.3. Policies

General Commercial and Industrial Policies

- 1) Commercial and industrial uses will be permitted or considered as discretionary uses in the districts established by the Zoning Bylaw. Uses proposed outside an appropriate commercial or industrial district may require rezoning. Screening, buffering, landscaping or other measures may be required where necessary to address visual, land-use, or watershed impacts.
- 2) Compatible commercial and industrial businesses will be encouraged to locate near one another where gathering will support efficient infrastructure use and reduce land-use conflicts.
- 3) Infill and redevelopment of vacant or underutilized commercial and industrial properties will be supported where the site is suitable, and the proposed use is compatible with surrounding development.
- 4) Development requiring substantial water use must demonstrate that an adequate and sustainable supply is available and that the proposed withdrawal will not adversely affect existing users, groundwater, surface water, or environmentally sensitive areas. Applicable provincial approvals remain the responsibility of the developer.
- 5) Commercial and industrial development should be located along roads capable of safely accommodating the anticipated traffic type and volume. Uses generating substantial heavy-truck

traffic should generally be directed toward provincial highways, established heavy-haul routes, or other suitable transportation corridors.

- 6) Where an existing municipal road or approach is inadequate, the developer may be required to construct or fund necessary improvements and enter into a road maintenance or servicing agreement.
- 7) Development must not create adverse drainage impacts on neighbouring lands, municipal infrastructure, wetlands, or downstream water bodies. Where drainage may be altered, the RM may require a drainage assessment or comprehensive drainage plan prepared by a qualified professional. Required provincial approvals remain the responsibility of the developer.
- 8) Permitted use applications will be reviewed by the Development Officer according to the Zoning Bylaw. Discretionary-use and rezoning applications will be considered by Council according to applicable legislation, this OCP and the Zoning Bylaw.
- 9) Application timelines and extension procedures will be governed by applicable legislation and municipal bylaws.
- 10) Development must comply with the Zoning Bylaw, Building Bylaw, and all applicable provincial and federal legislation, codes, standards, and approval requirements.
- 11) The RM will seek to process complete applications consistently and within applicable statutory timelines.
- 12) Municipal review will be coordinated with provincial or federal requirements where practical; however, municipal approval does not replace or guarantee any other required approval.
- 13) Development along a provincial highway must comply with applicable Ministry of Highways requirements. The developer is responsible for obtaining all required highway access, setback, and other approvals.
- 14) Commercial and industrial development should incorporate energy efficiency, water conservation, low-impact drainage, pollution prevention, and other environmentally responsible design measures appropriate to the proposed use.
- 15) Development should retain wetlands, drainage features, significant vegetation, and wildlife habitat where reasonably possible. Avoidance will be preferred over mitigation.
- 16) Development near railway lands will be evaluated according to the applicable development standards and recognized railway-proximity guidelines.
- 17) Where development is proposed within or adjacent to an urban municipality or organized hamlet, the RM may consult the affected municipality or Hamlet Board concerning land-use compatibility, access, servicing and anticipated impacts.

18) The Zoning Bylaw will provide criteria for business development, commercial uses, and industrial uses allowed within the RM, as well as for the processing of development applications.

19) Commercial and industrial growth should generally be directed toward existing development areas and locations identified on the Future Land Use Map. Identification on the map does not provide an automatic entitlement to rezoning, subdivision or development.

Development outside an identified growth area may be considered where its location is necessary because of access to resources, transportation requirements, land-area needs, separation from populated areas, or another demonstrated site-specific requirement. The proposal must otherwise conform to this OCP.

20) Council may consider an amendment to the OCP or Zoning Bylaw where the proposed location is appropriate and the applicant has addressed compatibility, access, servicing, infrastructure, and environmental conditions.

21) The RM will periodically review commercial and industrial development activity, land availability, infrastructure capacity, and economic trends. Additional growth areas may be identified where the existing supply is insufficient or does not meet emerging development needs.

22) Commercial or industrial uses that may generate noise, dust, odour, vibration, light, emissions, traffic, or other potential nuisances must comply with the Zoning Bylaw and may be required to provide setbacks, buffers, screening, or mitigation measures.

23) Reciprocal separation distances may be established in the Zoning Bylaw to reduce potential conflicts between incompatible uses.

24) A reduction to a municipal separation distance may only be considered where authorized by the Zoning Bylaw and applicable legislation. An agreement between affected owners may be considered but will not, by itself, require Council to approve the reduction.

25) New or expanding operations shall conform to all development standards specified in the Zoning Bylaw.

26) The Zoning Bylaw will provide for exterior storage and warehousing uses, bulk fuel and farm chemical depots, industrial or farm machinery dealers, and similar uses.

27) Agricultural processing, storage, service and value-added agribusiness may be accommodated in agricultural, commercial or industrial districts according to the scale, characteristics and potential impacts of the proposed use.

Commercial and Industrial Subdivision Policies

28) Rezoning or subdivision for commercial or industrial development will be evaluated according to land availability, the nature and scale of the proposed use, compatibility, transportation access,

servicing, infrastructure capacity, environmental conditions, and consistency with the Future Land Use Map.

29) Before supporting the development or subdivision of land for commercial or industrial purposes, Council may require a Concept Plan that outlines the following information:

- a. the types of commercial or industrial use to be contained on the site;
- b. the size and number of parcels proposed;
- c. the installation and construction of roads, services and utilities;
- d. the potential impacts on adjacent land uses, and proposed measures to reduce any negative impacts;
- e. Reports, prepared by professionals certified to assess relevant factors, to assess geotechnical suitability of the site, susceptibility to flooding or other environmental hazards, together with any required mitigation measures. These measures may be attached as a condition for a development permit approval.
- f. Engineering reports to address concerns such as availability of water supply, surface water drainage, and sewage treatment and disposal.
- g. the environmental suitability of the site and other potentially affected lands with particular consideration to the soils, topography, drainage and availability of services, proximity to wildlife management areas, critical wildlife habitat, fish spawning areas and hazard land;
- h. the access, egress, and the potential impacts of the proposed development on the highway system and traffic safety;
- i. the location of proposed uses in relationship to adjacent or surrounding commercial or industrial uses;
- j. development standards or design criteria that include such aspects as parking for large trucks, landscaping, screening, storage, signage, and building design and finish; and,
- k. any other matters that Council considers necessary.

Council's acceptance of a Concept Plan does not constitute approval of an OCP amendment, rezoning, subdivision, discretionary use, or development permit. Subsequent applications remain subject to applicable municipal and provincial approval processes.

30) Commercial or industrial development should avoid sterilizing known or demonstrated aggregate, oil and gas, forestry, or other resource opportunities. Council will consider the value and accessibility of the resource, compatibility, environmental conditions, and the relative public benefit of the proposed development.

31) Uses involving the manufacture, processing, storage, or transportation of hazardous materials will be directed toward appropriate industrial locations with suitable separation, transportation access, and emergency-response capacity. Council may require an environmental assessment, risk assessment, emergency-response plan, spill-response plan, or other supporting information.

32) The dedication or acquisition of land for road widening may be required where necessary to safely accommodate the proposed development and anticipated traffic.

33) Services:

Commercial and industrial development must demonstrate that an adequate and sustainable water supply, wastewater system, drainage system, solid-waste service and utility capacity can be provided for the proposed use. Proposals must address domestic and process water, sanitary and industrial wastewater, stormwater, hazardous waste and other operational requirements. All systems must comply with applicable provincial and federal requirements and receive approval from the responsible authorities. The developer must provide an acceptable arrangement for the construction, ownership, operation, maintenance and eventual replacement or decommissioning of required infrastructure.

34) Servicing Agreement:

Where subdivision is proposed, the RM may require the subdivision applicant to enter into a servicing agreement in accordance with *The Planning and Development Act, 2007*. The agreement may address roads, including snow removal; approaches; water; wastewater; drainage; solid waste; utilities; emergency access; dedicated lands; and other infrastructure and municipal services required to serve the development. Unless otherwise approved by Council, the developer will be responsible for all development-related infrastructure costs. Where development does not involve subdivision, development-related capital costs may be addressed through a development levy and development levy agreement only where authorized by an approved Development Levy Bylaw and applicable legislation.

5.7. Municipal Services

5.7.1. Discussion

Municipal infrastructure and public services are essential to public health, safety, economic activity and quality of life. The RM owns and maintains a range of assets, including roads, drainage infrastructure, public works facilities and certain utility systems. Other services are provided through public utility boards, regional organizations, provincial agencies and private utility providers.

The RM will plan, operate, maintain and renew municipally owned infrastructure in a fiscally responsible manner that reflects service needs, asset condition, growth priorities and available financial resources. New development will be directed toward locations where suitable access and services exist or can be provided without creating an unreasonable burden on existing ratepayers.

Infrastructure planning will consider long-term operating and replacement costs, climate and extreme-weather risks, environmental protection and changing community needs. Around Turtle Lake, Brightsand Lake and other sensitive water bodies including their watersheds, water, wastewater, drainage and solid-waste decisions will also consider water quality, groundwater vulnerability, natural drainage, cumulative development effects and environmental capacity.

5.7.2. Objectives

- 1) To provide municipal services in an efficient, economical, and environmentally responsible manner.
- 2) To plan, maintain and renew municipal infrastructure according to service needs, asset condition, risk, growth priorities, and available financial resources.
- 3) To maintain a municipal road network that supports safe and appropriate access for agricultural, resource, commercial, recreational, and residential users.
- 4) To coordinate transportation, utilities, drainage, and public works with provincial agencies, regional organizations, neighbouring municipalities, and utility providers.
- 5) To identify and protect corridors, easements and lands required for existing and future infrastructure.
- 6) To locate public works and utility facilities where they are compatible with surrounding land uses and environmental conditions.
- 7) To ensure that development-related infrastructure and servicing costs are appropriately assigned and do not create an unreasonable burden on existing ratepayers.
- 8) To monitor water, wastewater, drainage and other infrastructure capacity and plan improvements where demand, regulatory requirements or asset condition demonstrate a need.
- 9) To incorporate climate resilience, emergency preparedness and extreme-weather considerations into infrastructure planning and design.
- 10) To protect surface water, groundwater, wetlands, and natural drainage systems when planning infrastructure and municipal services.
- 11) To support regional or shared-service arrangements where they improve service delivery, long-term viability, or cost efficiency.

5.7.3. Policies

- 1) New development proposing a communal water or wastewater system must demonstrate an acceptable arrangement for the system's design, approval, construction, ownership, financing, operation, maintenance, monitoring, renewal, and eventual decommissioning. The developer and users will generally be responsible for development-related and ongoing system costs unless Council agrees otherwise. The system must receive all required provincial approvals and be operated by an appropriately authorized and qualified entity. Council may require a servicing agreement, utility agreement, financial security, or other mechanism authorized by legislation before supporting the development.

- 2) Council may consider proposals for communal water or wastewater systems serving existing hamlets, lakeside communities, or multiple-lot developments. The proposal must include preliminary engineering, estimated capital and operating costs, proposed governance and ownership, evidence of user support, and a long-term financial and asset-management plan. Financing may be considered through user charges, local improvement procedures, a public utility board, or another mechanism authorized by legislation.
- 3) Existing water and wastewater systems operated by public utility boards, cooperatives or other authorized entities may continue where they maintain all required approvals and comply with applicable municipal, provincial and federal requirements. New privately or independently operated communal systems may be considered where the applicant demonstrates that connection to an existing system is not practical and that the proposed system will be technically, operationally and financially viable over its full lifecycle.
- 4) Before supporting a new system, Council will consider provincial requirements, engineering recommendations, ownership and governance, operator qualifications, financial capacity, infrastructure replacement and the potential implications for the RM. Installation within a municipal road allowance requires municipal authorization and will be subject to terms concerning location, construction, maintenance, liability, relocation and restoration. Authorization to occupy a road allowance does not transfer ownership or maintenance responsibility to the RM.
- 5) When reviewing a subdivision or major development, the RM may consult utility providers regarding existing facilities, available capacity and planned system improvements.
- 6) Utility lines and facilities should be coordinated with existing and planned roads, development areas, and infrastructure corridors. Utilities must be located to avoid unnecessary constraints on future development and minimize disturbance to agricultural and environmentally sensitive lands.
- 7) Solid waste, liquid waste, and wastewater-treatment facilities may be considered in suitable locations in accordance with the Zoning Bylaw and applicable provincial requirements. Such facilities must be located and designed to protect residential and recreational areas, surface water, groundwater, wetlands and other sensitive features.
- 8) The RM will support regional cooperation in solid waste and wastewater management where it improves environmental protection, service reliability, or cost efficiency. Facilities replaced by regional systems must be appropriately closed, decommissioned, and monitored in accordance with provincial requirements.
- 9) The RM will monitor infrastructure use and capacity and plan expansion, renewal or service adjustments where established thresholds, regulatory requirements, asset condition or growth demands indicate that action is required.

- 10) Required corridors, easements and lands for public works and utilities may be protected or acquired through subdivision, development, agreement or other legally authorized means.
- 11) Where pipelines, utility lines or transportation facilities cross municipal roads or road allowances, the RM may impose construction, crossing, restoration, inspection and maintenance requirements necessary to protect municipal infrastructure and public safety.
- 12) Applicants are responsible for identifying pipelines, utility corridors, and related facilities that may affect the proposed development and for obtaining information and approvals from the applicable operator and regulatory authority.
- 13) Development near pipelines or related facilities must address applicable setbacks, safety requirements, access restrictions and emergency-planning considerations. The RM may require consultation with the facility operator or responsible regulatory authority.
- 14) Pipeline and utility development must comply with applicable federal, provincial and municipal requirements and should minimize conflicts with populated areas, waste facilities, airports, railways, transportation corridors and other incompatible uses.
- 15) The Zoning Bylaw will identify districts and development standards appropriate for public works and utility facilities.
- 16) Setbacks, buffers or reciprocal separation distances may be established to reduce conflicts between public works, utilities and surrounding land uses.
- 17) A reduction to a municipal separation distance may only be considered where authorized by the Zoning Bylaw and applicable legislation. An agreement between affected owners may be considered but will not, by itself, require Council to approve the reduction.
- 18) The RM will use asset-management planning to identify infrastructure condition, risk, lifecycle costs, renewal priorities, and future capacity needs.
- 19) Municipal infrastructure decisions will consider adopted asset-management plans, capital plans, budgets, service standards, and available funding.
- 20) The RM will periodically review population and development trends, infrastructure condition, service demand, and available capacity to determine whether municipal infrastructure or public works improvements are required. Asset-management planning, regulatory requirements, development activity, environmental conditions, and available financial resources will inform the timing and priority of infrastructure renewal or expansion.
- 21) Where practical, the RM may establish service-capacity indicators for infrastructure with known limitations, including water, wastewater, drainage, roads and solid-waste facilities. These indicators may be used to determine when additional study, upgrading, expansion or development staging is required.

- 22) The RM may support regional and renewable energy projects where they provide community or economic benefits and can be developed without unacceptable land-use, infrastructure or environmental impacts and proper end-of-life disposal plans.
- 23) The Zoning Bylaw will identify appropriate districts and development standards for energy generation, transmission, storage and related facilities.
- 24) The RM may consider energy efficiency, renewable energy, and other low-carbon or resilient infrastructure measures in municipally owned facilities where technically and financially practical.
- 25) Development will be directed away from areas where infrastructure is exposed to unacceptable flooding, erosion, wildfire, extreme-weather, or climate-related risks unless those risks can be safely and sustainably mitigated.
- 26) Development must have legal and physically suitable road access appropriate to the proposed use. Direct access to an adjacent municipal road will not be required where another legally authorized and acceptable access arrangement is provided.
- 27) Development will generally be encouraged in locations where suitable roads and services exist or can be efficiently extended.
- 28) Where subdivision or development requires new or upgraded municipal infrastructure, the RM may require a servicing agreement, development levy agreement, road maintenance agreement, or other agreement authorized by legislation.
- 29) Unless Council determines that a broader municipal benefit justifies a contribution, the developer will be responsible for infrastructure and servicing costs attributable to the proposed development.
- 30) Subdivisions and other developments with the potential to materially alter drainage must provide a drainage or stormwater-management plan appropriate to the scale and complexity of the proposal. Development must not create adverse drainage impacts on neighbouring lands, municipal infrastructure, wetlands, or downstream water bodies.
- 31) The developer is responsible for obtaining required off-site drainage easements and provincial approvals.
- 32) When Council identifies that the municipality will incur additional costs such as upgrading infrastructure on a proposed development that does not involve the subdivision of land, the applicant may be required to enter into a Development Levy Agreement with the RM to recover the capital costs.
- 33) Where warranted by the nature, scale, or location of a proposed development, drainage and stormwater management systems shall be designed by a professional engineer or other qualified professional, as appropriate, in accordance with applicable engineering and provincial standards.

- 34) The RM may pursue applicable federal, provincial, regional and other funding opportunities to support eligible infrastructure planning, construction, upgrades, and renewal projects.
- 35) Municipal services will be planned and provided in a manner consistent with the Future Land Use Map, this OCP, municipal service priorities, and available resources.
- 36) The RM may establish or adopt appropriate design and construction standards for new and upgraded municipal infrastructure.
- 37) The RM will encourage residents and businesses to reduce waste through recycling, composting, reuse, and other environmentally responsible practices where suitable programs and facilities are available.
- 38) At the date of adoption of this OCP, no municipal reserve site is designated for school purposes because consultation is pending with the applicable school division and the Minister responsible for the administration of *The Education Act, 1995*. If a future need is identified, the RM will consult the applicable school division, the Minister and any affected municipality, ensure the creation of a municipal reserve site suitable in size and location for school purposes, and amend this OCP to designate that location. Until such a need is identified, municipal reserve dedication or money in lieu will be administered through the subdivision process in accordance with provincial legislation and in a manner that supports equitable treatment of subdivision applicants and municipalities within the region.

5.8. Environmental Stewardship and Resource Conservation

5.8.1. Discussion

The RM's lakes, wetlands, groundwater, forests, soils, natural landscapes, fish, and wildlife habitat are important environmental, social, and economic assets. These natural systems support agriculture, recreation, tourism, resource activity, and the quality of life of residents and visitors.

Development and land-use activities can affect water quality, drainage, soil, vegetation, habitat, and other environmental features. The RM recognizes its land-use planning responsibilities under *The Planning and Development Act, 2007* while acknowledging the regulatory responsibilities of provincial and federal agencies, including the Water Security Agency, Ministry of Environment and Saskatchewan Health Authority.

The Turtle Lake study demonstrates the interrelationship among land use, runoff, wetlands, natural shoreline vegetation, groundwater, wastewater systems, and lake health. It also identifies the need to consider natural carrying capacity and the cumulative effects of development. These findings will inform municipal planning decisions around Turtle Lake, while development around Brightsand Lake and other water bodies will be evaluated according to their distinct conditions and available environmental information.

The RM will support development that avoids or minimizes environmental impacts, protects public health and safety, and maintains the natural systems on which the municipality's communities and economy depend.

5.8.2. Objectives

- 1) To promote land-use, subdivision, and development practices that support soil conservation, water quality, environmental sustainability and public health and safety.
- 2) To support responsible natural-resource development that contributes to the municipality's economic viability.
- 3) To avoid development that would unnecessarily prevent access to or responsible development of known mineral, aggregate, oil, gas, or forest resources.
- 4) To protect lakes, wetlands, riparian areas, groundwater, fish, and wildlife habitat and other significant natural features.
- 5) To protect historical, archaeological, and culturally significant sites from incompatible development.
- 6) To maintain natural vegetation, habitat connections, and biodiversity where reasonably possible.
- 7) To direct development away from lands affected by flooding, erosion, slope instability, inadequate drainage, or other hazards unless those risks can be safely mitigated.
- 8) To avoid, minimize, or mitigate development impacts on wetlands, riparian areas, significant landscapes, provincially designated lands, and other environmentally sensitive areas.
- 9) To use dedicated lands, environmental reserve easements, conservation tools, and development design to protect qualifying environmentally sensitive features through the subdivision process.
- 10) To recognize provincial and federal responsibilities for Crown lands, forests, wildlife, water and natural-resource regulation.
- 11) To support watershed-based and intermunicipal approaches to environmental planning where appropriate.
- 12) To consider cumulative environmental effects when evaluating substantial development near lakes or other environmentally sensitive areas.

5.8.3. Policies

- 1) Development must be designed and operated to avoid or minimize adverse effects on groundwater, surface water, wetlands, and downstream water bodies. Proponents are responsible for complying with applicable water-use, wastewater, drainage, and environmental requirements.

- 2) Development must provide suitable drainage and stormwater management appropriate to its scale and location. Runoff must not create unacceptable flooding, erosion, pollution, or drainage impacts on neighbouring lands, municipal infrastructure, wetlands, or downstream water bodies.
- 3) Development should avoid unnecessary removal or disturbance of natural vegetation, riparian areas, fish habitat, wildlife habitat and significant ecological features. The Zoning Bylaw may establish setbacks, vegetation-retention standards and requirements for environmental assessment, mitigation or restoration.
- 4) Development must comply with applicable provincial heritage-resource requirements. Where a proposed development may affect a known or potential archaeological, historical or culturally significant site, the RM may require referral to the responsible provincial agency or a heritage-resource assessment.
- 5) Where subdivision or development is proposed near a lake, watercourse, wetland, steep slope or other potentially hazardous or environmentally sensitive area, the RM may require a professional assessment of flooding, erosion, slope stability, geotechnical conditions, drainage or other relevant risks. Council may decline to support a subdivision application or may refuse or condition a development application where the land is unsuitable or identified risks cannot be safely and sustainably mitigated. The applicant will be responsible for the cost of required assessments and mitigation measures.
- 6) The RM recognizes that watersheds, ecosystems, wildlife habitat, and natural processes cross municipal boundaries. The RM will support watershed-based and ecosystem-based planning and, where appropriate, cooperate with adjacent municipalities, provincial agencies, and other organizations to address shared environmental matters.
- 7) Where development may affect species at risk, critical habitat or provincially protected lands, the RM may refer the application to the responsible provincial or federal agency and require the applicant to provide applicable approvals or supporting information before a municipal decision is made, subject to statutory decision timelines.
- 8) OCP maps may identify known provincially designated lands, Crown forests, major wetlands, riparian areas, significant landscapes, and other environmental features. These maps are intended for general planning guidance and may not identify every sensitive feature. Site-specific assessment may be required.
- 9) Development on Crown or provincially leased land may be considered where authorized by the Province and consistent with this OCP and the Zoning Bylaw.
- 10) Proposals must address road access, emergency response, water supply, wastewater, solid waste, drainage, and effects on existing services and natural features.

- 11) Applicants must acknowledge the service levels available to the site. Provincial authorization or a Crown lease does not create an entitlement to municipal servicing, rezoning or development approval.
- 12) Council may require an environmental, heritage, geotechnical, hydrogeological, drainage, riparian or habitat assessment where the location, scale or characteristics of a proposal could materially affect natural or cultural resources.
- 13) Subdivisions and major developments should identify soils, topography, drainage, wetlands, vegetation, habitat, and other relevant environmental features. Development design will prioritize avoidance of sensitive areas. Where avoidance is not reasonably possible, appropriate mitigation, restoration, or compensation may be required in accordance with municipal and provincial requirements.
- 14) Development should retain natural vegetation, watercourses, drainage features, habitat connections, and significant trees where practical. Environmental requirements will be proportionate to the scale, location, and anticipated impacts of the proposal.
- 15) The Zoning Bylaw will establish appropriate land uses and development standards for environmentally sensitive and hazard lands.
- 16) New development should be directed toward areas with lower environmental sensitivity and designed to conserve and complement natural features.
- 17) Development must respect lands protected under provincial or federal legislation and lands subject to registered conservation easements, interests, or other legally recognized protection mechanisms.
- 18) The ZB will establish appropriate land uses, development standards, and mitigation measures for development in the vicinity of significant lands and features, having regard for their value to the municipality, region, and province.
- 19) The RM will seek to protect significant wetlands because of their importance to flood reduction, water quality, groundwater recharge, habitat and lake health. Development should avoid the drainage, filling, or fragmentation of wetlands and riparian areas. Where impacts cannot be avoided, all required provincial approvals and mitigation or replacement measures must be obtained.
- 20) The RM will support the retention and, where practical, connection of wetlands, riparian areas, natural shorelines, habitat areas and other significant natural features.
- 21) At the time of subdivision, the RM will work with the subdivision approving authority to identify lands that qualify for dedication as environmental reserve under *The Planning and Development Act, 2007*. These may include shorelines, wetlands, natural drainage features, flood-prone or

unstable lands, significant natural features, and lands required to provide public access or environmental protection. Where dedication as environmental reserve is not appropriate or authorized, the RM may consider environmental reserve easements, municipal reserve, buffer strips, conservation easements, development setbacks, or other legally available measures.

- 22) Environmentally sensitive lands may contribute to a connected open-space system where public access is compatible with the environmental purpose and legally permitted. Public access may be limited where required to protect habitat, public safety, or sensitive natural features.
- 23) Municipal and utility construction and maintenance should minimize environmental disturbance and incorporate appropriate erosion control, drainage protection, site restoration and pollution-prevention measures.
- 24) New or expanding intensive livestock operations will generally not be supported within the Resource Conservation Area. Existing lawful operations may continue in accordance with applicable municipal and provincial requirements.
- 25) Residential subdivision within the Resource Conservation Area may only be considered where the proposed site is environmentally suitable, avoids significant natural features and hazards, can be safely accessed and serviced, and is consistent with the Future Land Use Map and all other applicable OCP and Zoning Bylaw policies.
- 26) Limited commercial, tourism, or recreational development may be considered as a discretionary use within the Resource Conservation Area where it is compatible with the area's conservation purpose and does not create unacceptable environmental, servicing, traffic, or land-use impacts.

5.9. Cultural and Heritage Resources

5.9.1. Discussion

Cultural and heritage resources include buildings, sites, landscapes, archaeological and paleontological resources, traditions, and other features possessing architectural, historical, cultural, aesthetic, or scientific value. Brooksdale School is a designated Municipal Heritage Property listed on the Canadian Register of Historic Places, and other places and traditions throughout the RM have local historical and cultural significance.

Cultural and heritage resources contribute to community identity, sense of place, and quality of life and may also support education, tourism, and economic development. Land-use and development decisions should recognize these resources and avoid or mitigate incompatible impacts.

The RM supports opportunities for the continued use, adaptive reuse, rehabilitation, preservation, and restoration of historic buildings and sites where practical. The RM also recognizes the cultural and historical significance of the area to First Nations and Métis peoples and will consider opportunities for respectful communication regarding heritage matters of shared interest.

5.9.2. Objectives

- 1) To identify, recognize, and protect significant cultural and heritage resources and, where impacts cannot be avoided, require appropriate mitigation.
- 2) To recognize intangible cultural resources, including significant landscapes, community traditions, languages, arts, crafts and local knowledge.
- 3) To recognize community participation in the preservation and promotion of cultural and heritage resources.
- 4) To recognize the cultural and historical significance of the area to First Nations and Métis peoples and support respectful communication where appropriate.
- 5) To support public awareness of the RM's cultural and heritage resources.
- 6) To encourage the continued use, adaptive reuse, rehabilitation, preservation, or restoration of historic buildings and sites.
- 7) To avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse development effects on archaeological, paleontological, historical, and culturally significant resources.
- 8) To ensure that development complies with applicable requirements of *The Heritage Property Act* and other relevant legislation.

5.9.3. Policies

- 1) The RM may maintain an inventory or map of known buildings, sites, landscapes, and other features of historical or cultural significance. The inventory will be used as a planning resource and will not be considered exhaustive.
- 2) Where proposed development or subdivision is located on land identified as heritage-sensitive or may affect a known or potential heritage resource, the RM may require the applicant to submit the project through the Province's Heritage Resources Screening process. Where required by the Heritage Conservation Branch, the applicant will be responsible for completing a Heritage Resource Impact Assessment and obtain provincial heritage clearance.
- 3) The RM will recognize and support volunteers, community organizations, and historical societies that contribute to the protection, documentation, interpretation, and celebration of local cultural and heritage resources.
- 4) Where appropriate and subject to the willingness of the affected communities, the RM may invite First Nations and Métis communities to share information or perspectives concerning cultural landscapes, heritage resources, and matters of shared interest. Confidential or culturally sensitive information will be respected and will not be publicly disclosed without appropriate authorization.

- 5) The RM may support interpretive signs, commemorative markers, or other initiatives recognizing significant local sites, people and events, subject to landowner consent, available resources, and applicable approvals.
- 6) The RM recognizes and may support cultural and heritage events organized by community organizations.
- 7) The RM may cooperate with museums, historical organizations, service clubs, community groups, and other organizations to promote awareness of local programs, events, and heritage resources.
- 8) Land-use, subdivision, and development decisions will consider potential effects on known or suspected cultural and heritage resources. Avoidance and retention will be preferred where reasonably possible.
- 9) During the subdivision process, the RM may work with the subdivision approving authority to consider environmental reserve, municipal reserve, public reserve, conservation easements, or other legally available measures where these are appropriate for protecting a significant cultural or heritage feature.
- 10) The RM may consider preparing a municipal culture and heritage plan or strategy to identify local priorities, improve public awareness, and guide future conservation and community-development initiatives.
- 11) The RM may support municipal or provincial heritage designation where the property possesses recognized heritage value, and the applicable designation process has been followed.
- 12) Subject to applicable legislation, municipal bylaws, and available resources, Council may consider incentives or planning tools that support the continued use, adaptive reuse, rehabilitation, or restoration of historic buildings. These may include compatible discretionary uses, authorized zoning standards, heritage agreements, grants, or property-tax incentives.
- 13) The adaptive reuse of a historic building should retain and complement its heritage character while meeting applicable health, safety, building, and accessibility requirements.
- 14) Where practical, the RM will have regard for the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* when considering conservation work involving a designated or recognized heritage place.
- 15) The Zoning Bylaw may establish setbacks, buffers, height limits, site-design standards, or other measures where necessary to protect a significant heritage resource from incompatible adjacent development.
- 16) The RM may share information about local cultural and heritage resources, organizations and events through its website, social media and other municipal communications.

5.10. Regional Planning and Collaboration

5.10.1. Discussion

The RM of Mervin No. 499 shares boundaries with rural and urban municipalities and Thunderchild First Nation. Adjacent and nearby communities include the RMs of Turtle River No. 469, Frenchman Butte No. 501, Parkdale No. 498, and Meadow Lake No. 588; the Village of Mervin; the Town of Turtleford; the Resort Villages of Turtle View and Kivimaa-Moonlight Bay; and Thunderchild First Nation.

Development, environmental conditions, transportation, economic activity, and municipal services can have effects beyond jurisdictional boundaries. The RM therefore recognizes the value of communication and cooperation on matters of shared interest, including land use, infrastructure, protective services, healthcare, recreation, economic development, and lake and watershed management.

The RM supports practical and flexible approaches to regional cooperation where they provide mutual benefit, improve service delivery, reduce costs, or help address shared land-use and environmental matters. Cooperation may occur through referrals, service agreements, joint projects, regional organizations, or other arrangements appropriate to the circumstances.

Within fringe areas and around shared natural features such as Turtle Lake and Brightsand Lake, the RM may consider the plans, infrastructure and land uses of neighbouring jurisdictions when making municipal planning decisions.

5.10.2. Objectives

- 1) To support communication and coordinated land-use planning in areas of common interest.
- 2) To identify practical opportunities for regional partnerships and shared services.
- 3) To support cooperation in the planning, development, or funding of infrastructure, public facilities, transportation, recreation, protective services, housing, and other community services.
- 4) To pursue appropriate provincial and federal partnerships and funding opportunities.
- 5) To support respectful communication with neighbouring municipalities, First Nations, and Métis communities on matters of shared interest.
- 6) To support regional economic opportunities that benefit the RM and surrounding communities.
- 7) To consider the regional implications of development, infrastructure, and environmental decisions.
- 8) To encourage cooperation in protecting shared lakes, watersheds, transportation networks, and other resources that extend beyond municipal boundaries.

5.10.3. Policies

- 1) The OCP maps will identify municipal and First Nation boundaries relevant to the RM's planning area.
- 2) The RM may refer a planning or development proposal to an adjacent municipality or First Nation where:
 - a. referral is required by legislation or an intermunicipal agreement;
 - b. the proposal is near a shared boundary;
 - c. the proposal may affect neighbouring land uses, roads, drainage, utilities, or services; or
 - d. the proposal may affect a shared lake, watershed, transportation corridor, or other area of common interest.
- 3) A referral will provide the receiving community with a reasonable opportunity to comment. Comments will be considered as part of the RM's decision-making process but will not transfer Council's municipal approval authority unless otherwise provided by legislation or agreement.
- 4) Where practical, the RM may consult adjacent municipalities concerning anticipated growth areas, compatible fringe-area land uses, and future transportation or servicing needs.
- 5) Intermunicipal agreements may include processes for communication, mediation, or dispute resolution appropriate to the matters addressed by the agreement.
- 6) The RM may enter into intermunicipal, regional or service agreements where Council determines that cooperation will provide mutual benefit, improve service delivery, reduce costs, coordinate growth or address a shared environmental or infrastructure matter.
- 7) The RM may cooperate with municipalities, First Nations, Métis communities, regional organizations, provincial or federal agencies, and other stakeholders where there is mutual interest and willingness to participate.
- 8) The RM may consult affected municipalities, Hamlet Boards, resort villages, regional parks, community organizations, First Nations, provincial agencies, and other interested parties on lake and watershed matters where consultation would assist municipal decision-making.
- 9) Consultation may occur through project-specific meetings, referrals, information-sharing, technical working groups, or other arrangements appropriate to the matter. Nothing in this policy requires the establishment of a permanent regional planning commission, watershed authority, or advisory committee.
- 10) The RM may cooperate on matters such as water-quality monitoring, public lake access, recreational safety, shoreline management, wastewater servicing, environmental education, and the collection of development information.

11) Proposals for municipal boundary alteration will be considered individually and in accordance with applicable legislation. The RM will consider:

- a. demonstrated land requirements and growth needs;
- b. existing and planned land uses;
- c. servicing and infrastructure implications;
- d. effects on municipal roads, taxation and the RM's agricultural land base;
- e. financial and service impacts on affected municipalities and ratepayers;
- f. environmental and drainage considerations;
- g. appropriate compensation and transitional arrangements; and
- h. the long-term interests of the RM.

12) When considering planning and development applications with potential regional implications, the RM will:

- a. have regard for applicable intermunicipal and regional agreements;
- b. consider existing and planned land uses in neighbouring jurisdictions;
- c. consider regional infrastructure and servicing implications;
- d. identify potential effects on shared roads, drainage, lakes, watersheds and services;
- e. consult affected jurisdictions where appropriate; and
- f. ensure that municipal decisions are consistent with binding agreements and applicable legislation.

5.11. Resource Development, Extraction, and Energy

5.11.1. Discussion

The RM contains aggregate, forestry, oil, and natural gas resources that contribute to its economic base and support employment, industry, and municipal activity. Opportunities may also exist for renewable and alternative energy development.

Resource development is regulated primarily through provincial and federal legislation. The RM's land-use responsibilities relate principally to matters within municipal authority, including land-use compatibility, road access, traffic, municipal infrastructure, drainage, setbacks, and the location of ancillary development.

The RM supports responsible resource development that contributes to the local and regional economy while protecting agricultural operations, water resources, natural areas, cultural and heritage resources, and the interests of existing and future ratepayers. New development should avoid unnecessarily preventing access to known or demonstrated resource deposits.

Resource proposals will be evaluated according to their location, scale, infrastructure requirements, environmental conditions, and compatibility with surrounding land uses. Municipal requirements will be coordinated with provincial and federal regulatory processes where practical and will not replace or guarantee approval from another authority.

5.11.2. Objectives

- 1) To support responsible resource and energy development that contributes to economic diversification.
- 2) To accommodate resource exploration, extraction and related development in suitable locations and according to the applicable Zoning Bylaw classification.
- 3) To avoid unnecessary sterilization of known or demonstrated aggregate, mineral, oil, gas, or forestry resources.
- 4) To minimize conflicts between resource activities and agricultural, residential, recreational, commercial and environmentally sensitive land uses.
- 5) To support renewable and alternative energy development in locations appropriate to the scale and characteristics of the proposed use.
- 6) To ensure that roads and municipal infrastructure affected by resource development are protected and that development-related costs are appropriately assigned.
- 7) To protect surface water, groundwater, wetlands, wildlife habitat, air quality and other environmental resources.
- 8) To ensure that reclamation, decommissioning, and site restoration are addressed through applicable provincial and municipal processes.
- 9) To support communication with industry, neighbouring municipalities, First Nations, and Métis communities where there is mutual interest in matters related to resource development.
- 10) To coordinate municipal requirements with applicable provincial and federal regulatory processes and avoid unnecessary duplication.

5.11.3. Policies

- 1) The RM will support resource and energy development that complies with applicable provincial and federal requirements and is compatible with municipal land-use, infrastructure, and environmental objectives.
- 2) The Zoning Bylaw will identify the districts in which resource exploration, extraction, processing, storage, and energy development may be permitted or considered as discretionary uses. Development standards will reflect the nature, scale, and potential impacts of each use.
- 3) Identification of land for resource development on the Future Land Use Map does not provide an automatic entitlement to rezoning, subdivision, or development.
- 4) When evaluating a proposed resource development, the RM will consider:

- a. compatibility with agricultural, residential, recreational, commercial, industrial, and other surrounding uses;
 - b. proximity to lakes, watercourses, wetlands, municipal water sources, and environmentally sensitive lands;
 - c. road access, traffic generation, haul routes, and municipal road capacity;
 - d. water supply, wastewater, drainage, and stormwater management;
 - e. noise, dust, vibration, odour, lighting, emissions, and other potential impacts.
 - f. emergency access, fire protection, and spill response;
 - g. infrastructure and servicing requirements;
 - h. potential effects on cultural or heritage resources;
 - i. reclamation, decommissioning, and the proposed future use of the site; and
 - j. applicable provincial and federal approvals.
- 5) Commercial, industrial, or residential development should avoid unnecessarily preventing access to known or demonstrated resource deposits where future extraction is reasonably feasible. The existence of a resource deposit will not, by itself, create an entitlement to development or extraction.
- 6) Uses directly necessary for resource extraction, including temporary stockpiling, equipment storage and material preparation, may be accommodated in the applicable zoning district. Processing, refining, permanent worker accommodation and other uses not inherently required at the extraction site will be considered separately according to their applicable commercial, industrial or residential land-use classification.
- 7) The Zoning Bylaw may establish setbacks, buffers, access requirements, operating standards, and other measures to avoid or mitigate conflicts between resource activities and surrounding land uses.
- 8) Resource development should minimize fragmentation, soil disturbance, and interference with agricultural operations. Proposals must address access, drainage, top-soil conservation, restoration of affected agricultural land, and ongoing collaboration with respect to watersheds and testing.

Water and Environmental Protection

- 9) Development requiring substantial water use or having the potential to affect groundwater or surface water must demonstrate that an adequate and sustainable supply is available and that water quality, existing users, and downstream water bodies will be protected. The developer is responsible for obtaining all required provincial approvals.
- 10) Resource development should avoid significant wildlife habitat and minimize habitat fragmentation. Timing restrictions or mitigation measures may be required where activities could

affect sensitive species during nesting, spawning, or other high-sensitivity periods, subject to applicable provincial and federal requirements.

- 11) Resource development must comply with applicable provincial and federal environmental monitoring, mitigation, reporting and reclamation requirements.
- 12) Where authorized and necessary to address matters within municipal jurisdiction, the RM may require additional information or mitigation concerning drainage, traffic, noise, dust, lighting, emergency response, or effects on nearby land uses.
- 13) Development near Turtle Lake, Brightsand Lake and other sensitive water bodies must address potential effects on water quality, groundwater, wetlands, riparian areas, natural shorelines, and cumulative development pressures.
- 14) Applicants are responsible for identifying and obtaining all required environmental, water, heritage, resource, and other approvals before commencing development.

Reclamation and Decommissioning

- 15) Resource development must comply with applicable provincial reclamation and decommissioning requirements.
- 16) Where matters within municipal jurisdiction are not fully addressed by provincial approval, the RM may require a site-restoration, reclamation, or decommissioning plan proportionate to the nature and scale of the proposed use.
- 17) Municipal reclamation and decommissioning requirements will compliment and not unnecessarily duplicate applicable provincial requirements.
- 18) Reclamation plans should address where applicable:
 - a. progressive and final reclamation;
 - b. site grading and slope stability;
 - c. top-soil and overburden replacement;
 - d. drainage and erosion control;
 - e. removal of equipment, buildings, stockpiles, and waste;
 - f. revegetation or return to agricultural production;
 - g. public safety;
 - h. future testing for watersheds; and
 - i. the proposed post-development land use.

Roads, Infrastructure, and Agreements

- 19) Resource development must have legal and physically suitable access. Uses generating significant heavy-truck traffic should be directed toward provincial highways, established heavy-haul routes or municipal roads capable of supporting the proposed traffic.

- 20) Where existing roads, approaches, or infrastructure are inadequate, the developer may be required to construct or fund improvements necessary to meet municipal engineering and safety standards.
- 21) Development-related infrastructure costs will generally be the responsibility of the developer. Council may approve proportionate cost-sharing where an improvement provides a demonstrated broader municipal or multi-user benefit.
- 22) Where authorized by legislation and warranted by the proposed development, the RM may require a servicing agreement, development levy agreement, road maintenance agreement, or other agreement addressing:
 - a. road and approach construction or upgrading;
 - b. haul routes and traffic management;
 - c. road maintenance and repair;
 - d. dust control;
 - e. drainage;
 - f. water, wastewater, and other services;
 - g. emergency access; and
 - h. allocation of infrastructure costs.

Renewable and Alternative Energy

- 23) Small-scale renewable energy systems accessory to a principal use may be accommodated in accordance with the Zoning Bylaw.
- 24) Commercial-scale wind, solar, or other energy projects will be evaluated according to:
 - a. compatibility with surrounding land uses;
 - b. effects on agricultural operations and productive land;
 - c. effects on migratory pathways;
 - d. setbacks from residences, roads, and property boundaries;
 - e. noise, glare, lighting, and visual effects;
 - f. road access and construction traffic;
 - g. drainage and environmental concerns;
 - h. emergency response requirements;
 - i. transmission and utility infrastructure; and
 - j. decommissioning and site restoration.
- 25) The Zoning Bylaw may establish separate approval processes and development standards for accessory and commercial-scale renewable energy systems.

Communication and Cooperation

- 26) The RM may communicate and/or cooperate with First Nations, Métis communities, neighbouring municipalities, industry, and regulatory agencies where there are mutual interest and willingness to address shared infrastructure, environmental, economic, or land-use matters.
- 27) The RM may periodically review available resource information, development activity, transportation needs and economic trends when updating its planning documents and infrastructure priorities.

Separation Distances

- 28) The Zoning Bylaw may establish setbacks, buffers, or reciprocal separation distances between resource development and incompatible land uses. These measures are intended to reduce, but may not eliminate, potential impacts.
- 29) A reduction to a municipal separation distance may only be considered where authorized by the Zoning Bylaw and applicable legislation. An agreement between affected owners may be considered but will not, by itself, require Council to approve the reduction or override a provincial requirement.

5.12. Sand and Gravel Aggregate Resources

5.12.1. Discussion

Sand and gravel are important non-renewable resources used in municipal infrastructure, public works and residential, commercial, and industrial development. The availability of local aggregate can reduce transportation costs and support the construction and maintenance of municipal roads.

Aggregate extraction can also affect neighbouring land uses, agricultural land, municipal roads, surface water, groundwater, drainage, soil stability, air quality, vegetation, and wildlife habitat. The RM will support responsible extraction in suitable locations while requiring appropriate measures to address land-use compatibility, infrastructure, environmental protection, public safety, and reclamation.

Provincial approvals relating to mineral rights, quarry dispositions, environmental protection, and reclamation remain the responsibility of the developer. Municipal approval addresses matter within the RM's land-use and infrastructure authority and does not replace or guarantee provincial approval.

Sand and Gravel Policies

- 1) Sand and gravel exploration, extraction, and related uses will be permitted or considered as discretionary uses in the districts established by the Zoning Bylaw. The approval classification and development standards may vary according to the scale, location, and characteristics of the operation.

- 2) Known or demonstrated aggregate deposits should be protected from incompatible development where future extraction is reasonably feasible. The existence of an aggregate deposit will not, by itself, create an entitlement to extraction.
- 3) Stockpiling, crushing, screening, washing, material preparation, and other activities directly related to an aggregate operation may be accommodated according to the applicable Zoning Bylaw classification. Asphalt plants, concrete plants, permanent processing facilities, worker accommodation, and other uses not inherently required for extraction will be considered separately.
- 4) When evaluating a proposed or expanding aggregate operation, the RM will consider:
 - a. the location, extent, and quality of the resource;
 - b. compatibility with surrounding agricultural, residential, recreational, and resource uses;
 - c. proximity to lakes, watercourses, wetlands, municipal water sources, and environmentally sensitive lands;
 - d. ground water, surface water, and drainage;
 - e. noise, dust, vibration, lighting, and hours of operation;
 - f. road access, haul routes, traffic, and road capacity;
 - g. setbacks, screening, and site security;
 - h. proposed phasing and duration of the operation;
 - i. reclamation and the intended post-extraction land use; and
 - j. applicable provincial approvals and requirements.
- 5) The Zoning Bylaw may establish setbacks, buffers, screening, operating standards, and application requirements for aggregate operations.
- 6) Screening may include retained vegetation, landscaping, berms, or the strategic placement of overburden where compatible with drainage, traffic safety, operational requirements, and the approved reclamation plan.
- 7) Operators must maintain reasonable site-safety measures appropriate to the operation, including signage, controlled access, fencing, or other measures where necessary. Site-safety requirements will apply during active operations, temporary shutdowns, and reclamation.
- 8) Aggregate development should minimize disruption to agricultural operations and productive soils. Topsoil and suitable overburden must be conserved and managed to support reclamation and an appropriate post-extraction land use.
- 9) An application for a new or expanding aggregate operation must include a reclamation and decommissioning plan proportionate to the scale and potential impacts of the operation.

- 10) Municipal reclamation requirements will complement and not unnecessarily duplicate applicable provincial requirements. The RM may require financial security for municipal reclamation obligations where authorized by legislation or the Zoning Bylaw.
- 11) Aggregate operations must incorporate appropriate fuel-storage, equipment-maintenance, spill-prevention, and emergency-response measures. All releases must be managed and reported according to applicable provincial and federal requirements.
- 12) Where an aggregate operation may affect groundwater, surface water, a municipal water source, wetland, or downstream water body, the RM may require a hydrogeological, hydrological, drainage, or stormwater assessment prepared by a qualified professional. The assessment must identify necessary avoidance and mitigation measures.
- 13) Aggregate development should avoid significant wildlife habitat and minimize habitat fragmentation. Timing restrictions or mitigation may be required where activities could affect sensitive species during high-sensitivity periods.
- 14) Aggregate operations must have legal and physically suitable access to a road capable of accommodating anticipated haul traffic.
- 15) The developer may be required to construct or fund road, approach, drainage, or traffic-safety improvements necessary to accommodate the operation.
- 16) Where authorized and warranted, the RM may require a road maintenance agreement, servicing agreement, development levy agreement, or other agreement addressing haul routes, road improvements, maintenance, dust control, traffic safety, drainage, and infrastructure costs.
- 17) Development-related road and infrastructure costs will generally be the responsibility of the developer. Council may approve proportionate cost-sharing where an improvement provides a demonstrated broader municipal or multi-user benefit.
- 18) Setbacks or reciprocal separation distances may be established in the Zoning Bylaw to reduce conflicts between aggregate operations and incompatible uses.
- 19) A reduction to a municipal separation distance may only be considered where authorized by the Zoning Bylaw and applicable legislation. An agreement between affected owners may be considered but will not, by itself, require Council to approve a reduction or override a provincial requirement.

5.13. Shore Lands, Water Bodies, and Source Water Protection

5.13.1. Discussion

The RM contains numerous lakes, wetlands, watercourses, shorelands, and groundwater resources, including Turtle Lake, Brightsand Lake, and Spruce Lake. These resources contribute to the RM's

environmental, recreational, social, and economic character and support residents, businesses, agriculture, tourism, wildlife, and aquatic ecosystems.

Residents and developments within the RM rely on various water-supply and wastewater-servicing methods. Protecting surface water and groundwater quality and availability is therefore important to public health, environmental sustainability, recreational use, and the accommodation of future development.

Natural shorelines, wetlands, and riparian areas perform important ecological functions. They provide wildlife and aquatic habitat, filter runoff, reduce erosion, moderate flooding, support groundwater recharge, and help maintain water quality. Development, shoreline alteration, vegetation removal, wastewater systems, stormwater runoff, agricultural and industrial activities, and substantial water withdrawals may affect these functions if they are not appropriately located, designed, and managed.

The most recent Turtle Lake study indicates that the lake's overall water chemistry remains generally good but identifies signs of biological stress, including recurring cyanobacteria blooms. The study emphasizes the importance of wetlands, natural shorelines and riparian vegetation, groundwater and runoff interactions, appropriate wastewater management, and consideration of the cumulative effects of development. Accordingly, future planning and development decisions around Turtle Lake will consider the lake's environmental conditions, servicing and infrastructure capacity, recreational use, and the collective effects of existing and proposed development.

Conditions and development patterns differ among Turtle Lake, Brightsand Lake, Spruce Lake, and other water bodies. Findings specific to Turtle Lake will inform decisions concerning Turtle Lake but will not automatically be applied elsewhere. Planning for other water bodies will be based on their respective environmental conditions, shoreline characteristics, development patterns, servicing capacity, and available technical information.

The RM will manage development near water bodies and sensitive groundwater areas to protect water quality, natural shorelines, wetlands, riparian areas, wildlife habitat, public access, and source-water resources. This will be achieved through coordinated land-use planning, appropriate development locations and servicing methods, risk-based technical assessments, applicable provincial approvals, and cooperation with neighbouring jurisdictions and other interested parties where practical and mutually supported.

5.13.2. Objectives

- 1) To use the most recent lakeshore, watershed, and other relevant environmental studies to inform planning and development decisions affecting shorelands, water bodies, wetlands, and groundwater resources.
- 2) To protect the quality and availability of surface water and groundwater for ecological, residential, agricultural, recreational, and other community needs.

- 3) To avoid, minimize, or mitigate the effects of subdivision, development, servicing, and land-use activities on watercourses, water bodies, watersheds, wetlands, shorelands, riparian areas, aquifers, groundwater-recharge areas, and drinking-water sources.
- 4) To protect and, where appropriate, restore natural shorelines, wetlands, riparian vegetation, drainage systems, wildlife habitat, and other features that support water quality and aquatic ecosystem health.
- 5) To ensure that development near water bodies is appropriately located, designed, serviced, and phased, having regard for environmental conditions, infrastructure capacity, wastewater management, drainage, recreational use, and cumulative development effects.
- 6) To preserve and enhance lawful public access to water bodies, shorelands, and public reserve lands where environmentally appropriate and consistent with provincial legislation.
- 7) To integrate applicable provincial watershed, source-water, aquatic-habitat, and flood-management requirements into municipal planning and development decisions.
- 8) To require risk-based technical assessments where a proposed development may materially affect water quality, water availability, drainage, shoreline stability, aquatic habitat, or source-water resources.
- 9) To recognize the differing environmental conditions and development patterns of Turtle Lake, Brightsand Lake, Spruce Lake, and other water bodies when establishing development expectations.
- 10) To cooperate, where practical and mutually supported, with provincial agencies, neighbouring municipalities, First Nations and Métis communities, community organizations, and other interested parties on water monitoring, watershed stewardship, public education, and protection initiatives.

5.13.3. Policies

- 1) Development near a lake, wetland, watercourse, groundwater-recharge area, municipal or communal water source, or other water-related feature shall be planned and designed to proactively protect surface-water and groundwater quality, water availability, natural drainage, shoreline stability, riparian vegetation, aquatic habitat, and drinking-water sources.
- 2) OCP maps may identify known lakes, watercourses, wetlands, flood-prone areas, and other water-related features. The maps are intended for general planning guidance and may not identify every feature or current boundary. Site-specific investigation may be required.
- 3) Development must not create unacceptable flooding, erosion, drainage, contamination, or nutrient-loading impacts on neighbouring lands, municipal infrastructure, wetlands, or downstream water bodies.

- 4) The RM will consider avoidance of environmental impacts before mitigation. Where impacts cannot reasonably be avoided, appropriate setbacks, buffers, restoration, drainage controls, or other mitigation may be required.
- 5) Development that generates substantial noise, light, odour, dust, traffic, or other off-site effects will be evaluated for compatibility with nearby water bodies, shorelands, recreational areas, and wildlife habitat. Appropriate separation, screening, or operating controls may be required.

Turtle Lake

- 6) Land-use and development decisions around Turtle Lake will have regard for the most current Turtle Lake study and other available environmental, infrastructure and development information.
- 7) Development decisions around Turtle Lake will consider:
 - a. natural carrying capacity and cumulative development effects;
 - b. water quality and biological conditions;
 - c. shoreline and riparian health;
 - d. wetlands, natural drainage, and groundwater;
 - e. soil and drainage limitations;
 - f. wastewater servicing;
 - g. road and emergency access capacity;
 - h. boating, beach, and recreational use;
 - i. public access; and
 - j. the capacity of municipal and community infrastructure.
- 8) Historical shoreline-capability classifications and density allowances will not, by themselves, establish an entitlement to rezoning, subdivision or development.
- 9) Future development around Turtle Lake should avoid creating additional linear shoreline development. Growth should generally be directed toward existing development areas and suitable off-lake, multi-tiered, or clustered locations. Council may consider another development form where site-specific assessment demonstrates that water quality, natural shorelines, wastewater servicing, drainage, public access, infrastructure capacity, and cumulative development effects can be appropriately addressed.
- 10) Development may be limited, deferred, staged, or redirected where environmental conditions, cumulative effects, wastewater servicing, road capacity, or recreational use indicate that additional growth cannot be sustainably accommodated.
- 11) The RM may support or participate in water-quality, source-water, shoreline, wastewater, wetland, and habitat monitoring, restoration, or public-education initiatives where Council

determines that the information or activity will support municipal planning, environmental protection, or development decisions.

Brightsand Lake and Other Water Bodies

- 12) Development decisions around Brightsand Lake and other water bodies will reflect available environmental information, site conditions, existing development, land availability, public access, and servicing capacity.
- 13) A single-row development pattern may be considered around Brightsand Lake where it would limit development intensity and inland expansion. The suitability of this approach must be demonstrated through site-specific consideration of shoreline protection, wastewater servicing, drainage, road access, public access and other infrastructure requirements.
- 14) Development approaches recommended specifically for Turtle Lake will not automatically be applied to Brightsand Lake or other water bodies without consideration of their distinct physical, environmental, and development conditions.

Wastewater and Water Servicing

- 15) Development near a water body must demonstrate that wastewater can be safely and sustainably managed in accordance with applicable provincial requirements.
- 16) When evaluating wastewater servicing, the RM will consider:
 - a. proximity to lakes, wetlands, watercourses, and groundwater;
 - b. soil, drainage, and groundwater conditions;
 - c. the density and cumulative number of existing and proposed systems;
 - d. risks associated with system failure, leakage, or improper maintenance;
 - e. access for inspection, maintenance, and pump-out services; and
 - f. the long-term ownership, operation, monitoring, and replacement of communal systems.
- 17) The RM may require a wastewater-servicing assessment for development, higher-density development, or a proposal where site conditions or cumulative development create a potential risk to water quality.
- 18) Communal or piped wastewater systems may be required where individual systems would create unacceptable risks to public health, groundwater, surface water, or long-term servicing.
- 19) All private and communal water and wastewater systems must receive required approvals from the responsible provincial authorities.

Provincial Approvals

- 20) Applicants are responsible for determining and obtaining all required federal and provincial approvals before altering a shoreline, lakebed, wetland, watercourse or aquatic habitat.

- 21) The RM may refer a proposal to the Water Security Agency, Ministry of Environment, Saskatchewan Health Authority, or another agency where the proposal may affect water, drainage, wastewater, aquatic habitat, or public health.
- 22) Municipal approval does not replace or guarantee any required federal or provincial authorization.

Technical Assessments

- 23) Where warranted by the location, scale, servicing method, water requirements, environmental sensitivity, or potential effects of a proposal, the RM may require an assessment prepared by a qualified professional addressing one or more of the following:
 - a. hydrology or hydrogeology;
 - b. groundwater availability and aquifer sensitivity;
 - c. municipal, communal, or private water supplies;
 - d. source-water protection;
 - e. wastewater servicing;
 - f. drainage and stormwater management;
 - g. flooding, erosion, or shoreline stability;
 - h. riparian health and vegetation;
 - i. wetlands, fish, and wildlife habitat; and
 - j. cumulative environmental effects.
- 24) Subdivisions and significant commercial, industrial, resource, recreational, or intensive agricultural developments may be required to provide a drainage or stormwater-management plan appropriate to the proposal's scale and potential impacts.
- 25) The applicant will be responsible for the cost of required professional assessments, approvals, and mitigation measures.

Source Water and Groundwater Protection

- 26) Development shall not be approved where it presents an unacceptable risk of contaminating or materially depleting a surface-water or groundwater source and the risk cannot be adequately avoided or mitigated.
- 27) Development near an identified municipal or communal well, surface-water intake, aquifer-recharge area, or other drinking-water source may be required to provide appropriate setbacks, technical assessments, monitoring, or mitigation measures.
- 28) Development involving substantial water use shall demonstrate that an adequate and sustainable water supply is available without adversely affecting existing users, groundwater resources, surface-water bodies, or aquatic ecosystems. All applicable provincial licenses and approvals shall be obtained.

- 29) Where provincial mapping, technical studies, or site-specific information identifies sensitive aquifer conditions, the RM may require a hydrogeological assessment and an aquifer-protection plan appropriate to the proposed development.
- 30) Fuels, chemicals, fertilizers, manure, hazardous substances, waste, and wastewater shall be stored, handled, and disposed of in accordance with applicable requirements and in a manner that protects surface water and groundwater.
- 31) Technical information shown on OCP or provincial maps is intended for general planning purposes and may not identify every aquifer, recharge area, wetland, drainage feature, or drinking-water source. The RM may require site-specific investigation where available information is incomplete.

Environmental Reserve

- 32) At the time of subdivision, the RM will work with the subdivision approving authority to identify lands that may qualify for dedication as environmental reserve in accordance with *The Planning and Development Act, 2007* and applicable guidelines.
- 33) Environmental reserve may include lands that qualify under provincial legislation because of their environmental characteristics, including certain shorelands, wetlands, natural drainage features, flood-prone or unstable lands, ravines, coulees, or buffer areas adjacent to water bodies.
- 34) Where environmental reserve dedication is not applicable or sufficient, the RM may consider environmental reserve easements, municipal reserve, walkways, buffer strips, conservation easements, development setbacks, or other legally available measures to protect environmental features or provide lawful public access.
- 35) The Zoning Bylaw may establish setbacks, buffers, and development standards to protect water bodies, wetlands, riparian areas, and flood-prone lands.

Public Access

- 36) The RM will seek to maintain and, where appropriate, improve lawful public access to lakes and other water bodies through municipal reserve, public reserve, environmental reserve, walkways, road allowances, and other legally established public lands.
- 37) Subdivision adjacent to a lake or other water body may be required to provide appropriate dedicated lands or public-access connections in accordance with *The Planning and Development Act, 2007* and applicable regulations.
- 38) Public access will be planned to protect sensitive habitat, natural shorelines, neighbouring properties, and public safety.

- 39) The RM will avoid closing established public access points where reasonably possible. A closure or alteration may be considered where required for public safety, environmental protection, infrastructure, or another demonstrated municipal purpose.
- 40) Nothing in this section authorizes public access across privately owned lands where a public right of access has not been legally established.

Restoration and Cooperation

- 41) Where a water body, wetland, shoreline, or riparian area has been materially disturbed or degraded, the RM may require restoration or mitigation as a condition of municipal approval where authorized.
- 42) The RM may communicate or cooperate with neighbouring municipalities, First Nations, Métis communities, provincial agencies, community organizations, and other interested parties on water and watershed matters where there is mutual interest and willingness to participate.
- 43) Nothing in this section requires the RM to establish or participate in a permanent regional planning commission, watershed authority, or advisory committee.

5.14. First Nations and Métis Relationships

5.14.1. Discussion

The RM of Mervin No. 499 is located within Treaty 6 territory and the Homeland of the Métis. The RM recognizes the cultural and historical significance of these lands to Indigenous peoples and supports mutually respectful relationships with First Nations and Métis communities.

Thunderchild First Nation reserve lands are located within the broader geographic area. Reserve lands are governed through First Nation and federal authorities and are not subject to the RM's OCP or Zoning Bylaw. However, land use, transportation, drainage, infrastructure, environmental conditions, and economic activity may create matters of shared interest across jurisdictional boundaries.

Where appropriate, the RM may consider opportunities for communication and cooperation with Thunderchild First Nation and other First Nations and Métis communities. Participation will depend on the interests, priorities, and willingness of the respective communities.

Municipal communication or engagement under this OCP does not replace the legal duty of the provincial or federal Crown to consult and, where appropriate, accommodate First Nations and rights-bearing Métis communities.

5.14.2. Objectives

- 1) To recognize that the RM is located within Treaty 6 territory and the Homeland of the Métis.
- 2) To support mutually respectful communication with First Nations and Métis communities on matters of shared interest.

- 3) To recognize the separate jurisdiction and land-use authority applicable to First Nation reserve lands.
- 4) To consider Indigenous interests and information voluntarily shared with the RM where relevant to municipal land-use planning.
- 5) To recognize opportunities for communication or cooperation concerning economic, environmental, cultural, infrastructure and service-delivery initiatives where there is mutual interest.
- 6) To encourage proponents to communicate with potentially affected First Nations or Métis communities where appropriate or required through a provincial or federal regulatory process.
- 7) To distinguish municipal engagement from the Crown's legal duty to consult and accommodate.

5.14.3. Policies

- 1) OCP maps may identify First Nation reserve boundaries and other publicly available jurisdictional information relevant to municipal planning. These maps are intended for general planning guidance and will not identify confidential cultural information or Indigenous land-use information.
- 2) The RM recognizes that First Nations and Métis communities may have an interest in participating in municipal planning projects or regional initiatives. The RM may invite participation where a matter is relevant to a community and there is a reasonable opportunity for shared benefit or impact.
- 3) Where appropriate, the RM may invite First Nations or Métis communities to provide input during the preparation or amendment of municipal planning documents. An invitation to participate will not require a community to respond or participate.
- 4) Municipal planning documents will acknowledge Treaty 6 and the Homeland of the Métis and will recognize that Aboriginal and treaty rights are protected under section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. Nothing in this OCP will define, interpret, or limit those rights.
- 5) Indigenous knowledge, present-day land-use information, or cultural information voluntarily shared with the RM may be considered in municipal planning decisions. Confidential or culturally sensitive information will not be mapped, published, or disclosed without appropriate authorization.
- 6) The RM may communicate with a First Nation or Métis community where a proposed municipal planning decision may materially affect:
 - a. reserve lands;

- b. shared roads, drainage, utilities, or infrastructure;
 - c. a shared lake, watershed, or environmental feature;
 - d. municipal or regional service arrangements; or
 - e. another identified matter of mutual interest.
- 7) Communication may occur through written referrals, meetings, information sharing or another process appropriate to the matter. The process will be proportionate to the nature and potential municipal effects of the proposal.
- 8) A fixed two-kilometre referral requirement will not apply to every development near reserve land. Referral will be based on the nature, scale, and potential effects of the proposal or on the requirements of applicable legislation or an agreement.
- 9) Where a proposed development requires provincial or federal authorization, the proponent is responsible for complying with any Crown consultation, engagement, or information requirements associated with that approval.
- 10) The RM may encourage a proponent to communicate with a potentially affected First Nation or Métis community before submitting a significant development proposal. Such communication will not replace a consultation process required by the Crown.
- 11) When evaluating a municipal planning or development application, the RM may consider relevant information provided by a First Nation, Métis community, proponent or provincial or federal authority.
- 12) Conditions imposed on a development permit or discretionary-use approval must relate to legitimate municipal planning matters, be authorized by legislation and be proportionate to the proposed development. Municipal conditions will not be represented as accommodation of Aboriginal or treaty rights unless established through an authorized Crown process.
- 13) Where a First Nation or Métis community participates in a municipal planning process, the RM may communicate how relevant information was considered, subject to privacy, confidentiality, and legal requirements.
- 14) The RM may consider agreements or cooperative initiatives involving infrastructure, emergency services, environmental stewardship, recreation, economic development, or other services where there is mutual interest, appropriate authority, and agreement among the participating parties.
- 15) Nothing in this section requires the RM, a First Nation, or a Métis community to enter into an agreement, establish a partnership, or participate in a particular initiative.

5.15. Public Safety

5.15.1. Discussion

The protection of people, property, infrastructure, and the natural environment is an important consideration in municipal land-use planning. The RM may experience flooding, drought, wildfire, severe storms, erosion, slope instability, and other natural or human-caused hazards. Changing climatic conditions may affect the frequency, severity, and location of some hazards.

Land-use planning can reduce risk by directing development toward suitable locations, protecting natural drainage systems, maintaining emergency access, and requiring appropriate professional assessment and mitigation where hazards are present.

The RM will balance public safety, environmental protection, infrastructure costs, emergency-service capacity, and the reasonable use of private property. Development will generally be directed away from hazardous lands. Where development is proposed in an area of potential risk, the applicant must demonstrate that the risk can be reduced to an acceptable level in accordance with applicable municipal and provincial requirements.

5.15.2. Objectives

- 1) To identify known and potential hazard lands and consider available hazard information in planning decisions.
- 2) To direct development away from areas where flooding, erosion, slope instability, wildfire, or other hazards create an unacceptable risk.
- 3) To prohibit new buildings and structures within the floodway of the current provincial design flood, except for compatible low risk uses permitted by provincial standards.
- 4) To require development within the flood fringe to be flood-proofed in accordance with current provincial requirements, including a minimum building elevation of 0.5 metres above the 1:200-year flood elevation where applicable.
- 5) To incorporate available flood, wildfire, and other hazard information into OCP maps, the Zoning Bylaw, and development decisions.
- 6) To locate subdivisions, transportation infrastructure, and public works to avoid or mitigate risks from flooding, wildfire, erosion, slope instability, and other emergencies.
- 7) To consider emergency access, evacuation routes, fire protection, and emergency-service capacity when reviewing development.
- 8) To incorporate potential extreme-weather considerations into land-use and infrastructure planning.
- 9) To protect wetlands, riparian areas, natural drainage systems, and other features that contribute to hazard mitigation.

- 10) To ensure that applicants are responsible for the professional studies and development-specific mitigation required by their proposals.

5.15.3. Policies

General Hazard-Land Policies

- 1) OCP and Zoning Bylaw maps may identify known flood-prone lands, steep slopes, wildfire-risk areas, and other potential hazards. These maps are intended for general planning guidance and may not identify every hazard or precise hazard boundary.
- 2) The RM will use the most current available provincial mapping, technical information, and professional assessments when evaluating potential hazards.
- 3) Development will generally be directed toward lands that are not affected by unacceptable natural or human-caused hazards.
- 4) Development will not be supported where the risk to people, property, infrastructure, or the environment cannot be reduced to an acceptable level through reasonable and reliable mitigation.
- 5) Where development or subdivision is proposed on potentially hazardous land, the RM may require an environmental, geotechnical, hydrogeological, hydrological, wildfire, drainage, or other engineering assessment prepared by a qualified professional.
- 6) A required professional assessment must:
 - a. identify the nature, extent, and severity of the hazard;
 - b. evaluate risks to people, property, infrastructure, and the environment;
 - c. identify avoidance and mitigation measures;
 - d. address construction and long-term maintenance requirements;
 - e. identify any residual risks; and
 - f. demonstrate compliance with applicable municipal and provincial standards.
- 7) Council may decline to support a subdivision application or may refuse or condition a development application where:
 - a. required information has not been provided;
 - b. the land is unsuitable for the proposed use;
 - c. the identified risk cannot be adequately mitigated; or
 - d. the proposal would create an unacceptable municipal liability, infrastructure impact, or emergency response burden.
- 8) The applicant will be responsible for the cost of required professional assessments, mitigation, monitoring and maintenance.

Emergency Access and Response

- 9) Development must provide legal, physically suitable and reliable access for occupants, emergency responders and evacuation.
- 10) Subdivisions may be required to provide more than one access and egress route where the number of lots, road length, wildfire risk, flooding risk, or other emergency considerations warrant.
- 11) Where a second permanent access is not practical, Council may require an emergency-only access, an evacuation plan, additional fire-protection measures, or other risk-reduction measures.
- 12) The RM will consider emergency-response access and available fire, medical, and protective services when evaluating residential, institutional, recreational, and higher-density development.
- 13) Development must not obstruct established emergency routes, drainage works, firebreaks, or access required for the inspection and maintenance of public infrastructure.

Flood Hazard Policies

- 14) Flood planning and development decisions will use the current provincial design flood standard. As of the adoption of this OCP, the applicable standard is the 1:200-year flood elevation.
- 15) Where the Province adopts a revised or more stringent flood standard, the current provincial requirement will prevail without limiting the RM's ability to amend its planning bylaws.
- 16) New buildings and structures will not be permitted within the floodway of the 1:200-year design flood, except for uses that are compatible with flood conditions and permitted under applicable provincial and municipal requirements.
- 17) Development within the flood fringe may only be considered where:
 - a. the use is appropriate for the level of risk;
 - b. safe access and evacuation can be provided;
 - c. the development will not obstruct or redirect floodwaters;
 - d. neighbouring properties will not be adversely affected; and
 - e. buildings and structures are flood-proofed to applicable provincial standards.
- 18) Unless a higher elevation is established through current provincial requirements or a site-specific professional assessment, the minimum building elevation within the flood fringe will be 0.5 metres above the 1:200-year flood elevation.
- 19) Flood-proofing measures must be designed by a qualified professional where required and may include:
 - a. building elevation;

- b. flood-resistant materials;
 - c. protection of electrical, mechanical, and utility systems;
 - d. anchoring and foundation requirements;
 - e. site grading and drainage;
 - f. safe access and evacuation; and
 - g. protection of water and wastewater systems.
- 20) Hospitals, personal care homes, emergency-service facilities, and other institutional uses involving occupants who may require assistance during an evacuation will not be located within the floodway or flood fringe unless expressly permitted by provincial standards and supported by an appropriate professional risk assessment.
- 21) Uses proposed within the floodway must be low-risk and compatible with periodic flooding. Uses involving overnight accommodation, hazardous materials, permanent buildings or impediments to flood conveyance will not be supported.

Environmental Reserve and Flood Lands

- 22) At the time of subdivision, the RM will work with the subdivision approving authority to identify flood-prone, unstable or otherwise qualifying lands for dedication as environmental reserve in accordance with *The Planning and Development Act, 2007*.
- 23) The RM will not assume that every part of a flood fringe qualifies or should be dedicated as environmental reserve. Environmental reserve dedication will be based on provincial legislation, site conditions, and the subdivision review process.
- 24) Where environmental reserve dedication is not appropriate, the RM may consider environmental reserve easements, setbacks, development restrictions, drainage easements, or other legally available measures.
- 25) Hazard lands may be used for compatible agriculture, natural open space, trails, or recreation where the use does not increase risk, obstruct natural processes, or require inappropriate municipal servicing.

Existing Development in Flood-Prone Areas

- 26) Existing lawful buildings and uses within a flood-prone area may continue subject to the non-conforming provisions of The Planning and Development Act, 2007, the Zoning Bylaw, and other applicable requirements.
- 27) An existing building will not be considered legally non-conforming solely because updated mapping identifies the property as flood prone.

- 28) An addition, reconstruction, relocation, change of use, or substantial alteration within a flood-prone area may be required to comply with current floodproofing and hazard-mitigation standards.
- 29) New permanent buildings will generally not be permitted on an existing parcel located wholly within the floodway.
- 30) The RM may require professional assessment and mitigation before approving development on an existing parcel within the flood fringe.

Erosion and Slope Stability

- 31) Development will not be supported where erosion, subsidence, or slope failure creates an unacceptable risk that cannot be reliably mitigated.
- 32) Where erosion or slope stability is uncertain, the applicant may be required to provide a geotechnical or engineering assessment prepared by a qualified professional.
- 33) Development may be considered where the assessment demonstrates that:
 - a. the site is suitable for the proposed use;
 - b. risks can be reduced to an acceptable level;
 - c. development will not increase instability on adjacent lands;
 - d. municipal infrastructure will be protected; and
 - e. long-term inspection and maintenance requirements can be satisfied.
- 34) The developer must implement all required engineering and mitigation measures. An acknowledgement of residual risk by the developer or property owner will not, by itself, make an otherwise unsafe development acceptable or release the RM from its statutory responsibilities.
- 35) Where authorized, the RM may require registration of an interest, agreement or notice on title identifying ongoing mitigation or maintenance obligations.

Wildfire Risk

- 36) Subdivision and development within or adjacent to forested or wildfire-prone areas should incorporate applicable FireSmart principles.
- 37) The RM may require a wildfire-hazard assessment, vegetation-management plan, landscaping plan, emergency-access plan, or other supporting information for development in a higher-risk area.
- 38) Wildfire-risk mitigation may include:
 - a. defensible space around buildings;
 - b. fire-resistant landscaping and building materials;
 - c. vegetation and fuel management;

- d. adequate road widths and turning areas;
 - e. more than one evacuation route where warranted;
 - f. reliable emergency access;
 - g. water supply or other fire-suppression measures; and
 - h. appropriate civic addressing and signage.
- 39) Wildfire mitigation must be balanced with the OCP's objectives for natural shoreline vegetation, riparian protection, and wildlife habitat. Vegetation removal will be limited to what is reasonably required for public safety.

Technical Advice and Referrals

- 40) The RM may request technical advice or comments from the Water Security Agency, Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency, Ministry of Environment, Community Planning, or another relevant provincial authority.
- 41) Recommendations from a provincial authority or qualified professional may be incorporated into subdivision comments, development conditions, servicing agreements, or other municipal approval requirements where authorized.
- 42) Municipal approval does not replace any required provincial or federal authorization.

5.16. Transportation

5.16.1. Discussion

The RM maintains an extensive transportation network consisting of municipal roads, internal subdivision roads, service roads, and connections to Provincial Highways 3, 26, 303, and 795. This network supports agriculture, resource activity, commercial and industrial development, residential communities, recreation and tourism, and access to community and emergency services.

Safe, reliable, and cost-effective transportation infrastructure is important to the RM's rural and resource-based economy. Transportation and land-use planning will be coordinated so that development is directed to locations with suitable access and does not create unacceptable safety concerns, infrastructure demands, drainage impacts, or land-use conflicts.

Existing and new development around Turtle Lake, Brightsand Lake, and other recreational areas will consider seasonal traffic, road and emergency-access capacity, evacuation requirements, parking, public access, and the cumulative effects of development. Higher-density and multi-lot development should provide an interconnected road system and, where warranted, more than one safe access and egress route.

The RM will cooperate, where appropriate, with the Ministry of Highways, neighbouring municipalities, transportation planning organizations, and other interested parties on matters involving provincial highways, regional routes, heavy-haul traffic, infrastructure improvements, and long-term transportation

needs. The RM may participate in the North Central Transportation Planning Committee where Council determines that participation advances municipal or regional transportation interests.

Transportation infrastructure will be planned, constructed, maintained, and, where applicable, decommissioned in a manner that considers public safety, municipal cost, drainage, water quality, wildlife habitat, agricultural operations, and the natural environment.

5.16.2. Objectives

- 1) To provide a safe, efficient, cost-effective, and convenient transportation network for all users.
- 2) Coordinate transportation network and facility planning with land use planning.
- 3) To support the safe and efficient function of Provincial Highways 3, 26, 303, and 795 and their connections to the municipal road network.
- 4) To support reciprocal cooperation with the Ministry of Highways in protecting provincial highway operations, access, drainage, sight lines, and lands that may be required for future transportation improvements.
- 5) Provide a network of well-maintained municipal roads to allow for movement within the RM and create an effective linkage to the provincial highways in the area and major roadways in other jurisdictions.
- 6) To cooperate, where appropriate and mutually supported, with neighbouring jurisdictions and regional transportation organizations on transportation matters of shared interest.
- 7) To ensure that developers are responsible for the municipal infrastructure costs reasonably attributable to their developments, except where Council approves an alternative cost-sharing arrangement.
- 8) Ensure that development and re-development in proximity to railway lands and other transportation infrastructure are planned and developed in a manner that addresses land use conflicts and public health and safety issues between the development and the transportation infrastructure.
- 9) Consider setbacks, noise, and vibration when contemplating development in proximity to existing or proposed railway operations.
- 10) Consider both human and environmental interests when planning, constructing, maintaining, decommissioning and reclaiming road systems and other transportation corridors.
- 11) To support walking, cycling, trails, and other forms of active transportation in communities and recreational areas where practical, safe, and appropriate.

- 12) To ensure that development around the lakes and other seasonal recreational areas considers road capacity, emergency access, evacuation, parking, public access, and seasonal traffic conditions.
- 13) To avoid, minimize, or mitigate transportation-related effects on drainage, water quality, wetlands, wildlife habitat, agricultural land, and neighbouring properties.

5.16.3. Policies

- 1) The RM will seek to retain lawful access, where practical, to municipal and other publicly owned lands where required for public use, municipal operations, recreation, or emergency purposes. Access may be relocated, altered, or closed where justified by public safety, environmental protection, infrastructure requirements, or another municipal purpose.
- 2) Developments shall be located and designed in a manner which ensures safe and efficient traffic operations.
- 3) Permanent residential development, multi-lot subdivisions, and other development requiring regular year-round access shall generally be located on or connected to an all-weather registered road. Where existing access is inadequate for the proposed use, the developer may be required to construct or upgrade a roadway to municipal standards and enter into an appropriate servicing, development levy, or road agreement with the RM.
- 4) Development, approaches, signs, utilities, drainage works, and other activities affecting a provincial highway shall be referred to the Ministry of Highways where appropriate and shall obtain all applicable provincial permits. Applicable work within 90 metres of the property line or right-of-way edge of a provincial highway requires a provincial roadside-development permit.
- 5) The OCP maps may identify existing and proposed provincial highways, significant municipal roads, heavy-haul routes, and other transportation features for general planning purposes. These maps do not replace detailed surveys, engineering assessments, or provincial transportation plans.
- 6) Subdivision design shall provide for the logical extension and connectivity of the road network where required to support future development, emergency access, municipal operations, or an efficient transportation pattern.
- 7) The RM shall develop new municipal roads strategically to ensure they are designed efficiently and that the hierarchy of the municipal road network and the road standards are compatible with the provincial highway system and the road networks in neighbouring jurisdictions.
- 8) The municipality may designate some municipal roads as truck routes, haul routes or over-dimensional routes in order to direct specific types of road users to appropriate roadways, which

shall assist to minimize safety hazards and nuisances and limit deterioration of the local road system.

- 9) The municipality may also limit access and impose weight restrictions on certain roads and in certain areas such as residential subdivisions in order to protect the integrity of the roadways and the quality of life in the communities.
- 10) The municipality will strive to maximize the efficiency of the roadway network by directing developments that may have a significant impact on roadways to locate in areas where the network has been planned or designed to accommodate future development.
- 11) Where projects relating to highways, railway operations, or other transportation corridors or infrastructure needs are being planned or designed for or within the region, the municipality may endorse or support these projects through various methods including advocacy for the project.
- 12) The RM may consult the Ministry of Highways, neighbouring municipalities, regional transportation organizations, railway operators, emergency-service providers, and other affected parties on transportation proposals having interjurisdictional or regional implications.
- 13) Where the scale, location, traffic generation, vehicle type, seasonal demand, or access requirements of a development may materially affect a municipal road or provincial highway, the RM may require a Traffic Impact Assessment or other transportation assessment prepared by a qualified professional at the developer's expense.
- 14) Building setbacks shall be applied to new developments along municipal roads and provincial highways to provide a measure of safety for the traveling public, buffer the buildings from roadway nuisances such as noise, vibrations and dust, and minimize issues related to snow drifting.
- 15) Mitigation measures such as buffers, screens and setbacks, sound barriers, and safety berms shall be outlined in the Zoning Bylaw to minimize impacts of road systems and other transportation corridors on surrounding lands, features and residential development.
- 16) All new approaches to municipal roads shall require an approach permit from the RM. The RM will determine if a culvert is required in the approach or if any other specific standards must be met.
- 17) Municipal road allowances shall be protected for public access, drainage, utilities, future transportation needs, and other municipal purposes. Clearing, cultivation, cropping, construction, or other private use of an unimproved road allowance shall require municipal authorization and shall not adversely affect drainage, wetlands, water bodies, wildlife habitat, or public access.

- 18) The RM will establish road-maintenance and capital-improvement priorities having regard for public safety, road condition, traffic demand, seasonal use, available funding, emergency access, and the function of each road within the municipal network.
- 19) Developers shall be responsible for the costs of constructing, upgrading, or maintaining roads, approaches, drainage works, signage, and other transportation infrastructure required to serve their development, except where Council approves a written cost-sharing arrangement based on broader municipal benefit.
- 20) In organized hamlets, lakeshore communities, multi-lot developments, and recreational areas, the RM may require or support walkways, trails, or pedestrian connections where they are safe, practical, and appropriate to the development's location and anticipated use. New municipal pedestrian facilities should consider accessibility for people of different ages and abilities, site conditions, environmental sensitivity, maintenance requirements, and municipal capacity.

6. Planning Tools and Strategies

The RM will use the planning tools and implementation strategies authorized by provincial legislation to implement the adopted Vision, Mission, Values, key principles, objectives, and policies of this OCP. These tools provide a framework for evaluating development, coordinating infrastructure and services, protecting environmental and cultural resources, managing municipal costs, and responding to changing community conditions over the planning horizon.

Implementation will occur through the Zoning Bylaw, subdivision and development review, concept plans, servicing and development agreements, development levies, road maintenance agreements, dedicated lands, land acquisition, intermunicipal cooperation, capital planning, technical studies, monitoring, and amendments to this OCP where warranted.

The availability of a planning tool in this section does not require Council to use it in every circumstance. The tool selected will depend on the nature, location, scale, servicing requirements, environmental conditions, infrastructure implications, and anticipated effects of the proposal.

6.1. The Official Community Plan

The Official Community Plan is an adopted municipal bylaw that establishes the RM's long-term direction for land use, growth, environmental protection, transportation, infrastructure, servicing, recreation, economic development, and community well-being. It is intended to guide Council, municipal administration, approving authorities, developers, landowners, and other interested parties over an approximately 20-year planning horizon.

Council and municipal administration shall apply the objectives and policies of this OCP when exercising municipal planning and development responsibilities under *The Planning and Development Act, 2007*. Decisions should consider the OCP as a whole. Where multiple policies apply, they shall be considered together and balanced in a manner that best advances the overall intent of the Plan.

The OCP does not create an automatic entitlement to rezoning, subdivision, development approval, municipal servicing, or infrastructure investment. Land identified for a potential future use on the Future Land Use Map remains subject to applicable rezoning, subdivision, development approval, servicing, environmental review, infrastructure assessment, and other municipal or provincial requirements.

Municipal bylaws, policies, plans, programs, and capital decisions should be consistent with the OCP. Where an inconsistency is identified, the RM shall determine whether the subordinate document or proposed action should be revised or whether an amendment to the OCP is justified. An OCP amendment shall not be presumed solely because a proposal conflicts with the existing Plan.

The OCP shall be implemented principally through the RM's Zoning Bylaw and shall be read in conjunction with applicable federal and provincial legislation. Relevant legislation includes *The Planning and Development Act, 2007*, *The Statements of Provincial Interest Regulations*, *The Municipalities Act*, and other applicable enactments governing subdivision, dedicated lands, construction, fire safety, environmental protection, water, wastewater, highways, heritage resources, and public health, as amended or replaced from time to time.

6.1.1. Understanding the Language

The objectives and policies of this OCP use different forms of language to indicate the nature and degree of direction intended:

- “Shall” or “will” expresses a mandatory direction or municipal commitment, subject to applicable legislation and municipal authority.
- “Shall not” or “will not” expresses a prohibition.
- “Should” expresses a preferred course of action. A different approach may be considered where it is demonstrated to satisfy the intent of the OCP.
- “May” expresses discretion or authorization and does not require the RM to take the action in every circumstance.
- “Encourage,” “support,” or “promote” expresses a desired outcome that the RM may advance through advocacy, cooperation, incentives, information, or available planning tools.
- “Consider” requires the identified matter to be evaluated but does not predetermine the resulting decision.
- “Generally” identifies the usual approach while allowing consideration of site-specific circumstances.
- “Where appropriate,” “where warranted,” or “where practical” requires consideration of the proposal’s location, scale, effects, municipal authority, cost, and relevant site conditions.

Headings, figures, maps, appendices, and explanatory text assist in interpreting the OCP. Where there is uncertainty, the Plan shall be interpreted in a manner that advances its adopted Vision, Mission, Values, key principles, objectives, and overall policy direction.

6.1.2. Amending the Official Community Plan

The OCP may be amended where Council determines that an amendment is in the long-term public interest and is consistent with applicable provincial legislation and the Statements of Provincial Interest. An amendment may be initiated by Council or requested in association with a development proposal.

Amendments may include:

1. a **text amendment**, which changes the written provisions of the OCP; or
2. a **map amendment**, which changes the Future Land Use Map or another map forming part of the OCP.

When considering an amendment, Council shall evaluate relevant matters, including:

- a. the adopted Vision, Mission, Values, key principles, objectives, and policies of the OCP;
- b. compatibility with existing and planned land uses;
- c. environmental conditions and potential cumulative effects;
- d. water quality, source-water protection, shorelands, wetlands, and natural drainage;
- e. servicing, transportation, emergency access, and infrastructure capacity;
- f. agricultural land fragmentation and resource considerations;
- g. municipal costs and the allocation of development-related expenses;
- h. public and agency input;

- i. applicable technical studies; and
- j. provincial interests and legislative requirements.

An amendment shall follow the applicable procedures established by *The Planning and Development Act, 2007*, including required public notice, a public hearing, Council consideration and adoption, and provincial approval where required. Approval of an OCP amendment does not, by itself, constitute approval of a rezoning, subdivision, development permit, servicing arrangement, or other required authorization.

6.1.3. Monitoring the Long-Term Performance of the Plan

The RM will monitor the effectiveness of the OCP and may consider:

- a. the location, type, and rate of development;
- b. the availability of residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, recreational, and community-service land;
- c. subdivision and development activity around Turtle Lake, Brightsand Lake, and other water bodies;
- d. current environmental studies, water-quality information, and cumulative development effects;
- e. wastewater, water, drainage, transportation, and emergency service capacity;
- f. changes in populations, demographics, housing, employment, and economic activity;
- g. agricultural, resource, and tourism trends;
- h. infrastructure condition and municipal financial capacity;
- i. amendments to provincial legislation or the Statements of Provincial Interest; and
- j. whether the Future Land Use Map continues to reflect Council's long-term growth strategy.

6.2. The Zoning Bylaw

The Zoning Bylaw is the principal regulatory instrument used to implement this Official Community Plan. It divides the RM into zoning districts and establishes permitted and discretionary uses, development standards, application requirements, and procedures for administering development.

The Zoning Bylaw will establish districts appropriate to agricultural, residential, lakeshore, commercial, industrial, resource, community-service, recreational, environmental, and other land uses. Its regulations may address matters such as parcel and site dimensions, setbacks, building and structure locations, parking, access, landscaping, screening, wastewater servicing, recreational vehicles, environmental protection, and other matters authorized by provincial legislation.

The Zoning Bylaw shall be consistent with this OCP and *The Planning and Development Act, 2007*. It will be applied together with applicable subdivision requirements, construction codes, environmental requirements, municipal bylaws, and provincial approvals.

Neither the designation of land on the Future Land Use Map nor a policy supporting a particular use creates an entitlement to rezoning, subdivision, discretionary-use approval, or development approval.

6.2.1. Amending the Zoning Bylaw

The Zoning Bylaw may be amended where Council determines that an amendment is consistent with this OCP, applicable provincial legislation, and the long-term public interest. An amendment shall not be presumed solely because it is requested in association with a development proposal.

A text amendment changes a written provision of the Zoning Bylaw. A map amendment changes the zoning designation of land shown on the Zoning Map.

When considering a Zoning Bylaw amendment, Council shall consider:

- a. conformity with this OCP and the Future Land Use Map;
- b. compatibility with existing and planned land uses;
- c. environmental conditions and cumulative effects;
- d. water quality, source-water, wetlands, shorelands, and drainage;
- e. transportation, emergency access, infrastructure, and servicing capacity;
- f. agricultural land fragmentation and resource considerations;
- g. municipal costs and required agreements;
- h. applicable concept plans and professional studies; and
- i. public, agency, and adjacent landowner input.

Zoning Bylaw amendments shall follow the procedures established by *The Planning and Development Act, 2007*, including required notice, a public hearing, Council adoption, and provincial approval where required.

Approval of a Zoning Bylaw amendment does not constitute approval of a subdivision, discretionary use, development permit, building permit, servicing agreement, or provincial authorization.

6.2.2. Contract Zone

Contract zoning may be used to accommodate a specific development proposal requiring rezoning where Council determines that an agreement is necessary to ensure that the development occurs only in accordance with the approved proposal.

Council may consider contract zoning where:

- a. the proposal is sufficiently specific to permit its uses, site layout, external design, development standards, and timing to be established in an agreement;
- b. the proposal is consistent with the OCP and Future Land Use Map or an associated OCP amendment has been approved;
- c. the proposed uses will be authorized by the associated zoning amendment and expressly identified in the contract-zoning agreement;
- d. the proposal is compatible with adjacent existing and planned land uses;
- e. environmental, servicing, transportation, drainage, emergency access, and infrastructure matters can be appropriately addressed; and
- f. the agreement complies with Section 69 of *The Planning and Development Act, 2007*.

A contract-zoning agreement may address the matters authorized by provincial legislation, including the use of land and buildings, forms of development, site layout, parking, landscaping, access, external design, implementation time limits, and other reasonable terms associated with the specified proposal.

The agreement shall run with the land and shall be registered against the affected title as required by provincial legislation. Development shall not proceed except in accordance with the approved agreement and associated zoning amendment.

6.3. Other Implementation Tools

6.3.1. Development Levy

In accordance with sections 169–176 of *The Planning and Development Act, 2007*, Council may adopt and maintain a Development Levy Bylaw to recover all or part of the additional municipal capital costs resulting from development that does not involve subdivision.

Development levies may be used only for eligible capital costs associated directly or indirectly with the development, including sewage, water, drainage, roadways and related infrastructure, parks, and recreational facilities. Development levies shall not be used to recover ordinary maintenance, operating, or repair costs.

A Development Levy Bylaw shall be supported by the studies required by provincial legislation and shall consider anticipated land-use patterns, development phasing, infrastructure requirements, and the allocation of capital costs among benefiting developments. Similar developments creating similar capital costs shall be treated consistently.

Where authorized by the Development Levy Bylaw, the RM may require payment of an applicable levy as a requirement of development approval. Where Council determines it necessary, the applicant or landowner may be required to enter into a development levy agreement addressing:

- a. the amount and timing of payment;
- b. payment by instalments;
- c. variable rates for phased development;
- d. letters of credit, performance bonds, or other payment assurances;
- e. reimbursement for infrastructure capacity benefiting subsequent development; and
- f. other matters recognized by provincial legislation.

Development levies shall not be used as a substitute for servicing agreement fees where subdivision is involved. A development shall not be charged twice for the same municipal capital cost unless the RM will incur additional eligible capital costs.

Funds collected through development levies shall be maintained and used in accordance with provincial legislation. The Development Levy Bylaw, supporting studies, rates, defined benefiting areas, and capital-cost estimates should be reviewed periodically.

6.3.2. Servicing Agreements

Where subdivision is proposed, the RM may require the subdivision applicant to enter into a servicing agreement in accordance with sections 172–176 of *The Planning and Development Act, 2007*. Where the RM requires an agreement, subdivision approval shall be subject to execution of that agreement.

A servicing agreement may require the applicant to construct or install services and infrastructure required by the proposed subdivision in accordance with municipal standards. It may also require payment of eligible fees for municipal capital works that directly or indirectly serve the subdivision where the RM can reasonably demonstrate the associated costs.

A servicing agreement may address:

- a. roads, connecting and boundary roads, approaches, lanes, and related infrastructure;
- b. stormwater, drainage, grading, and erosion-control works;
- c. water-supply and wastewater collection or treatment systems;
- d. utility connections and municipal utility parcels;
- e. street lighting, signs, landscaping, parks, and recreational facilities, where applicable;
- f. emergency access and secondary access routes;
- g. design and construction specifications;
- h. construction and payment timelines;
- i. allocation or sharing of costs;
- j. letters of credit, performance bonds, warranties, and other assurances;
- k. excess infrastructure capacity benefiting subsequent development;
- l. inspection, testing, professional certification, and record drawings; and
- m. long-term ownership, operation, maintenance, and replacement responsibilities.

When determining servicing requirements, the RM shall consider the location, scale, density, phasing, environmental conditions, water and wastewater needs, drainage, transportation impacts, emergency access, municipal capacity, and cumulative effects of the subdivision.

Servicing agreements for development around Turtle Lake, Brightsand Lake, and other water bodies may address wastewater servicing, stormwater, drainage, shoreline and wetland protection, public access, road capacity, emergency access, and any mitigation identified through required technical studies.

Applicants shall be responsible for subdivision-related infrastructure costs reasonably attributable to their proposals, except where Council approves a written cost-sharing arrangement based on a broader municipal benefit.

Servicing fees and development levies shall not recover the same capital cost unless additional capital costs will be incurred. Fees collected shall be administered and used in accordance with provincial legislation.

Council may adopt and periodically update policies, schedules, engineering standards, and securities requirements to support the consistent administration of servicing agreements.

6.3.3. Concept Plans

Council may require a concept plan before considering the rezoning, subdivision, or development of land where coordinated planning is necessary because of the proposal's scale, location, environmental conditions, servicing requirements, infrastructure implications, or relationship to surrounding land.

A concept plan should generally be required or considered for:

- a. multi-lot residential or country-residential development;
- b. new lakeshore, off-lake, multi-tiered, or clustered development;
- c. major tourism or recreational development;
- d. large or phased commercial, industrial, resource, or mixed-use development;
- e. land involving multiple owners or development phases;
- f. development requiring new communal water or wastewater systems;
- g. development requiring significant municipal road or drainage improvements; and
- h. development in or near environmentally sensitive or potentially hazardous areas.

A concept plan shall be prepared by the applicant at the applicant's expense and at a level of detail appropriate to the proposal. Council may require the involvement of registered professional planners, engineers, environmental professionals, or other qualified persons.

A concept plan may address:

- a. existing site conditions and surrounding land uses;
- b. proposed land uses, development density, and parcel configuration;
- c. development phasing and anticipated build-out;
- d. roads, emergency access, secondary access, parking, trails, and public access;
- e. water supply, wastewater servicing, stormwater, and drainage;
- f. wetlands, shorelines, riparian areas, groundwater, wildlife habitat, and other natural features;
- g. environmental reserve, municipal reserve, buffer strips, walkways, and other dedicated lands;
- h. agricultural land fragmentation and compatibility with agricultural operations;
- i. compatibility with nearby residential, commercial, industrial, recreational, and resource uses;
- j. utility and infrastructure requirements;
- k. emergency services, wildfire, flooding, erosion, and other hazards;
- l. anticipated municipal capital, operating, and maintenance implications;
- m. required professional studies and mitigation measures; and
- n. any other matter Council considers necessary to evaluate the orderly and sustainable development of the area.

Concept plans affecting Turtle Lake shall consider the most recent Turtle Lake study, including natural carrying capacity, cumulative development effects, shoreline and riparian conditions, wetlands, groundwater and drainage, wastewater servicing, road and emergency-access capacity, recreational use,

and public access. Growth should generally be directed toward existing development areas and suitable off-lake, multi-tiered, or clustered locations rather than creating further linear shoreline development.

Concept plans affecting Brightsand Lake or another water body shall be based on the specific environmental conditions, development pattern, servicing capacity, infrastructure, and available technical information for that water body. A single-row development pattern may be considered around Brightsand Lake where site-specific assessment demonstrates that it would appropriately limit development intensity and inland expansion.

A statutory concept plan shall be adopted in accordance with section 44 of *The Planning and Development Act, 2007*.

A concept plan does not create an entitlement to rezoning, subdivision, development approval, servicing, or municipal infrastructure investment. Subsequent applications shall comply with the OCP, Zoning Bylaw, approved concept plan, servicing requirements, and applicable provincial approvals.

6.3.4. Building Bylaw

The RM shall administer its current Building Bylaw in accordance with *The Construction Codes Act*, applicable regulations, and the codes adopted by the Province of Saskatchewan.

The Building Bylaw establishes municipal procedures for building-permit applications, review, inspection, enforcement, and other matters within municipal authority. Building permits help ensure that construction, alteration, addition, relocation, change of occupancy, and demolition are undertaken in accordance with applicable construction and accessibility requirements.

A building permit does not replace a required development permit, discretionary-use approval, subdivision approval, wastewater approval, highway permit, environmental authorization, or other municipal, provincial, or federal approval.

6.3.5. Community Engagement

The RM shall provide public notice and hold public hearings where required by *The Planning and Development Act, 2007*. Council may undertake additional community engagement where the nature, scale, location, public interest, or potential effects of a planning matter warrant further input.

Additional engagement may be considered for:

- a. preparation or comprehensive review of the OCP or Zoning Bylaw;
- b. significant concept plans or multi-lot developments;
- c. proposals affecting lakes, public access, environmentally sensitive areas, or major municipal infrastructure;
- d. developments having substantial regional, servicing, transportation, or environmental implications; and
- e. other matters Council considers to be of broad community interest.

Engagement shall be proportionate to the matter under consideration and may include online information, surveys, written submissions, open houses, public meetings, stakeholder discussions, or other suitable methods.

When undertaking additional community engagement, the RM should:

- a. clearly explain the purpose of the process and the decision being considered;
- b. provide relevant information in a timely and understandable format;
- c. provide reasonable opportunities for affected ratepayers, residents, businesses, seasonal property owners, community organizations, and other interested parties to participate;
- d. consider accessibility and a reasonable range of participation methods;
- e. respect Council's statutory decision-making authority and applicable procedural requirements;
- f. summarize the input received and explain how it was considered, where appropriate; and
- g. conduct the process in a timely and cost-effective manner appropriate to the significance of the matter.

Community engagement does not require consensus and does not transfer Council's decision-making authority. Additional engagement does not replace statutory notice, referral, consultation, or public-hearing requirements.

6.4. Binding

Upon coming into effect, this Official Community Plan is binding on the RM and all other persons, associations, and organizations in accordance with section 40 of The Planning and Development Act, 2007. No development shall be carried out that is contrary to this OCP.

The adoption of this OCP does not commit the RM, any person, association or organization, or any ministry or agency of the Government of Saskatchewan to undertake any project, infrastructure improvement, service expansion, land acquisition, environmental initiative, or other action identified or contemplated in the Plan.

Nothing in this OCP removes the requirement to obtain a rezoning, subdivision approval, development permit, building permit, servicing agreement, provincial authorization, or other approval required by law.

6.5. Interpretation and Definitions

Terms defined in The Planning and Development Act, 2007 or other applicable provincial legislation shall have the meanings assigned to them by that legislation where used in the corresponding statutory context.

Terms expressly defined in this OCP shall have the meanings assigned to them by this Plan. Where a term is not defined in the OCP or applicable legislation, the corresponding definition in the Zoning Bylaw may be used as an interpretive aid where it is consistent with the context, purpose, and policies of this OCP.

Where no applicable definition is provided, a word or phrase shall be interpreted according to its ordinary meaning and the context in which it is used. In the event of an inconsistency, applicable provincial legislation shall prevail, and the OCP and Zoning Bylaw shall otherwise be interpreted in a manner that gives effect to the intent of the OCP.

The interpretation provisions in Section 6.1.1 concerning “shall,” “should,” “may,” “encourage,” and similar terms also apply throughout this Plan.

7. Effective Date

7.1. Ministerial Approval

The Official Community Plan Bylaw 2026-XX and all Maps shall come into force on the date of final approval by the Minister of Government Relations.

1ST READING