



Parkland County **Integrated Community** **Sustainability Plan**

One Parkland: Powerfully Connected.

Parkland County
Integrated
Community
Sustainability
Plan

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Executive Summary

What you will find in this document and how it will be used to create a resilient community.

The Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (the Plan) is Parkland County's primary vehicle for planning, achieving and reporting on the success of community sustainability initiatives.

The Plan sets out the long-term path to a sustainable County. It has:

- Five pillars of sustainability;
- Eighteen aspirational sustainability objectives; and
- A work plan that integrates with Council's Strategic Plan.

The Plan provides direction for the County for the next 20 to 30 years as to how it can:

- Promote balanced growth;
- Ensure healthy ecosystems;
- Build **complete communities**;
- Diversify the economy; and
- Deliver inclusive governance.

Over the past three and a half years, the County has engaged the community for advice about what sustainability looks like. How can it meet current and future needs? This input helped shape the Plan, from broad objectives to action recommendations. Through this engagement the community demonstrated how it cares about its deep **rural** roots and native landscapes. It is already involved in a grassroots movement towards sustainability. A summary of stakeholder feedback is available in the "What We Heard" report¹.

DEFINITIONS:

Complete Communities | A complete community meets people's needs for daily living throughout an entire lifetime by providing convenient access to an appropriate mix of jobs, local services, a full range of housing, and community infrastructure including affordable housing, schools, recreation, and open space for their residents. Convenient access to public transportation and options for safe, non-motorized travel is also provided.

Rural | Rural relates to the countryside and the people who live there instead of urban centres.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document includes learnings from earlier versions of the Plan. Learnings have been applied to new broad objectives, strategies and recommended actions. The Plan now:

- Emphasizes the rural nature of the County and establishes strategies to address its unique opportunities and challenges.
- Places importance on balancing land uses between natural ecosystems and human activities.
- Ensures each of the five pillars of sustainability are equally emphasized and integrated.
- Includes an implementation framework that aligns closely with Council's Strategic Plan and the County's new Municipal Development Plan. This ensures all areas of the organization are similarly focused and working together.











The Plan is centered around 18 long-term, broad objectives, which outline the measures the County plans to achieve. This helps the County evaluate strategies and supports decision-making on priorities. It includes a work plan that is focused, realistic, and manageable to implement with available resources. These updates, together with a renewed culture of sustainability, will enable the County to achieve a sustainable and resilient community for the benefit of current and future residents.








This Plan provides:

- An introduction to sustainability planning in the County;
- The approach the County took to develop the Plan, including inputs from other strategic plans and feedback from the community;
- The framework the County will use to structure and measure its progress;
- Details about how the Plan will be put into action; and
- Information about the direction the County is taking to create a culture of sustainability.



LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVES

COMMUNITY		QUALITY OF LIFE <i>Good quality of life for all residents.</i>
		RURAL HERITAGE <i>A vibrant rural character, sense of community and strong local heritage.</i>
		SOCIAL & RECREATIONAL AMENITIES <i>A variety of lifestyle options, recreational amenities and facilities.</i>
		INCLUSIVE & VALUED COMMUNITIES <i>Empowered, included and valued community members.</i>
LAND USE		BALANCED LANDSCAPES <i>Balanced interests and reduced conflict between developed, natural and working landscapes.</i>
		COMPLETE COMMUNITIES <i>Complete communities and prosperous hamlets that support live, work and play.</i>
ECONOMY		INNOVATIVE INDUSTRIAL & COMMERCIAL <i>Innovative and diversified industrial and commercial development.</i>
		VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURE <i>A vibrant agricultural economy.</i>
		RECREATION & TOURISM <i>A diverse and prosperous recreation and tourism market.</i>
		RURAL BUSINESS <i>Widespread entrepreneurship and rural diversification of business opportunities.</i>

ENVIRONMENT		ECOSYSTEMS & BIODIVERSITY <i>Functioning natural ecosystems.</i>
		WATER QUALITY & WATERSHEDS <i>Quality water supplies supported by healthy and resilient watersheds.</i>
		CLIMATE RESILIENCE <i>Climate change resiliency and good air quality.</i>
		WASTE DIVERSION <i>Diversion of solid waste from landfills.</i>
GOVERNANCE		DECISION MAKING <i>Responsible, balanced, and transparent decision-making.</i>
		COMMUNICATION & ENGAGEMENT <i>County operations that create a partnership culture with community members.</i>
		ACHIEVING GOALS <i>Progress in achieving corporate and sustainability objectives.</i>
		REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS <i>Effective regional partnerships that build resilience and improve efficiency.</i>



1.0



INTRODUCTION




1.0 INTRODUCTION

Parkland County is a beautiful rural community offering country living with easy access to city amenities.

Parkland County offers a distinctly vibrant atmosphere. It has an assortment of agricultural properties, country residential acreages, and a diverse range of small and large businesses. This rural municipality has recreation opportunities for all ages including: hunting, fishing, water sports, golfing, farmer's markets, arts, culture, and shopping.



POPULATION OF
32,097
IN 2016



COUNTY SIZE
242,595
HECTARES





The County actively preserves its scenic natural landscapes, ecosystems and cultural features. At the same time, it supports conditions for economic development.

The County's landscape supports diverse species and habitat through a well-connected network of natural assets including:

- Forests.
- Lakes.
- Wetlands.
- Large wildlife corridors.
- Underground aquifer fresh water resources.
- Provincial and local parks.

Within these natural areas are small urban centres. Such landscape patterns are characteristic of rural-agricultural and rural-urban transition areas in Alberta.

The County offers some of the best economic development opportunities and industry supports in the region. It has industrial areas such as the Acheson Industrial Park and easy access to transportation and trade corridors, rail lines and airports. With these assets, it is not surprising that over 3,000 industrial start-ups, agricultural processing and home-based businesses have made the County their home.

The County prides itself on providing residents with a great balance between live, work, and play. It boosts quality of life and **comprehensive wealth** for its residents through:

- A strong commercial/industrial sector that allows for local employment opportunities;
- Low residential taxes;
- Opportunities for starting and growing a business;
- A strong sense of community and vibrant, **rural character**;
- A range of amenities; and
- Resilient natural ecosystems.

DEFINITIONS:

Comprehensive Wealth | Comprehensive wealth is the sum total of assets we own as a society. It is made up of five components: produced, financial, natural, human, and social capital. It is about measuring a society's total stock of assets over time; focusing on the role of people, the environment, the economy, and infrastructure in creating and sustaining well-being.

Rural Character | Rural character refers to an individual's perception of the aspects that make up a rural area.



1.1 What is Sustainability?

One of the most widely-accepted definitions of sustainability is “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”² Community sustainability also considers the **resilience** of systems, including both natural (biophysical) and human (social, cultural, financial and developed) parts.

The International Institute of Sustainable Development further encourages communities to look beyond traditional measures of wealth, such as built and financial assets. Communities should consider “comprehensive wealth” or the sum total of the assets owned as a society, including natural and human assets³. Both types of assets should be accounted for when making decisions.

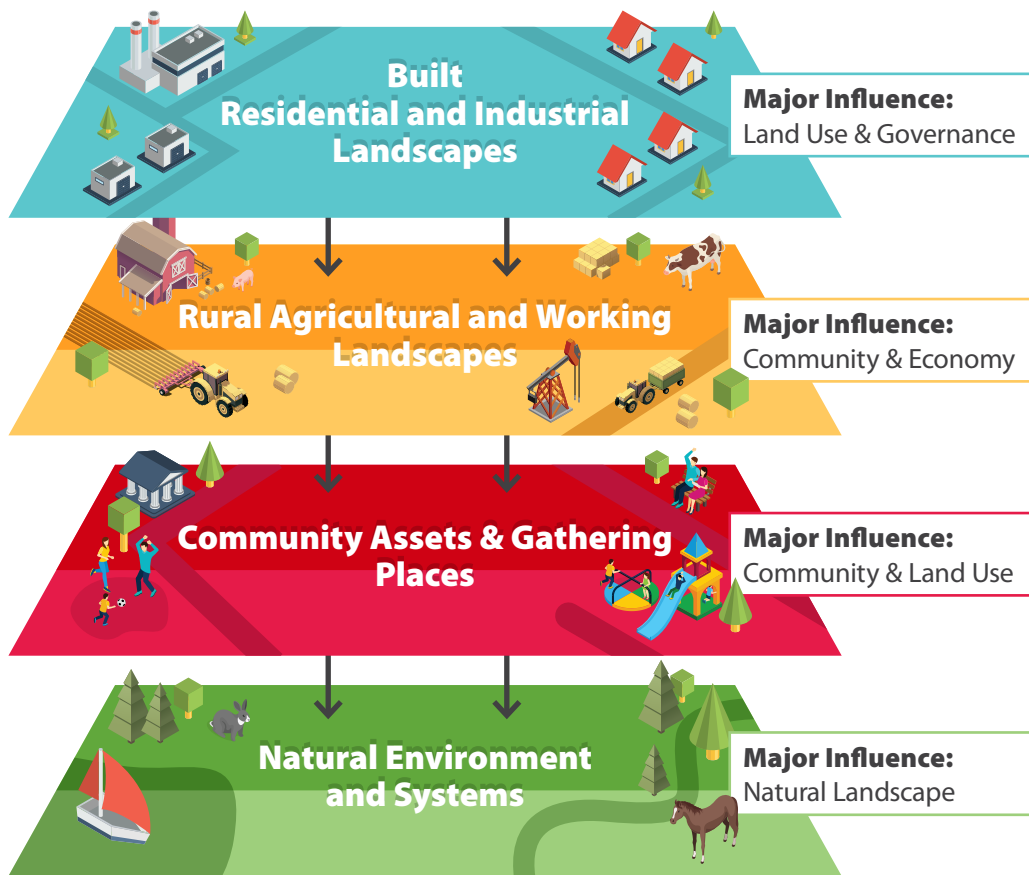
In the context of rural sustainability, communities must strike a balance between protecting agricultural and natural resources while supporting rural lifestyle and employment opportunities. To further add to the challenges, the feasibility of achieving these objectives depends on the affordability of the selected actions.

DEFINITION:

Resilience | Resilience is the capacity of a system to withstand and bounce back intact from environmental or human disturbances.



RURAL SUSTAINABILITY



Rural sustainability, from a land use perspective, is the interplay of all these layers

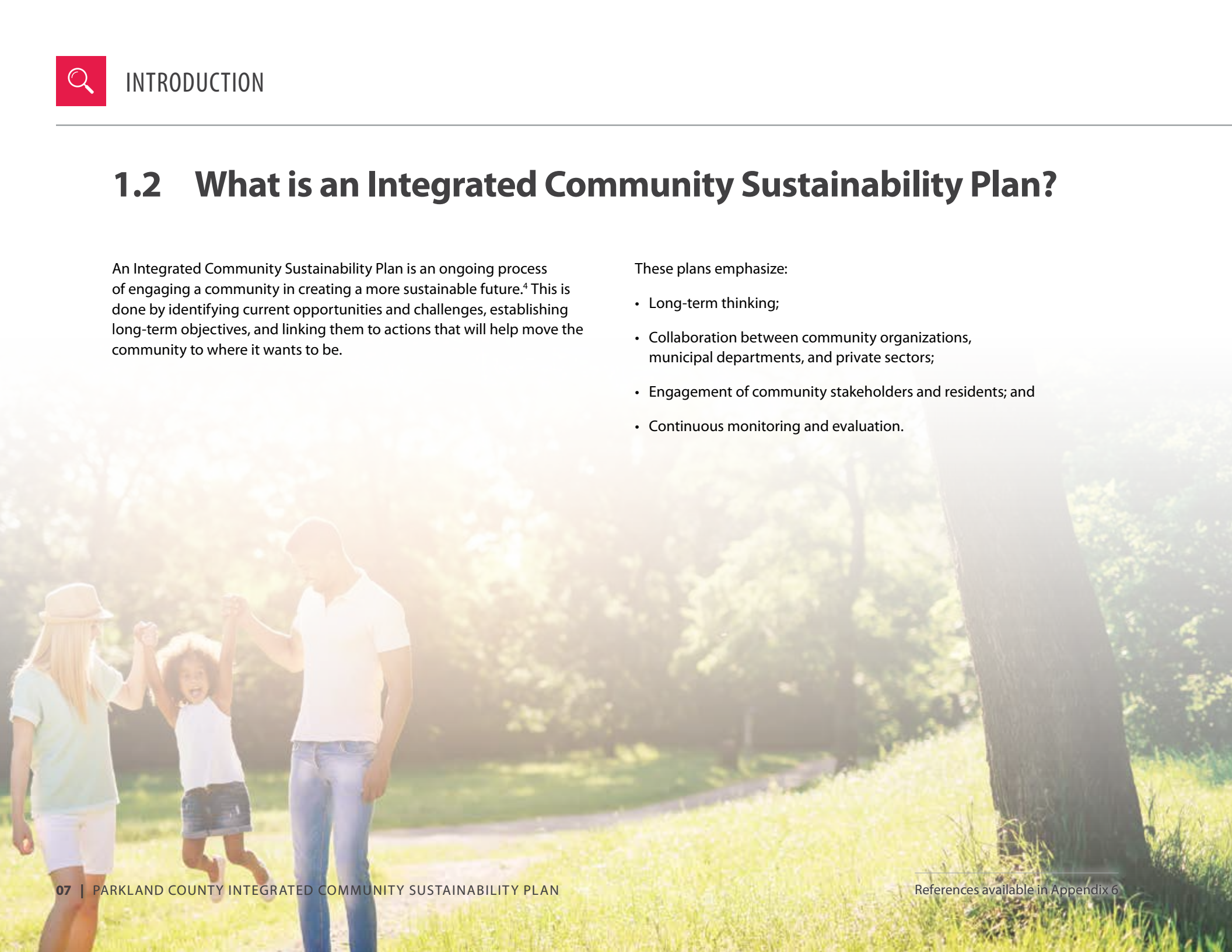


1.2 What is an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan?

An Integrated Community Sustainability Plan is an ongoing process of engaging a community in creating a more sustainable future.⁴ This is done by identifying current opportunities and challenges, establishing long-term objectives, and linking them to actions that will help move the community to where it wants to be.

These plans emphasize:

- Long-term thinking;
- Collaboration between community organizations, municipal departments, and private sectors;
- Engagement of community stakeholders and residents; and
- Continuous monitoring and evaluation.





1.3 Community Sustainability Planning in Parkland County

Parkland County views community sustainability planning as an opportunity to demonstrate its commitment to sustainability. The County developed its first Plan in 2006 to show how it would be a sustainability leader moving forward and to establish a primary source of information on sustainability. The plan was updated in 2011 with input from the community and Council.

LESSONS LEARNED & IMPROVEMENTS:

This Plan applies learnings from earlier versions by introducing the improvements described below:

- 1** The rural nature of the community is emphasized. The County has developed strategies that address the unique opportunities and challenges of a rural-urban transition environment.
- 2** The County recognizes the importance of managing land use sustainably to ensure balance and resilience of natural ecosystems, social networks, and financial systems. The County introduced land use as the fifth pillar of sustainability and developed broad objectives specific to sustainable land use practices.
- 3** The County found that it was difficult to get buy-in for past versions of the Plan because true sustainability—as it relates to each pillar (not just the environment)—was not emphasized. Therefore, the County identified broad objectives for each pillar that focus on sustaining that pillar, rather than how aspects of that pillar can help sustain the environment.
- 4** The County determined a framework was needed to implement priority strategies and embed sustainability in both community and corporate culture. This Plan aligns with the County's Strategic Planning Framework to ensure the policy and processes are in place to support both measurement of the County's progress toward its broad objectives, and prioritization of actions and strategies.



1.4 Recognizing Achievements

Parkland County has several sustainability achievements following the implementation of the 2011 Plan.

ENVIRONMENT

- The County adopted two stewardship programs for private landowners that support the production of ecosystem services on their land: the Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS)⁵ program for agricultural producers and the Green Acreages⁶ program for residents. In 2016, the County's ALUS program received the *Shared Footprint Emerald Award*⁷, as part of a collaborative tri-County contribution.
- The County joined the Partners for Climate Protection (PCP)⁸ program to ensure ongoing management of the County's impact on climate change. The PCP program comprises a network of over 240 municipalities committed to reducing greenhouse gases (GHGs). Beyond a GHG inventory and forecast completed by the County, reduction targets and initiatives have also been identified for both corporate operations and community emissions.

GOVERNANCE

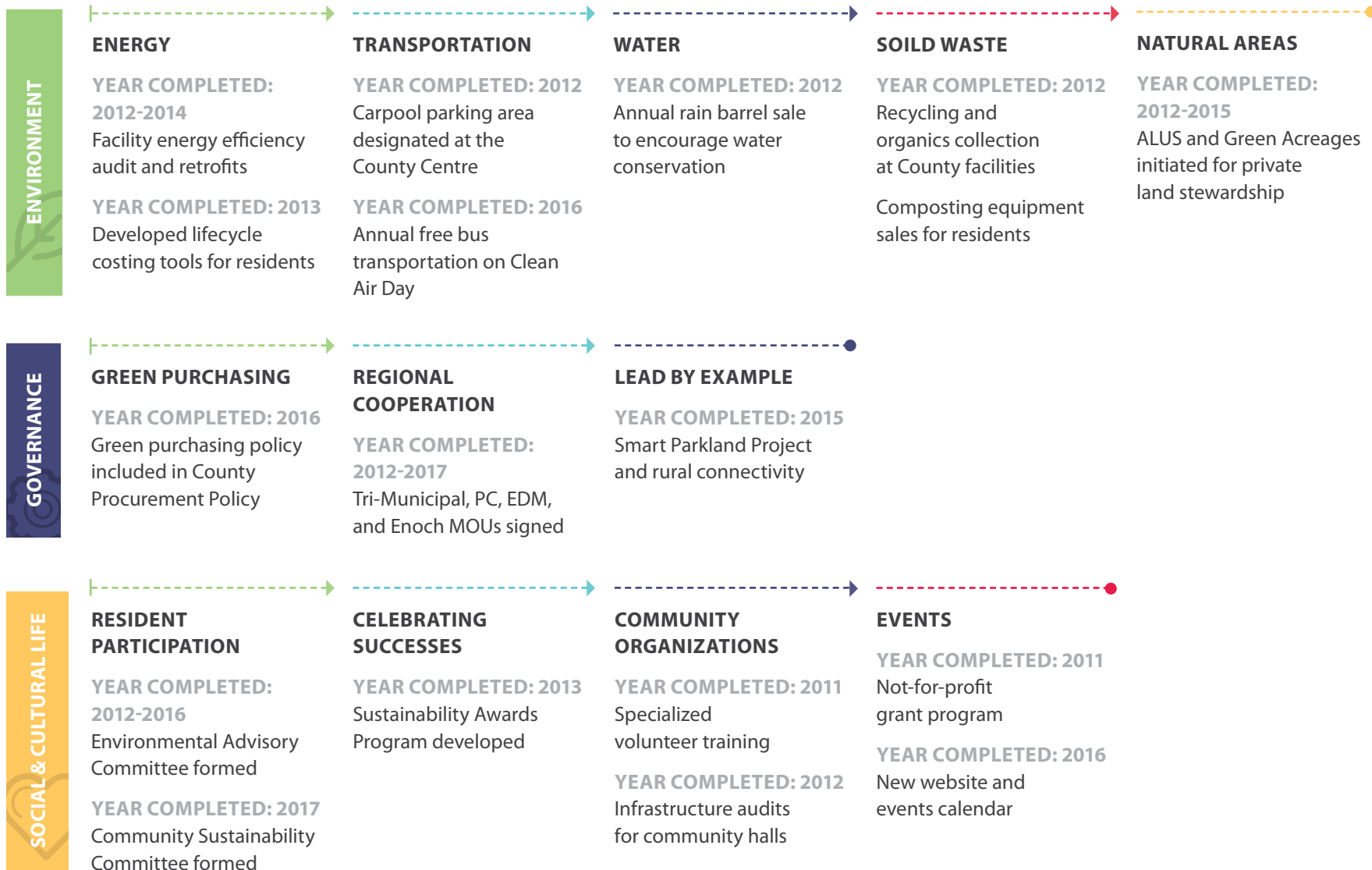
- A Tri-Municipal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Environmental Sustainability Initiatives and Planning was signed between Parkland County, Spruce Grove and Stony Plain. The MOU has led to increased collaboration on events and initiatives, greater information and resource sharing, as well as the development of a Feasibility Study for a Municipally-Operated Organics Processing Facility.
- The Smart Parkland project focuses on connectivity, knowledge workforce, digital inclusion, innovation, marketing, advocacy, and environment. The project has brought Internet connection to both individual residences and social hubs, such as libraries and community halls. The program was awarded the Global Top 21 Intelligent Communities award in 2014 by the Intelligent Communities Forum.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL LIFE

- The Sustainability Awards Program was approved and developed in 2013. In 2017, the County held an inaugural ceremony recognizing individuals, businesses, producers, schools, and youth for their contributions toward a sustainable community.



IMPLEMENTATION SUCCESSES TIMELINE





2.0



THE APPROACH



2.0 THE APPROACH

If sustainability means meeting current needs while protecting the needs of future generations, what is Parkland County doing to achieve this balance?

The County has a strong vision that is supported by a series of strategic plans and an engaged community. The Approach outlines how the County builds on this vision to plan for sustainability. Because the County is mostly rural, its approach to sustainability must consider the rural character of its communities.



2.1 Vision

‘ONE PARKLAND: POWERFULLY CONNECTED’

Parkland County has a vision to be a powerfully connected community. To get there, planning occurs at several levels and there are three documents that guide the County’s long-term direction.

- At the uppermost level is Council’s Long-Term Strategic Plan⁹, a document that establishes the County’s vision and priorities for the next 20 to 30 years.
- The Municipal Development Plan¹⁰ is the second piece to the long-term planning puzzle and is required under provincial legislation to set a strategic policy direction for future growth within Parkland County. This document outlines how the County will be developed over the next 30 years.
- The Integrated Community Sustainability Plan is the third document in the County’s high-level planning toolkit. It builds on the Strategic Plan’s vision by defining objectives specific to sustainability and highlighting where sustainability measures can be integrated into long-term directions.

Integration and synergy between these three documents is essential to develop a consistent course of action for achieving the vision of One Parkland: Powerfully Connected. For this reason, the Municipal Development Plan and the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan have incorporated Council’s four strategic pillars into their frameworks:

- Complete communities.
- Strategic economic diversification.
- Respected environment.
- Responsible leadership.

The overall goal of each plan is to achieve the County’s vision.





2.2 The Sustainability Approach

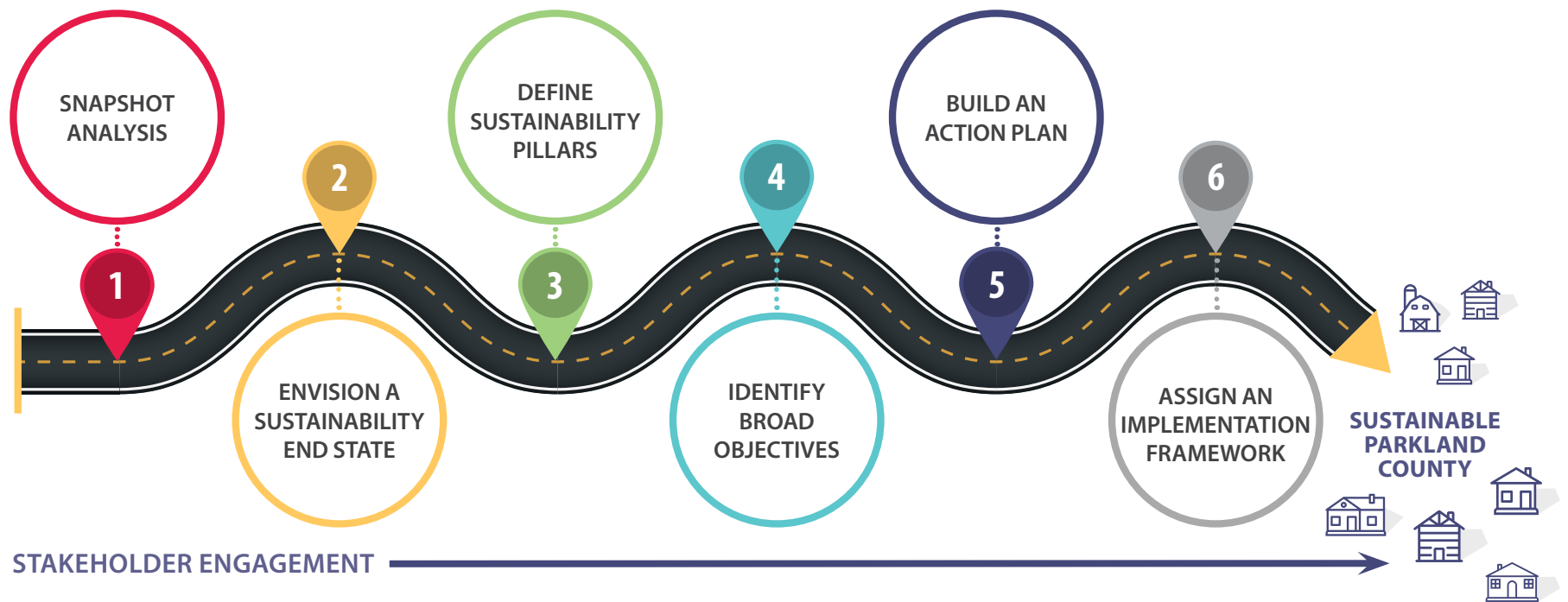
The sustainability approach describes the method used to develop the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan. This approach is an iterative process where each step is re-evaluated based on the stakeholder input that is obtained throughout plan development.

APPROACH:

- 1 Snapshot Analysis:** Understand the County's current situation. Include challenges and opportunities that are relevant to both current and future generations using background studies; research of local and global trends and statistics; and input from the public, Council and Administration.
- 2 Sustainability End State:** Envision what sustainability looks like in the community 20 to 30 years in the future.
- 3 Define Sustainability Pillars:** Create definitions of sustainability for the five pillars keeping in mind that all pillars need to interact to achieve the end state.
- 4 Identify Broad Objectives:** Identify specific objectives for each pillar. These objectives become the foundation of the Plan, specify what the County is trying to achieve, and address the current opportunities and challenges outlined in the snapshot analysis.
- 5 Build an Action Plan:** Get creative and collaborative. Outline specific strategies and recommend actions that can be implemented by the County in partnership with the broader community. These strategies and actions specify how the County will achieve its broad objectives, and in turn, achieve the sustainability end state.
- 6 Assign an Implementation Framework:** Prioritize actions, assign initiative leads, set timelines and develop indicators and targets that will help measure and monitor success throughout implementation.



THE APPROACH

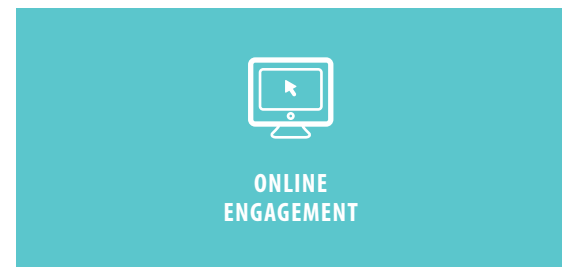




2.3 Community Engagement

The community has played a significant role in developing the 2017 Plan. In January 2014, the Development Services Division began updating both the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan and the Municipal Development Plan.

The public engagement focused on three key elements:



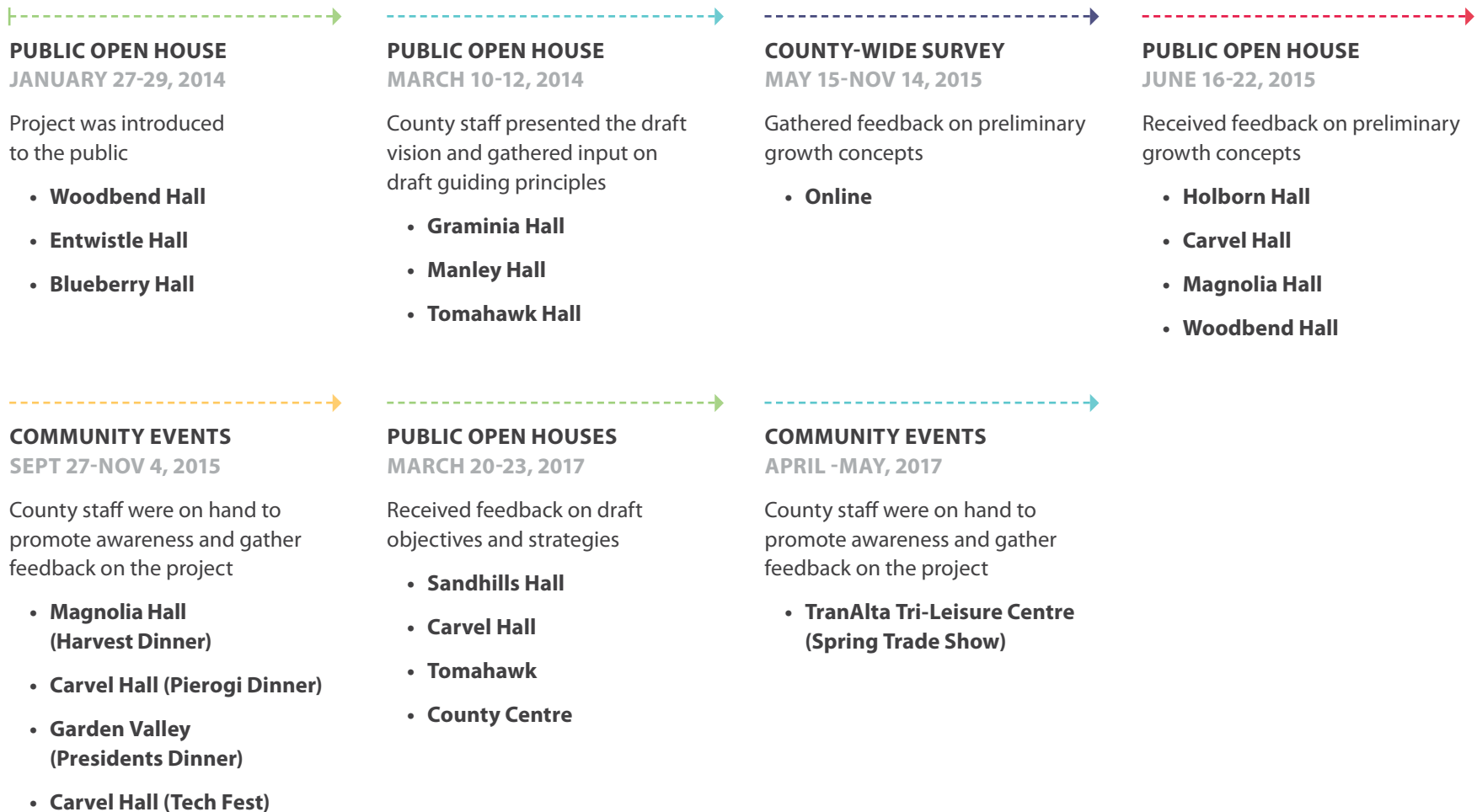
In addition to public engagement, an advisory committee was struck to provide guidance on major milestones in the planning process. Representation included public members from different Council advisory committees that focused on topics such as the environment, economic development, and arts and culture. The Integrated Community Sustainability Plan Advisory Committee was charged with:

1. Refining community input into an overarching sustainability end state to be used in both the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan and the Municipal Development Plan.
2. Identifying and defining the sustainability pillars that will build the foundation for the County's community sustainability end state.

It is important to keep the community sustainability end state and pillars consistent between both the Municipal Development Plan and Integrated Community Sustainability Plan. This ensures integration of sustainability throughout all planning and policy initiatives within the County.



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT TIMELINE





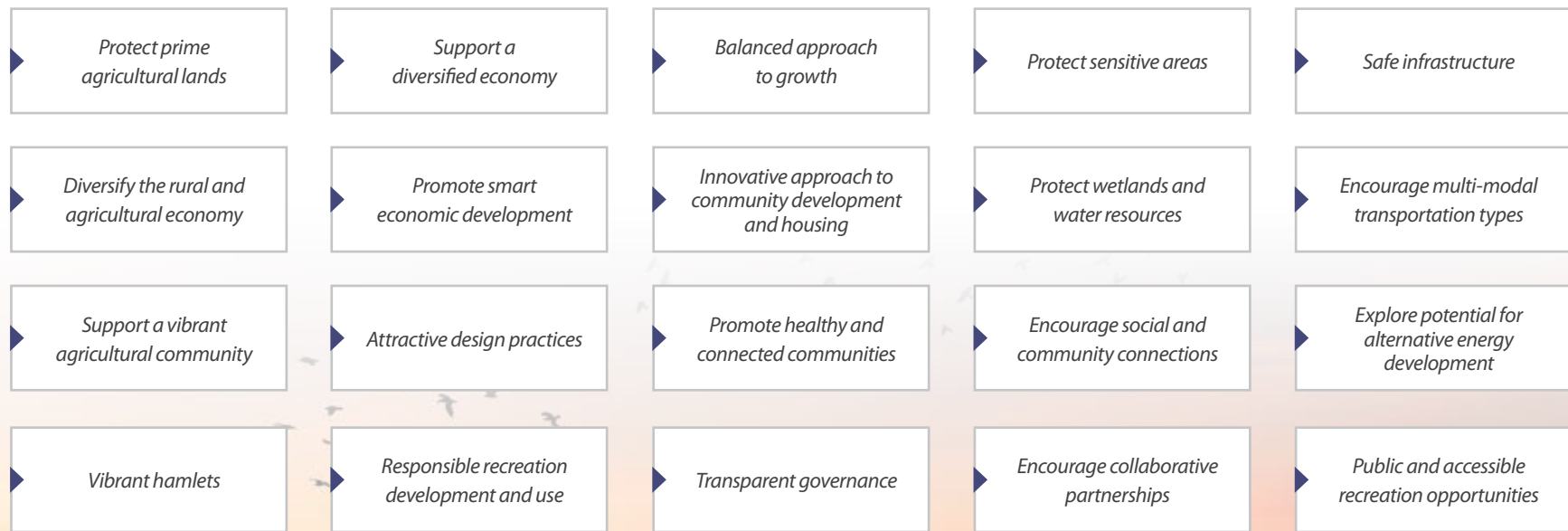
2.4 A Commitment to Rural Community Sustainability

The Community Sustainability End State, approved by Council, acts as the County's commitment to sustainability and states:

Parkland County will steward our natural environment and foster a sustainable and diverse economy while maintaining our rural character. We will be innovative and creative in growing a healthy community that provides equitable opportunities for all, and we will celebrate our heritage and culture.



Public engagement findings played a vital role in building the desired end state. The major areas of community interest (community planning considerations) that were incorporated into the end state are detailed below:



Detailed public comments received between 2014 and 2017 can be found in the “What We Heard” report¹ (www.parklandcounty.com/environment).



3.0



THE FRAMEWORK



3.0 THE FRAMEWORK

Once the County has a sustainability end state that supports its vision, it needs a structure to make it actionable. That's where the framework comes in. The framework is the backbone of the Plan. It outlines the document's six key elements and organizes them into a supportive hierarchy.

THE FRAMEWORK:

1. The framework starts by defining a sustainability end state from which five sustainability pillars are identified.
2. Each pillar is assigned a definition of sustainability.
3. Broad objectives are developed that outline the sustainability measures the County plans to achieve.
4. Each objective has associated strategies that detail how we plan to achieve the objective at a high level.
5. Strategies are broken down into recommended actions to provide a more defined road forward.
6. A **decision support tool** and an implementation plan containing specific timelines, indicators, and targets are used to prioritize actions and monitor results.

DEFINITION:

Decision Support Tool | A decision support tool is a process, model, or criteria that is useful in analysis of various options to determine which best meets the pre-determined criteria and results in the desired outcomes.



SUSTAINABILITY END STATE

Parkland County will steward our natural environment and foster a sustainable and diverse economy while maintaining our rural character. We will be innovative and creative in growing a healthy community that provides equitable opportunities for all, and we will celebrate our heritage and culture.

SUSTAINABILITY PILLARS

Each of the sustainability pillars represents a broad area of importance to building a sustainable community. Environment, economy, and community are the traditional elements of sustainability. The County’s more comprehensive framework includes two additional pillars—governance and land use—which are crucial to municipal planning and operations. The five pillars provide the elements necessary to measure community sustainability and resilience.



BROAD OBJECTIVES

Each pillar is connected to broad objectives derived from the challenges and opportunities outlined in the snapshot analysis. They describe the community priorities and the outcomes necessary to achieve the sustainability end state.

STRATEGIES

These outline, at a high level, how the identified broad objectives will be achieved. They are a key piece in building our sustainability roadmap and will be realized through implementation of more specific actions.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

A suite of sustainability tools that ensure our sustainability end state is realized over time. Through these, the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan will come alive and be tied into the County’s community initiatives and corporate operations.

INDICATORS & TARGETS

These measure progress while providing the means to achieve our objectives. Indicators are based on objective and comprehensive information, and developed to track performance. When monitored over time, they highlight both successes and challenges on the road to sustainability. Targets consider both community ambition and goal feasibility, and should encourage success rather than hinder it.



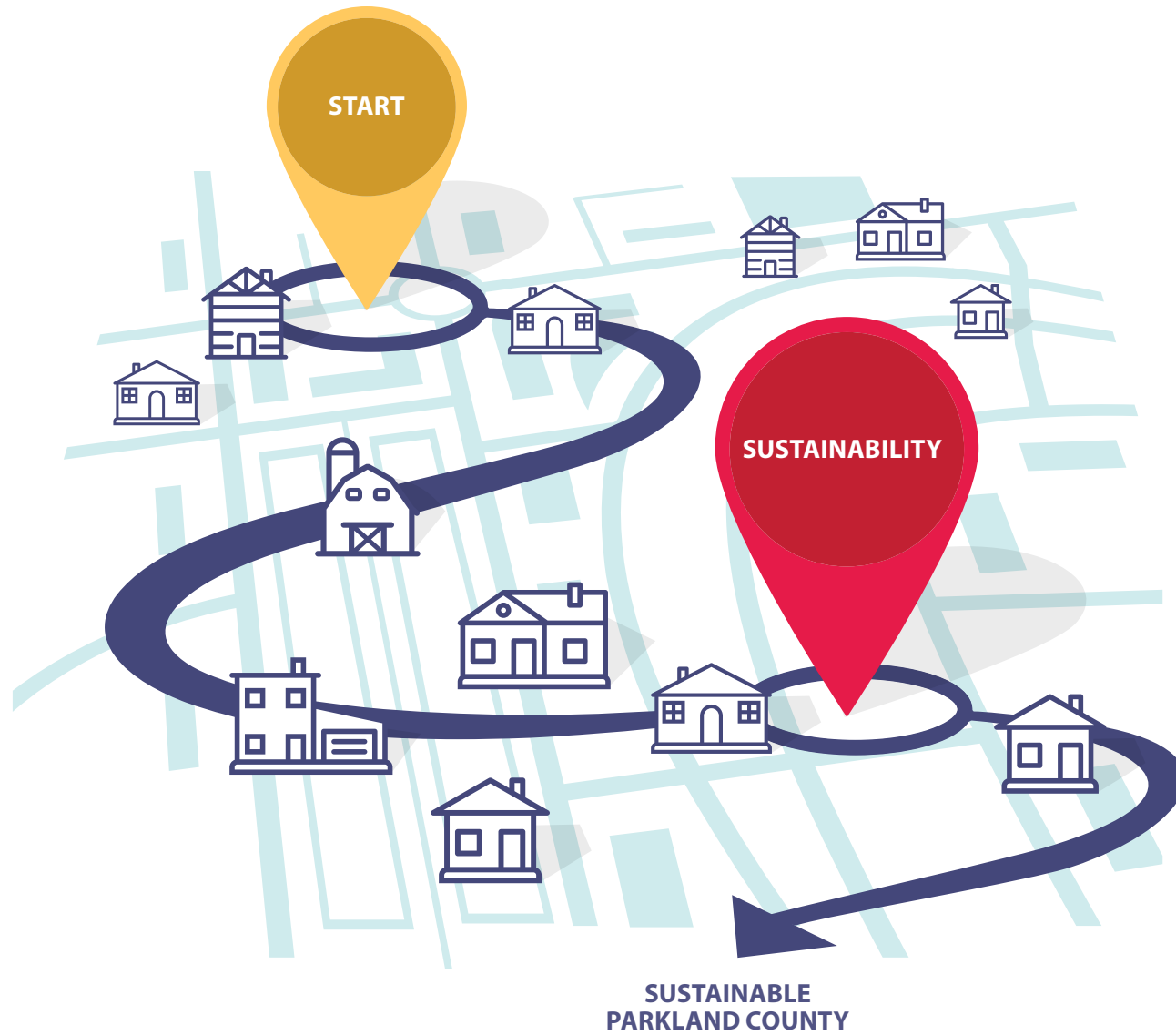
3.1 Benefits of a Framework

There are many benefits to planning for sustainability using a basic yet integrated framework. These include:

1. The framework enables a holistic and integrated approach by linking broad objectives, strategies, and actions between multiple pillars. Actions designated to one pillar will demonstrate pillar interactions by contributing to the high-level indicators used to measure the progress of multiple pillars.
2. Once the indicators are developed they will represent “guide posts” to help the County and community determine if the specific targets and overarching end state have been reached. The net effect is that the framework allows broad intentions to be clearly translated into sustainable, on-the-ground, measurable results.
3. This type of framework will also transition the County’s thinking from a linear model, where one pillar is considered in decision-making, to a cohesive approach where decisions consider impacts on all the pillars.
4. The framework is also meant to create a living document where, as success is achieved, the strategies and actions are renewed or replaced as necessary. This **iterative approach** enables the County to work towards long-term sustainability.

DEFINITION:

Iterative Approach | An iterative approach is a process for arriving at a decision or a desired result by repeating rounds of analysis or a cycle of operations. The objective is to bring the desired decision or result closer to discovery with each repetition (iteration).





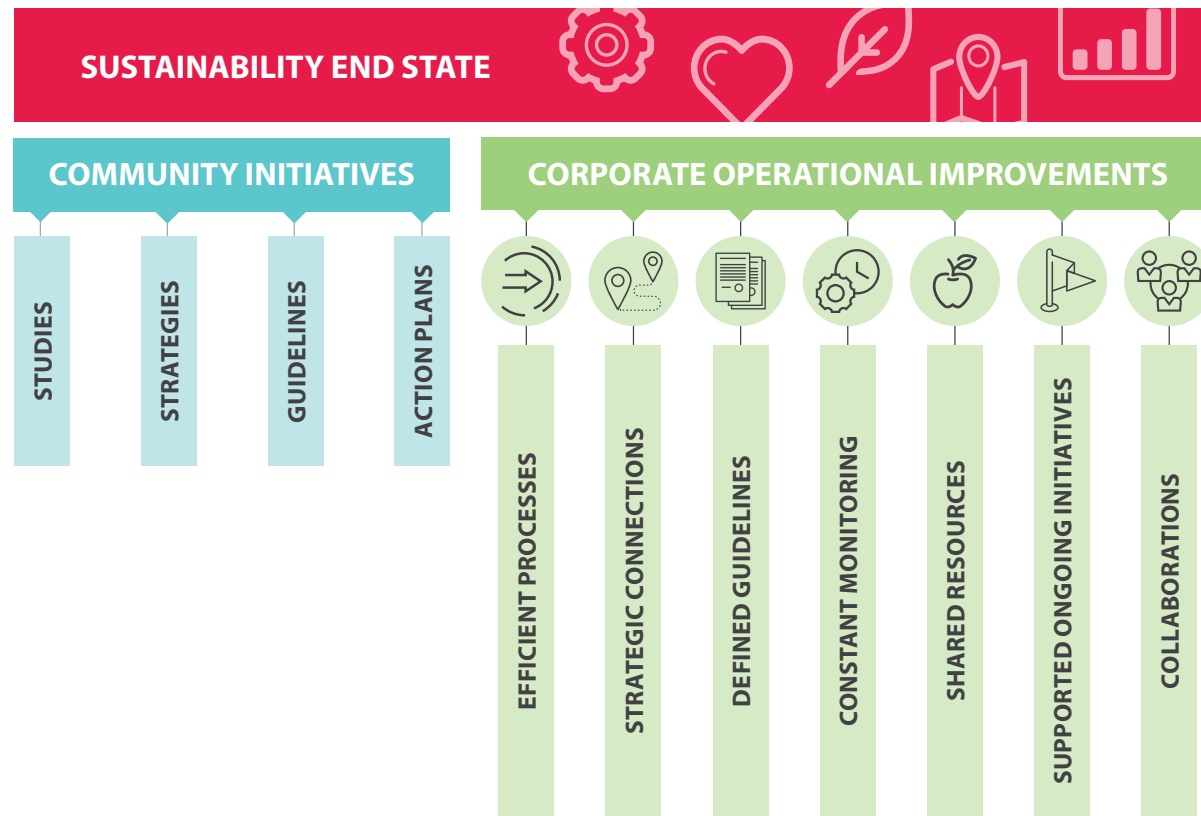
3.2 Recommended Actions

Successful integration of sustainability into a community requires setting priorities and implementing well thought out and clearly defined actions. Throughout community and staff engagements, several specific actions were suggested. These ideas were compiled with research from provincial, national and global trends into a list of high level actions that will assist the County in becoming a more sustainable community, and address the current snapshot of its opportunities and challenges.

The actions are divided into two categories: corporate operational improvements and community initiatives.

- Operational improvements suggest ways that the County can implement sustainability into everyday corporate practices.
- Initiatives are new ideas that have been put forward based on the needs of the County’s residents, business owners, and producers. They suggest mechanisms such as strategies, guidelines, best practices, and more detailed action planning for specific areas of community interest.

Undertaking this set of actions will effectively make the County a more sustainable community over the next twenty years.



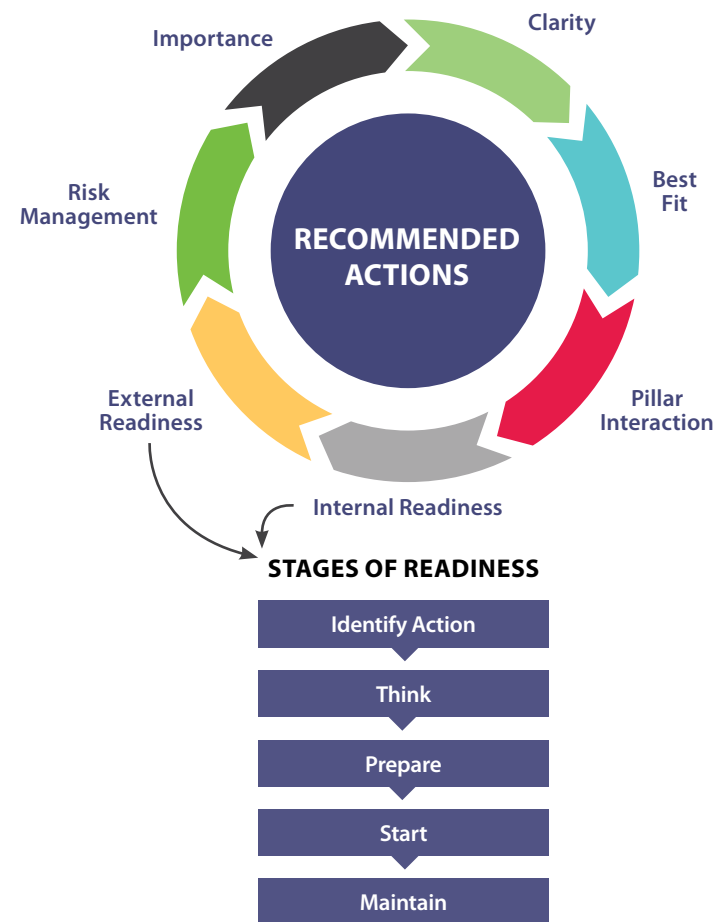


3.3 Setting Priorities

Parkland County has developed a set of rigorous criteria for setting action priorities, as described below.

SEVEN PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA:

- **Clarity:** How well does the County understand the action? To show understanding, the County must be able to state the purpose and outcomes, elaborate on assumptions and key concepts, provide implementation examples, and describe the current state.
- **Best Fit:** How well does the action meet the required outcomes? In the context of the Plan, this means how well it addresses a broad objective, strategy, or the overall sustainability end state.
- **Pillar Interaction:** How does the action impact the County's definitions of sustainability for each pillar? Does it bring us closer to this state, further away, or have no impact at all?
- **Importance:** What is the likely degree of impact? Not all actions produce the same level of impact. This is one way to decide which action to take first.
- **Risk:** What risk factors are present? Each action should be achievable, even with risk factors. Risk is generally a function of severity of consequence and likelihood of occurrence, and must be identified and managed accordingly. If risks cannot be managed, what are the impacts?
- **Internal Readiness:** What stage is the County at in preparing for or implementing the action? Are both Council and Administration ready to accept this action? If the County is at a low level of readiness, what changes or level of effort is required to move to the next stage?
- **External Readiness:** What stage is the community at in preparing for or implementing the action? Is the local, regional, national, or global environment ready to accept this action? If the community is at a low level of readiness, what changes or level of effort is required to progress to the next stage?





3.4 Measuring Success

WE CAN'T MANAGE WHAT WE DON'T MEASURE!

Parkland County recognizes the importance of evaluating progress and outcomes.

Administration, together with key stakeholders, will implement, track, and report on the progress of each action. This holistic management style helps build a sustainability culture from the ground up. It also builds internal and external buy-in and allows individuals to take a lead role in achieving the objectives.

ONGOING STAKEHOLDER ROLES:

ADMINISTRATION

Manages action implementation, processes monitoring data and presents to public, Council and Council Committees

COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Reviews progress and makes recommendations for additional or adjusted actions

COUNCIL

Sets priorities and makes ultimate decisions regarding recommendations

COMMUNITY

Identifies priorities, follows implementation, partners on and leads certain actions, and provides feedback



Developing and monitoring indicators is critical to track and measure the County's progress. Indicators, if chosen properly and monitored over time, can measure trends and movement toward the objectives and the desired end state. Indicators also have the capability of identifying areas in need of attention or improvement. It is important that indicators are easy to compile and associated with readily available data. In this document indicators have yet to be established, although they will be tied to the sustainability objectives once they are developed.

The Community Sustainability team, together with action leads, will monitor and track metrics throughout the year and present progress in an Annual Sustainability Report to both Council and the public. A more detailed report on indicators with varying frequencies of measurement (such as those compiled in the Census of Canada) will be amalgamated and presented on a five-year basis. This five-year status report will feed directly into the renewal and update of the Plan. To assist in the tracking and implementation process, a publicly available dashboard will be used to monitor action implementation status and associated indicators.



4.0



THE WORK PLAN



4.0 THE WORK PLAN

A sustainability framework is just that—a framework. It needs to be filled in with detailed objectives, strategies, and actions so that progress can be achieved and measured. The work plan fills in these details by taking a closer look at *what* the community wants to achieve and *how* the County can assist in achieving it.





The Work Plan is organized by pillar. For each pillar, a set of broad objectives, strategies and recommended actions were developed through extensive public consultation and workshops with community stakeholders, Council, and County Administration. These components establish the direction the County will take in becoming a more sustainable and resilient community.





4.1 Community

Parkland County is a rural municipality containing many small, vibrant communities with distinct social and cultural aspects. There are a number of hamlets of various sizes and amenities. A variety of grassroots, non-governmental organizations also exist throughout the County that support local gathering places such as the County's abundant network of community halls.

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES:

- Population decline is evident in some rural hamlets and other outlying areas. Younger generations are choosing to move to urban centres for greater opportunities.
- Existing social engagements and community networks, as well as increased job diversification and promotion of rural development opportunities can be used to support youth in the community.
- Small, rural communities often rely on larger urban centres to meet basic needs. Building these communities to be more self-serving and resilient presents a challenge.
- Residents have identified retaining the County's rich heritage in farming and agriculture as a priority. This provides clear direction on sustaining important cultural features.
- Conflicts can occur between agricultural, urban and acreage communities. This is often related to the impacts of each community on the natural environment, as well as differences in lifestyles.
- The County relies on regional service partnerships to provide necessary facilities and services in areas without sufficient population density.

DEFINITIONS:

Social Capital/Attributes | Social capital is the sum of the networks of relationships composed of values, norms, and understanding that facilitate cooperation within or among groups. The value of social capital resides in the overall positive consequences resulting from the creation and maintenance of social contracts. For example, social capital may include: flow of information, trust, reciprocity, co-operation, and productivity.

Heritage Inventory | A heritage inventory is a community's repository of historic places and stories that have meaning and value to the community and its founders.

Aging in Place Strategy | Aging in place is the ability to live safely and independently in your own home or community for as long as possible, while still having access to health and social services.



COMMUNITY

A state in which the community's social and cultural traditions thrive now and in the future.



BROAD OBJECTIVE: Good quality of life for all residents.

STRATEGY: Lobby for and support accessible services, programs and facilities that meet health, education, recreational, employment and housing needs of all residents.

RECOMMENDED • Measure, monitor and report on quality of life indicators for **social attributes**.

ACTIONS: • Create a Social Development Plan.



BROAD OBJECTIVE: A vibrant rural character, sense of community and strong local heritage.

STRATEGY: Define and plan for the aspects of our community that create rural character, sense of community and local heritage.

RECOMMENDED • Conduct a **heritage inventory** and prepare a plan.

ACTIONS: • Partner with community organizations to build community capacity and maintain community spaces as hubs for social and cultural activities.
• Ensure the community is connected through access to Internet and awareness of programs and services.



BROAD OBJECTIVE: A variety of lifestyle options, recreational amenities and facilities.

STRATEGY: Encourage and facilitate recreational and social facilities and programs that reflect community needs.

RECOMMENDED • Implement priority recommendations outlined in the Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan to increase recreational options.

ACTIONS: • Implement the priority recommendations outlined in the Social Development Plan to increase lifestyle options.
• Implement priority recommendations outlined in the Indoor Facility Strategy to ensure facilities meet community need.



BROAD OBJECTIVE: Empowered, included and valued community members.

STRATEGY: Provide opportunities for community engagement in community planning, management, and program development; including the youth and elderly.

RECOMMENDED • Encourage and facilitate programming and services targeted at youth.

ACTIONS: • Develop an **Aging in Place Strategy**.



4.2 Land Use

Striking a balance between developed, natural and working landscapes is key to maintaining the rural character that is so highly valued by our community. To achieve this balance, Parkland County must understand two things: What are the drivers facing development in the region? What is the capacity of natural and human systems to adapt to change while maintaining their integrity and function? With this understanding, the County can maintain **ecosystem goods and services** and **human capital** while allowing for sustainable development and growth.

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES:

- Agriculture is the primary land use in the County. It contributes to the County's economic base and is essential to maintaining the rural culture. However, it can be challenging to balance competing land uses, such as resource extraction (including peat, aggregates, and oil and gas), residential, and electrical power generation, which are also important contributors to the rural economy.
- Natural landscapes are often challenged by urban forms such as residential, industrial and commercial development. The County currently contains areas of high class soils to support highly productive agriculture. These areas are generally located near urban centres (where communities have established around agriculture-based industries) and are on prime land for urban development. There is the opportunity to incorporate natural landscapes and small agricultural holdings into urban development in order to retain the rural character and limit the fragmentation of agricultural lands and ecosystems.
- The County's population is dispersed. Built infrastructure, service levels, and utilities need to be strategically and carefully planned. Creating complete systems where residents live, work, and play in small communities is an important aspect of social and environmental resilience. This can be supported through recreational trails and park systems, as well as rural business opportunities.

DEFINITIONS:

Ecosystem Goods and Services | This means the tangible benefits arising from the ecological functions of ecosystems that provide benefits to all living things such as food, water, and raw material, as well as flood and drought mitigation, air and water purification, soil formation, and pollination.

Human Capital | The knowledge, skills, competencies, and attributes embodied in individuals or populations that facilitate the creation of personal, social, and economic well-being.

Land Use Balance | This refers to conducting an inventory of current use and availability of agricultural, commercial/ industrial, and residential land categories. Having a current inventory of land use patterns, densities and relationships will assist in developing policies and practices relating to future development.

Transfer of Development Credits | The Transfer of Development Credits (TDC tool) is designed to help communities deal with the rapid conversion of their valued landscapes while simultaneously promoting appropriate landscape development. The tool allows for the transfer of development potential from areas desired to be protected (based on community desire to see its character and function maintained), to areas more suited for proposed developments (based on their capacity to accept greater development activity).

Green Building | Green building policies are becoming popular mechanisms to align municipal infrastructure investments with sustainability goals. These are a great way to demonstrate municipal commitment to a sustainability plan. A green building policy can also be written to encourage new developments and retrofits to align with both local and provincial targets for reducing emissions, energy and water use.



LAND USE

A state in which the community's land use meets community needs now and in the future.



BROAD OBJECTIVE: Balanced interests and reduced conflict between developed, natural and working landscapes.

STRATEGY: Support a diversity of agricultural land uses and priority developments while preserving important ecosystems.

- RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**
- Identify priority areas and policy direction for natural landscapes, agriculture, and recreation and tourism in the Municipal Development Plan.
 - Monitor and report on **land use balance** trends and areas requiring attention.
 - Explore the development of a food security policy and support existing food security initiatives.
 - Explore the use of **Transfer of Development Credits** to guide future development.

STRATEGY: Minimize the impacts of development and resource extraction on natural areas and communities.

- RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**
- Develop strategies and guidelines to support resource extraction industries with implementation of best management practices.
 - Incorporate Integrated Land Management principles into land use decision-making.
 - Review and update County documents, standards and bylaws on an ongoing basis to include current best management practices and mitigation measures.



BROAD OBJECTIVE: Complete communities and prosperous hamlets that support live, work and play.

STRATEGY: Concentrate a diversity of development, growth and local employment into communities.

- RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**
- Develop a Hamlet Reinvestment Strategy to guide focused investment and redevelopment in growth hamlets.
 - Develop and implement a Housing Diversity Strategy that identifies and addresses barriers to accessible housing.

STRATEGY: Design efficient and safe infrastructure that supports concentrated employment hubs and services complete communities.

- RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**
- Establish a **Green Building** Program to inform future development and retrofits for County-owned and private facilities.
 - Invest in recommended infrastructure and community design upgrades to address lifecycle, energy use, or community access benefits.
 - Collaborate in the development of a regional transit network for alternative transportation options.
 - Implement the Smart Parkland Program to ensure virtual innovation and broadband connectivity for residents, producers, and businesses; while.
 - Expand the current network infrastructure to be a holistic approach to broadband that includes a combination of wireless and fibre.
 - Update Engineering Design Standards to increase flexibility and to align with current policy.

STRATEGY: Ensure development, ecosystems, and recreation opportunities are physically connected throughout the County.

- RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**
- Develop and implement conservation-by-design standards and processes for new infrastructure, development, and community design.
 - Establish standards for recreational networks, trail connections, and facilities in residential developments and hamlets.
 - Develop a Trails Master Plan to guide park creation and development decisions.



4.3 Economy

Being a large rural community at the doorstep of a concentrated urban centre allows Parkland County considerable opportunities in economic and tourism development. The County can focus on industrial and commercial growth while supporting agricultural operations, developing tourism markets, and providing opportunities for small business and entrepreneurs.

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES:

- The ability to develop recreational and active tourism markets that take advantage of the natural amenities prevalent in the County.
- The ability to develop value-added agriculture and agri-food processing through partnerships, policy, and training. This may limit further fragmentation and loss of agricultural lands and reduce their conversion into other uses, such as residential or industrial/commercial.
- Home-based businesses are an important opportunity. They can support other industries such as agriculture and oil and gas, but can also be commercial and retail-based. They add to rural character and can serve to create “complete communities” where residents can live, work, and play.
- Providing reliable internet connectivity and infrastructure is an important driver of economic growth, but can be a challenge. These features enable businesses and producers to innovate and build capacity.
- Strategically located industrial areas have been developed throughout the County and are home to many oil and gas-related companies. With the volatility of resource-based industries, there is a need to diversify the economic base and capitalize on emerging markets provincially, nationally, and globally.

DEFINITIONS:

Green Business | Green businesses produce, support, or enhance the County’s environmental goals. Green businesses have a stated commitment to reducing energy and water consumption, reducing environmental impact, or supporting broadly defined sustainability goals.

Circular Economy | A circular economy is a regenerative system in which resource input and waste, emission, and energy leakage are minimized by slowing, closing, and narrowing material and energy loops. This can be achieved through long-lasting design, maintenance, repair, reuse, remanufacturing, refurbishing, and recycling. Circular economy models are becoming ideal ways of maximizing efficiencies in water, energy and waste reduction by co-locating complimentary industries that can benefit from repurposing what could have been considered waste streams (such as fiber residues, wastewater, solid waste, and waste-heat). This presents an economic development opportunity, whereby municipalities can recruit industries based upon their water, waste, and energy demands that might complement existing assets or emerging interest from industries wishing to locate in the local economy. Water-based bio clusters could include industries that have a high-output of wastewater that can be repurposed for manufacturing, or secondary processing. A processing facility that can make use of its bio-waste for energy production is another example.



ECONOMY

A state in which the community's economy is able to generate prosperity now and in the future.



BROAD OBJECTIVE: Innovative and diversified industrial and commercial development.

STRATEGY: Plan for strategic infrastructure development and collaborate regionally to support diverse business opportunities.

- RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**
- Develop an Economic Diversification Strategy to identify economic assets and evaluate gaps and barriers for economic expansion.
 - Establish dedicated industrial and commercial development zones through Municipal Development Plan policy.
 - Continue to establish and support regional economic partnerships.
 - Define and develop policies that enable **green businesses** and alternative energy production.
 - Continue to maintain a competitive advantage in business and development processes.



BROAD OBJECTIVE: A vibrant agricultural and food-producing economy.

STRATEGY: Establish policies, programs, and training to support agricultural operations and advance value-added activities in agriculture.

- RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**
- Develop and implement a Value-added Agriculture Action Plan including actions that support primary, secondary, and tertiary food-related business.
 - Identify opportunities for clustering agriculture producers and industry to establish a **circular economy**.



BROAD OBJECTIVE: A diverse and prosperous recreation and tourism market.

STRATEGY: Support emerging and existing recreational and tourism markets, including eco-friendly options.

- RECOMMENDED ACTION:**
- Develop, implement, and monitor a Tourism Action Plan.



BROAD OBJECTIVE: Widespread entrepreneurship and rural diversification of business opportunities.

STRATEGY: Provide support for new businesses, including small business, cottage industry, and knowledge-based sector opportunities.

- RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**
- Connect people to opportunities that support entrepreneurship development and community investment.
 - Develop a Rural Business Development Action Plan, in collaboration with the local business community, to identify and reduce barriers for small businesses.
 - Update the Land Use Bylaw to enable small businesses and cottage industry.



4.4 Environment

Parkland County is at a point in the Albertan landscape where multiple ecosystems and watersheds converge. This unique natural system is important to preserve, but is often challenged by a mix of rural and urban developments.

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES:

- The Province of Alberta has rated the County as high risk for drought, water quality issues, and localized flooding. This presents an important opportunity for regional watershed planning.
- The County is home to an array of wetlands that are consistently being lost to human development. This loss directly affects the County's ability to store water and prevent flood and drought conditions.
- The County is home to numerous lakes that are influenced by recreation and nutrient loading. The high number of lake management groups that exist present an opportunity for community participation and support in watershed planning.
- The County has an abundance of natural areas with significant biodiversity features and important wildlife corridors that connect to the regional landscape. There are many motivated residents who voluntarily steward residential and agricultural properties. As a result, efforts to conserve the County's natural habitat can be dispersed and balanced.
- Central community spaces, new value-added waste opportunities, and existing facilities present opportunities to increase waste diversion; however, services like curb-side recycling and organics pick-up may not be feasible due to the dispersed rural population.
- The County has decided to measure and reduce its greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs). As our community creates its largest amount of GHGs through transportation, this presents the greatest challenge in reducing emissions.

DEFINITIONS:

Ecological Network Approach | The planning and establishment of ecological networks as a means of creating spatially integrated landscapes and habitats. This is being increasingly accepted as an appropriate approach for improving the ecological quality of natural ecosystems and protecting biodiversity.

Natural Capital | Natural capital is all components of the living ecosystems (land, air, water and, biota) and their associated interactions and functions.

Conservation Offsets | A conservation offset is a tool that enables industry to offset adverse effects of their activities and development by supporting conservation efforts on other lands.

Water Conservation-Based Rate Structures | Inclining-block rate structures encourage water conservation by implementing higher costs for greater usage. An inclining block rate structure can be implemented as net-revenue neutral, penalizing high residential water users while keeping rates low for those that conserve. This program works well with coinciding water conservation and community education programs.



ENVIRONMENT

A state in which the demands placed on the natural environment can be met without reducing its capacity to allow living things to live well now and in the future.



BROAD OBJECTIVE: Functioning natural ecosystems.

STRATEGY: Take an **ecological network approach** to land use planning that protects valuable **natural capital**, critical wildlife habitat, and unique biodiversity.

- RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**
- Explore the use of **conservation offsets** or allowances on private and public lands.
 - Assess critical habitat and wildlife corridors, and protect their integrity through updated design standards, stewardship, and planning.
 - Implement best practices from the Environmental Conservation Master Plan¹¹.
 - Quantify ecosystem services production and economic value of natural capital.
 - Advocate to higher levels of government to incentivise landowners to protect lands that provide ecological goods and services.
 - Develop a land conservation policy and program to direct the conservation of environmentally sensitive or significant areas.



BROAD OBJECTIVE: Quality water supplies supported by healthy and resilient watersheds.

STRATEGY: Support land use and development that protects and maintains ground water and surface water supplies, minimizes loss of wetland and riparian area, and supports aquatic ecosystems.

- RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**
- Continue to participate in lake management and inter-municipal watershed planning activities.
 - Promote environmental conservation and restoration through education, stewardship, and incentive programs.
 - Update utility rate structures to include **water conservation-based rates** for residential, industrial, and commercial use.
 - Work with the Government of Alberta to develop and implement a Wetland Management Plan.
 - Implement sub-watershed management plans.



BROAD OBJECTIVE: Climate change resiliency and good air quality.

STRATEGY: Monitor air pollutants, and increase community capacity for climate mitigation and adaptation.

- RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**
- Explore practical applications and incentives for green technologies.
 - Develop a Climate Resilience Plan to limit the effects of climate change on the community.
 - Complete the Federation of Canadian Municipalities Partnership for Climate Protection milestones.
 - Implement an educational awareness program.



BROAD OBJECTIVE: Diversion of solid waste from landfills.

STRATEGY: Enhance corporate and community organics and recycling programs.

- RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**
- Assess and establish service levels offered for waste diversion.
 - Engage citizens on a zero-waste management strategy.
 - Explore sustainable options for a joint municipally run organic waste processing facility.
 - Encourage community composting.



4.5 Governance

Parkland County strives to be seen as a partner across rural communities in addition to its roles as a regulator and policy maker (as governed by the Municipal Government Act). The County wants to ensure internal processes, programs, and services provide residents what that they need, leave residents feeling engaged in the decision-making process, and present County staff as approachable.

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES:

- The rural setting of the County results in a dispersed population that can be difficult to engage in the decision-making process. Internet is an important tool to engage residents, but connectivity is not always available or reliable. The dispersed population can make community events difficult to resource and for residents to attend. The County lacks a central focal point or gathering area for residents, although community halls present gathering places for individual communities.
- The County is required to comply with the Municipal Government Act. Changes to the Act can provide both opportunities and challenges in daily operations.
- Residents gravitate toward and use facilities and services within their geographic areas, and are not limited by municipal boundaries. Existing and new regional partnerships are important opportunities to establish cost-effective and efficient delivery of municipal services.

DEFINITIONS:

Customer Relationship Management System |

Customer relationship management refers to consistent and reliable practices, strategies, and technologies used by an organization to manage and analyze customer interactions and relationships for the purpose of developing and retaining customers.

Key Performance Indicators |

A key performance indicator is a quantifiable value that gauges the success of reaching a pre-determined target.



GOVERNANCE

A system of government which maintains the capacity and the resources necessary to function now and in the future.



BROAD OBJECTIVE: Responsible, balanced, and transparent decision-making.

STRATEGY: Provide Council with the information necessary to make informed decisions and budgets based on strategic priorities and service levels.

RECOMMENDED • Expand implementation capacity by sharing technical staff among departments.

- ACTIONS:**
- Develop a decision support tool that enables informed priority setting in strategic planning and budgeting.
 - Establish processes for coordinating the development and revision of plans and studies.
 - Ensure an effective use of resources through the maximization of available grants and project cost sharing.
 - Identify, review and evaluate new and existing programs and services for relevance, effectiveness and efficiency.



BROAD OBJECTIVE: County operations that create a partnership culture with community members.

STRATEGY: Create and adjust processes to ensure customer-centric communication, education, and engagement for all community members.

RECOMMENDED • Implement the One Parkland Customer Service Strategy using best practices to enhance customer service.

- ACTIONS:**
- Identify, map, and improve internal processes to increase efficiencies and effectiveness.
 - Engage with municipal staff and communities in ongoing County activities and celebrate key milestones.
 - Use a knowledge base and **Customer Relationship Management system** to enhance customer service.



BROAD OBJECTIVE: Progress in achieving corporate and sustainability objectives.

STRATEGY: Monitor, adjust course where required, and report regularly on the progress of key actions.

RECOMMENDED • Establish an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan monitoring and reporting framework.

- ACTIONS:**
- Develop a policy framework to support Plan implementation.
 - Reference and apply an organizational **Key Performance Indicators** framework and reporting structure.



BROAD OBJECTIVE: Effective regional partnerships that build resilience and improve efficiency.

STRATEGY: Work regionally with Indigenous communities, neighbouring municipalities, provincial and federal governments, and the non-profit sector to define and create service levels.

RECOMMENDED • Work collaboratively with regional municipal entities to establish joint use agreements for combined services, facilities, and programs.

- ACTIONS:**
- Establish relationships with Indigenous communities and engage them in regional projects.
 - Continue to support and enable not-for-profit organizations to achieve community goals.
 - Develop a generalized statement for Intermunicipal Collaboration Frameworks.



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CREATING A CULTURE OF SUSTAINABILITY



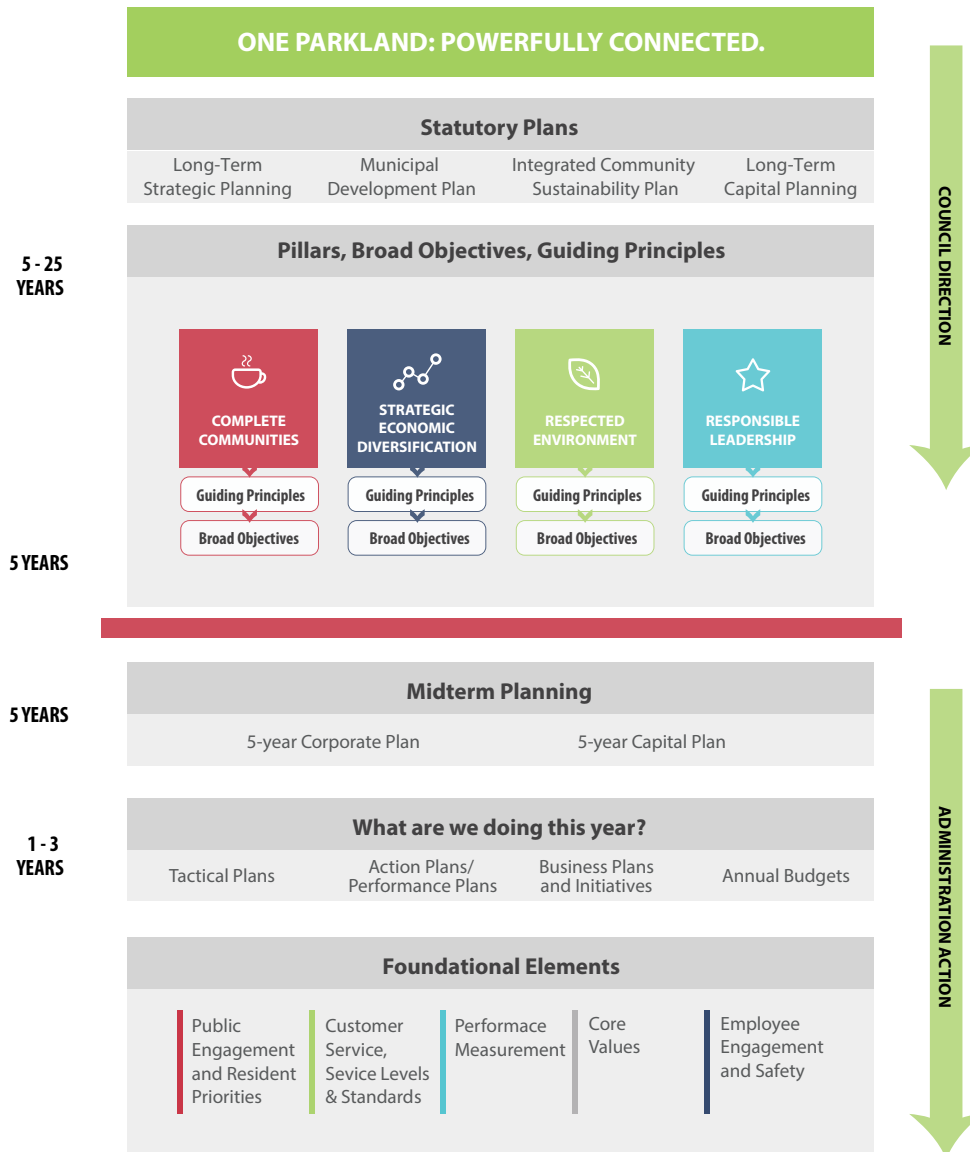
5.0 CREATING A CULTURE OF SUSTAINABILITY

The journey towards a more sustainable Parkland County needs both a long-term work plan to lay the road forward and a sustainability culture that changes daily behaviours. The County amended its corporate strategy to incorporate the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan into Council's Strategic Planning Framework. This is the first step in successfully turning sustainability initiatives into day to day practices.

5.1 Implementation Pathways

Parkland County developed a Strategic Planning Framework to ensure it achieves its long-term vision by investing in resident priorities while still keeping life affordable. The framework is based on a hierarchy of planning tools.

- All plans must support the County's vision.
- At the top of the framework sits Council's Strategic Plan, the Municipal Development Plan and the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan. These are long-term, high-level documents that provide strategic direction and policy to administrative operations. They identify community priorities and outline the policies necessary for sustainable development.
- A mid-term, five-year Corporate plan is the bridge between the longer term strategic plans and the annual tactical plans and tools.
- The base of the framework consists of the annual County budget and specific short-term implementation tools, such as tactical and business plans. This base allows Administration to act on community priorities by setting timelines, allocating budget where necessary, and measuring success.



This Plan directly integrates high-level community vision with sustainability actions between all five pillars. To ensure sustainability actions are prioritized and implemented, the Plan will use the established Strategic Planning Framework to achieve the County’s objectives and bring its strategies to life.

Recommended initiatives have been divided into three categories—short, medium and long term. Each category lays the foundation for subsequent categories of initiatives and operational improvements. Each has been associated with an implementation tool in the Strategic Planning Framework where it will take shape and remain throughout its implementation:

- **Short-Term Initiatives** – Identified in tactical plans and annual budgeting
- **Medium-Term Initiatives** – Identified in the five-year corporate plan and the five-year capital plan
- **Long-Term Initiatives** – Recommended for future implementation and identified in the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan

Operational improvements have not been assigned to a specific timeframe or document as they are ongoing activities that are implemented through existing programs or services.

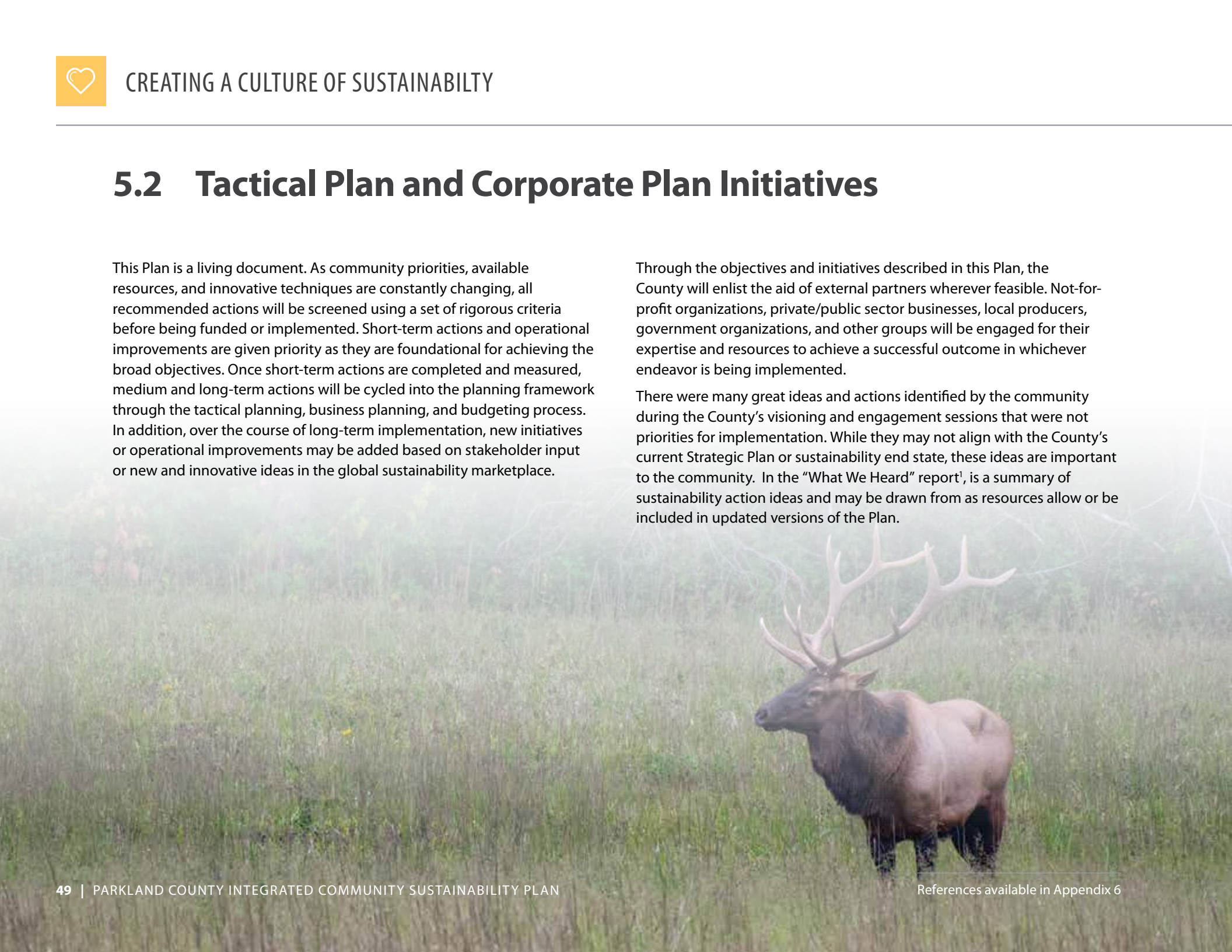


5.2 Tactical Plan and Corporate Plan Initiatives

This Plan is a living document. As community priorities, available resources, and innovative techniques are constantly changing, all recommended actions will be screened using a set of rigorous criteria before being funded or implemented. Short-term actions and operational improvements are given priority as they are foundational for achieving the broad objectives. Once short-term actions are completed and measured, medium and long-term actions will be cycled into the planning framework through the tactical planning, business planning, and budgeting process. In addition, over the course of long-term implementation, new initiatives or operational improvements may be added based on stakeholder input or new and innovative ideas in the global sustainability marketplace.












Through the objectives and initiatives described in this Plan, the County will enlist the aid of external partners wherever feasible. Not-for-profit organizations, private/public sector businesses, local producers, government organizations, and other groups will be engaged for their expertise and resources to achieve a successful outcome in whichever endeavor is being implemented.

There were many great ideas and actions identified by the community during the County's visioning and engagement sessions that were not priorities for implementation. While they may not align with the County's current Strategic Plan or sustainability end state, these ideas are important to the community. In the "What We Heard" report¹, is a summary of sustainability action ideas and may be drawn from as resources allow or be included in updated versions of the Plan.















2017/2018 TACTICAL PLAN

GOAL	INITIATIVES	LEAD
	Create a Social Development Plan.	Community Services
	Implement the priority recommendations outlined in the Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan to increase recreational options.	Community Services
	Develop a Hamlet Reinvestment Strategy to guide focused investment and redevelopment in growth hamlets.	All Divisions
	Develop and implement a Value-added Agriculture Action Plan including actions that support primary, secondary, and tertiary food-related business.	Development Services
	Develop, implement and monitor a Tourism Action Plan.	Development Services
	Update the Land Use Bylaw to enable small businesses and cottage industry.	Development Services
	Quantify ecosystem services production and economic value of natural capital.	Development Services
	Explore sustainable options for a joint municipally run organic waste processing facility.	Development Services
	Develop a decision support tool that enables informed priority setting in strategic planning and budgeting.	Executive Administration
	Implement the One Parkland Customer Service Strategy, using best practices to enhance customer services.	Corporate Services
	Establish an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan monitoring and reporting framework.	Development Services



CREATING A CULTURE OF SUSTAINABILITY

5 YEAR CORPORATE PLAN

GOAL	INITIATIVES	LEAD
	Implement the priority recommendations outlined in the Social Development Plan to increase lifestyle options.	Community Services
	Explore the use of Transfer of Development Credits to guide future development.	Development Services
	Develop strategies and guidelines to support resource extraction industries with implementation of best management practices.	Development Services
	Collaborate in the development of a regional transit network for alternative transportation options.	Infrastructure Services
	Develop an Economic Diversification Strategy to identify economic assets and evaluate gaps and barriers for economic expansion.	Development Services
	Assess critical habitat and wildlife corridors, and protect their integrity through updated design standards, stewardship and planning.	Development Services
	Work with the Government of Alberta to develop and implement a Wetland Management Plan.	Development Services
	Develop a Climate Resilience Plan to limit the effects of climate change on the community.	Development Services
	Identify, map and improve internal processes to increase efficiencies and effectiveness.	Executive Administration
	Develop a policy framework to support Plan implementation.	Development Services



5.3 Celebrating Success

Creating a culture of sustainability means living it. There is no better way to encourage participation and leadership than to celebrate successes and milestones. The County recognizes that along with the sustainability actions outlined in this Plan, the community will continue to implement measures that contribute to achieving the sustainability objectives independently. For this reason, the County has introduced an annual Sustainability Awards program to recognize residents, businesses, producers, schools, and other organizations that have made commitments to sustainability. The County hopes this recognition will continue to inspire further commitment to sustainability and community resilience.







APPENDIX



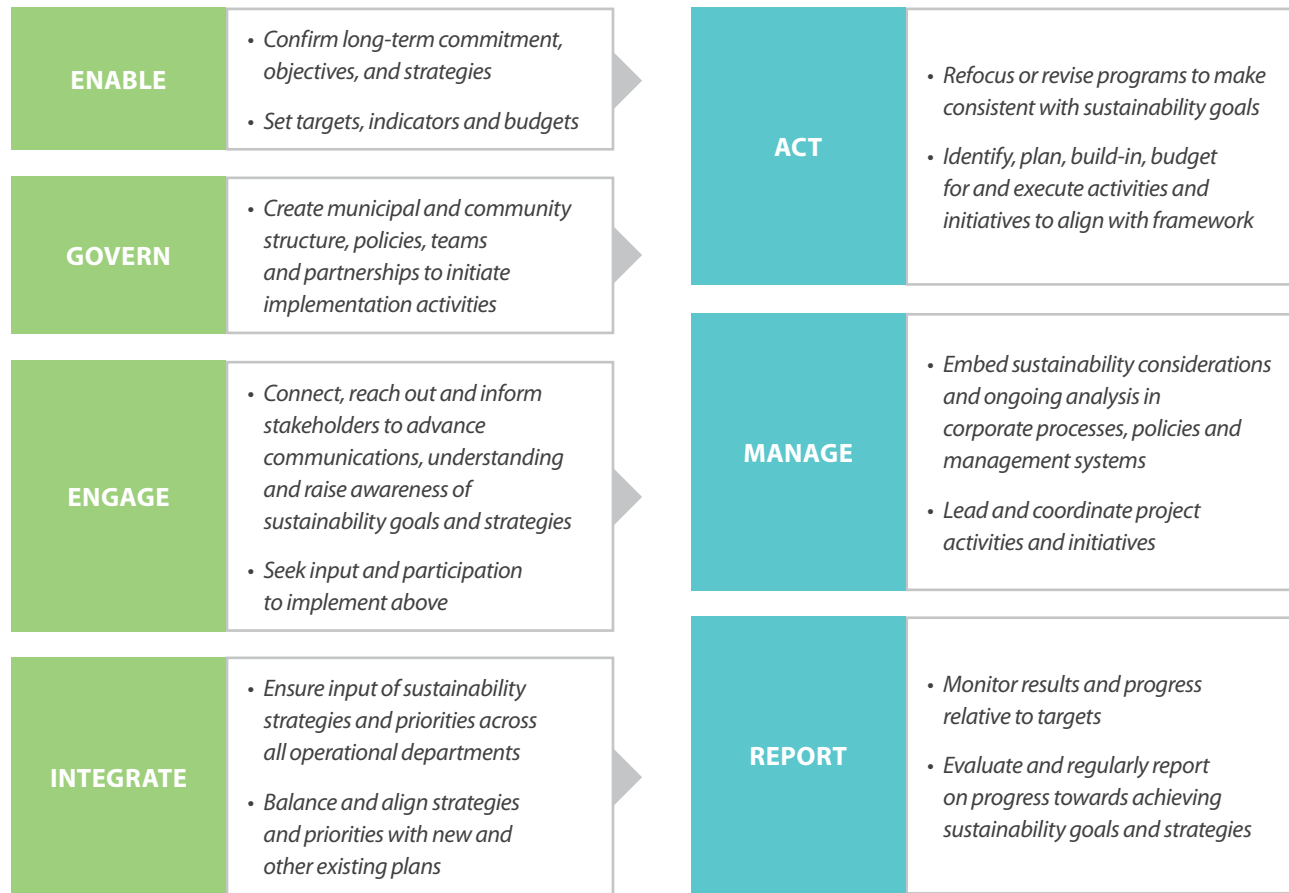
APPENDIX 1 | IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

Integrated Community Sustainability Plans are invaluable planning documents; however consistent implementation within municipalities is a challenge. Some barriers to implementation include:

- Decision-making silos
- Lack of community engagement
- Lack of accountability
- Limited resources
- Policy misalignment
- Absence of decision-making tools.

This Plan bridges the gap between planning and implementation through the following framework:

PARKLAND COUNTY ICSP IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS





APPENDIX 2 | TRENDS IN SUSTAINABILITY

UNDERSTANDING CURRENT TRENDS IN SUSTAINABILITY – GLOBAL, CANADA, ALBERTA

At the 21st Session of the Conference of the Parties (United Nations), known as the Paris Agreement 2015, Canada (one of 195 signatory countries) committed to global efforts to maintain climate change below 2°C and limit increase to 1.5°C by 2025. Global goals include enhancing adaptive capacity and reducing vulnerability to the impacts of climate change. The Paris agreement came into force on November 5th, 2016.ⁱ

In September 2015, the United Nations (UN), of which Canada is a member, announced 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 Targets to address the urgency created by the combination of climate change and population growth and its impact on humanity and the planet by 2030 (People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, Partnership).ⁱⁱ

This new UN Resolution is considered a “Charter for People and Planet in the Twenty-first Century” and is officially titled “Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”.^{iv}

United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals:ⁱⁱⁱ





APPENDIX

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals for Sustainable Cities and Communities (SDG 11)^v

includes the following:

- Adequate, safe, and affordable housing and basic services that are sustainable and resilient and use local materials.
- Access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transportation.
- Resilience to natural disasters, risk management, and climate change.
- Reduction in adverse impacts of cities related to air quality and waste.
- Universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible green and public spaces.
- Positive economic, social and environmental links between urban and peri-urban and rural areas through regional planning.
- Resource efficiency
- Social inclusion

The Federal Sustainable Development Strategy for Canada^{vi} commits Canada to achieve these goals domestically and internationally by 2030. This Strategy is supported by the Federal Sustainable Development Act 2008 and includes 13 aspirational goals to promote clean growth, ensure healthy ecosystems, and build safe, secure and sustainable communities.

The Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change^{vii} (Jan 2017) was developed with the provinces and territories in consultation with Indigenous peoples to meet emissions reduction targets and grow the economy. This Framework includes pricing carbon pollution with measures to reduce carbon across all sectors and a focus on innovation and technology development. The Pan Canadian Framework is a federal mandate to support provincial action on emissions reductions with the looming threat of a federal carbon tax. This could be imposed as early as 2018.^{viii}

In 2016, Canada announced a \$2 billion **Low Carbon Economy Trust**^{ix} to support Canada’s commitments made at the UN Climate Conference (COP21) in Paris. This Trust is set up to invest in clean technologies across all sectors, and accelerate clean technology development through Sustainable Development Technology Canada (SDTC) and Natural Resources Canada. The budget also includes \$100 million to develop alternative fuels and support electric vehicle infrastructure and alternative energy.



EFFECTIVE ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE
A low-carbon economy contributes to limiting global average temperature rise to well below two degrees Celsius and supports efforts to limit the increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius



LOW-CARBON GOVERNMENT
The Government of Canada leads by example by making its operations low-carbon



CLEAN GROWTH
A growing clean technology industry in Canada contributes to clean growth and the transition to a low-carbon economy



MODERN AND RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE
Modern, sustainable, and resilient infrastructure supports clean economic growth and social inclusion



CLEAN ENERGY
All Canadians have access to affordable, reliable and sustainable energy



HEALTHY COASTS AND OCEANS
Coasts and oceans support healthy, resilient and productive ecosystems



PRISTINE LAKES AND RIVERS
Clean and healthy lakes and rivers support economic prosperity and the well-being of Canadians



SUSTAINABLY MANAGED LANDS AND FORESTS
Lands and forests support biodiversity and provide a variety of ecosystem services for generations to come



HEALTHY WILDLIFE POPULATIONS
All species have healthy and viable populations



CLEAN DRINKING WATER
All Canadians have access to safe drinking water and, in particular, the significant challenges Indigenous communities face are addressed



SUSTAINABLE FOOD
Innovation and ingenuity contribute to a world-leading agricultural sector and food economy for the benefit of all Canadians



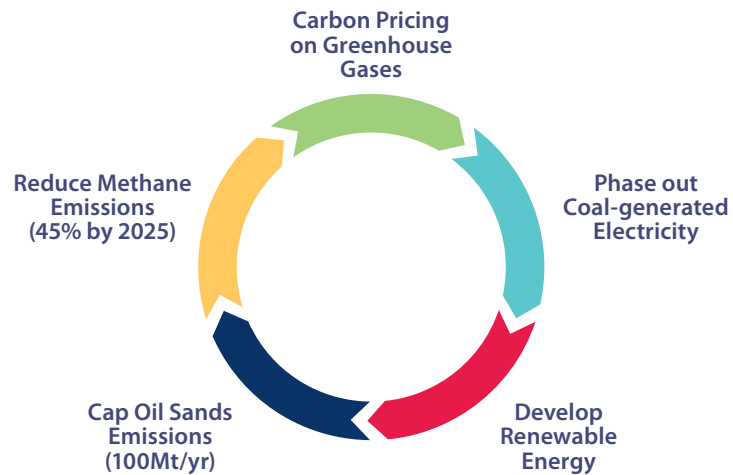
CONNECTING CANADIANS WITH NATURE
Canadians are informed about the value of nature, experiencing nature first hand, and actively engaged in its stewardship



SAFE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES
All Canadians live in clean, sustainable communities that contribute to their health and well-being



ALBERTA CLIMATE LEADERSHIP PLAN 2017



Source: www.alberta.ca/climate-leadership-plan.aspx/toc-0

Alberta's Climate Leadership Plan^x is a response to the Pan-Canadian Framework and includes a commitment to the following:

- Implementing a new carbon price on GHG emissions – the carbon levy is applied to heating and transportation fuels and is marketed as a policy pricing tool to pay for the transition to a diversified economy with directed investments in GHG reduction efforts, renewable energy and green infrastructure projects, as well as research and innovation.
- Shutting down coal-generated electricity plants by 2030 – this includes a phased approach to help diversify the economies for affected communities.
- Developing more renewable energy – this includes a renewable electricity program, new enabling micro-generation rules and an efficiency program to boost uptake of efficiency upgrades.
- Capping oil sands emissions to 100 megatonnes per year – this includes support to accelerate innovation and adopt performance-based standards.
- Reducing methane emissions by 45 percent by 2025 – mostly targeted at oil and gas operations, this policy action also includes investment in innovative technologies.



MUNICIPAL SUPPORT

The Canadian commitment to supporting municipal governments is also evident in the expansion of funding made available by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities through the new Municipalities for Climate Innovation^{xi} program. Over \$75 million is being provided in the way of grants for plans, studies, and demonstration projects.

Alberta's municipalities are also supported through the Municipal Climate Change Action Center^{xii}. Since 2016, 18 municipalities have received \$2 million in rebates to offset solar installation of over 28 projects through the Alberta Municipal Solar Program.

Alberta is also introducing an On Farm Solar PV Program, as well as Residential and Community Solar Programs, through Growing Forward^{xiii} (a federal-provincial agricultural grant program) to enable communities to participate in the provincial initiative to address climate change.





APPENDIX 3 | GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The following definitions apply to terms in this document.

Aging in Place Strategy

Aging in place is the ability to live safely and independently in your own home or community for as long as possible, while still having access to health and social services.

Retrieved May 29, 2017 from <http://www.seniors-housing.alberta.ca/seniors/aging-in-place.html>

Circular Economy

A circular economy is a regenerative system in which resource input and waste, emission, and energy leakage are minimized by slowing, closing, and narrowing material and energy loops. This can be achieved through long-lasting design, maintenance, repair, reuse, remanufacturing, refurbishing, and recycling. Circular economy models are becoming ideal ways of maximizing efficiencies in water, energy and waste reduction by co-locating complimentary industries that can benefit from repurposing what could have been considered waste streams (such as fiber residues, wastewater, solid waste, and waste-heat). This presents an economic development opportunity, whereby municipalities can recruit industries based upon their water, waste, and energy demands that might complement existing assets or emerging interest from industries wishing to locate in the local economy. Water-based bio clusters could include industries that have a high-output of wastewater that can be repurposed for manufacturing, or secondary processing. A processing facility that can make use of its bio-waste for energy production is another example.

Retrieved May 29, 2017 from <http://www.nzwc.ca/focus/circular-economy/Pages/default.aspx>

Community Investment Bond

Community bonds can be set up by a municipality to support the investment in new alternative energy infrastructure or other community assets. Community members can participate in the community bond and bond financing is typically used to finance capital projects. When a municipality wants to build a new facility, it issues bonds to finance that facility. Bonds are secured either by property taxes or user fees.

Retrieved May 29, 2017 from <http://www.fcm.ca/home/programs/partners-for-climate-protection/alternative-financing-mechanisms/bonds-and-bond-financing.htm%20%20>



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Complete Communities	<p>A complete community meets people’s needs for daily living throughout an entire lifetime by providing convenient access to an appropriate mix of jobs, local services, a full range of housing, and community infrastructure including affordable housing, schools, recreation, and open space for their residents. Convenient access to public transportation and options for safe, non-motorized travel is also provided.</p>
	<p><i>Retrieved August 16, 2017 from http://smartgrowthontario.ca/our-focus/complete-communities/</i></p>
Comprehensive Wealth	<p>Comprehensive wealth is the sum total of assets we own as a society. It is made up of five components: produced, financial, natural, human, and social capital. It is about measuring a society’s total stock of assets over time; focusing on the role of people, the environment, the economy, and infrastructure in creating and sustaining well-being.</p>
	<p><i>Retrieved June 30, 2017 from http://www.iisd.org/library/comprehensive-wealth-canada-measuring-what-matters-long-run</i></p>
Conservation Offsets	<p>A conservation offset is a tool that enables industry to offset adverse effects of their activities and development by supporting conservation efforts on other lands.</p>
	<p><i>Retrieved May 29, 2017 from https://landuse.alberta.ca/ConservationStewardship/ConservationStewardshipTools/Pages/default.aspx%20</i></p>
Customer Relationship Management System	<p>Customer relationship management refers to consistent and reliable practices, strategies, and technologies used by an organization to manage and analyze customer interactions and relationships for the purpose of developing and retaining customers.</p>
	<p><i>Retrieved May 29, 2017 from http://canadabusiness.ca/managing-your-business/marketing-and-sales/sales-and-customer-relationship-management/what-is-customer-relationship-management/</i></p>
Cumulative Effects	<p>Cumulative effects are changes to the environment that are caused by an action in combination with the past, present, and future human actions. They can include environmental, socio-economic, or health effects on physical and cultural heritage; current land uses; and resources for traditional indigenous purposes, or on structures of historical or archaeological significance.</p>
	<p><i>Retrieved May 29, 2017 from http://www.ceaa-acee.gc.ca/default.asp?lang=En&n=43952694-1&offset=6%20</i></p>



Decision Support Tool	<p>A decision support tool is a process, model, or criteria that is useful in analysis of various options to determine which best meets the pre-determined criteria and results in the desired outcomes.</p>
	<p><i>Retrieved May 29, 2017 from http://www.ifm.eng.cam.ac.uk/research/dstools/%233%20</i></p>
Ecological Network Approach	<p>The planning and establishment of ecological networks as a means of creating spatially integrated landscapes and habitats. This is being increasingly accepted as an appropriate approach for improving the ecological quality of natural ecosystems and protecting biodiversity.</p>
	<p><i>Retrieved September 28th from http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0169204608001850</i></p>
Ecosystem Goods and Services	<p>This means the tangible benefits arising from the ecological functions of ecosystems that provide benefits to all living things such as food, water, and raw material, as well as flood and drought mitigation, air and water purification, soil formation, and pollination.</p>
Food Cooperative (HUB)	<p>A food cooperative or hub provides the means for Alberta-direct marketing producers and small-scale food processors to get their products to market. A food hub is a profitable and sustainable business model that actively manages the aggregation, logistical coordination, and marketing of source-identified food products primarily from local producers, to strengthen their ability to satisfy year-round wholesale, retail, and institutional market demand.</p>
	<p><i>Retrieved May 29, 2017 from http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/explore14625%20%20</i></p>
Green Building Policy	<p>Green building policies are becoming popular mechanisms to align municipal infrastructure investments with sustainability goals. These are a great way to demonstrate municipal commitment to a sustainability plan. A green building policy can also be written to encourage new developments and retrofits to align with both local and provincial targets for reducing emissions, energy and water use.</p>
	<p><i>Retrieved May 29, 2017 from http://www.cagbc.org/CAGBC/Advocacy/Green_Building_Toolkit/CAGBC/Advocacy/Green_Building_Toolkit.aspx?hkey=f413d2b1-a706-433b-b872-ad627e730fdb%20</i></p>



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Green Business	<p>Green businesses produce, support, or enhance the County’s environmental goals. Green businesses have a stated commitment to reducing energy and water consumption, reducing environmental impact, or supporting broadly defined sustainability goals.</p>
Green Investment Fund	<p>A green investment fund would position the municipality as an investor in projects that benefit the environmental and economic development goals of the municipality. The premise behind green bonds is simple: Investors buy privately managed, government-guaranteed bonds with modest returns and the money is invested in large-scale renewable energy projects that reduce carbon emissions.</p> <p><i>Retrieved May 29, 2017 from http://www.rbc.com/community-sustainability/_assets-custom/pdf/Green-Bonds-Fifty-Shades-of-Green.pdf</i></p>
Iterative approach	<p>An iterative approach is a process for arriving at a decision or a desired result by repeating rounds of analysis or a cycle of operations. The objective is to bring the desired decision or result closer to discovery with each repetition (iteration).</p> <p><i>Retrieved May 31, 2017 from http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/iterative-process.html</i></p>
Heritage Inventory	<p>A heritage inventory is a community’s repository of historic places and stories that have meaning and value to the community and its founders.</p> <p><i>Retrieved May 29, 2017 from http://www.pcs.gov.sk.ca/InventoryGuide%20</i></p>
Human Capital	<p>The knowledge, skills, competencies, and attributes embodied in individuals or populations that facilitate the creation of personal, social, and economic well-being.</p>



Integrated Land Use Management	<p>Integrated land use management is a term that implies that all land uses are coordinated and managed to ensure high efficiency and reduce impact in the development of roads, services, and use of land by commercial, government, and the public. Taking an ecosystem approach to land use implies that decisions made for land use encompass goals for the natural environment at the decision maker level, such as when making approvals for new development, infrastructure, and or the designation of land use.</p>
Integrated Waste Management Plan	<p>Waste management strategies may include developing an integrated waste management plan, adopting policies that reduce the amount of waste generated, implementing a training program for all Parkland County staff in waste reduction, handling and proper disposal, ensuring procurement policies include criteria for waste management, performing a waste audit, establishing a baseline, and developing diversion rate targets. The purpose behind any action is to divert as much waste as possible from the landfill. Reducing at the source (use less), reusing as much as possible, and recycling all acceptable materials will increase the County's diversion rate.</p> <p><i>Retrieved May 29, 2017 from https://www.dal.ca/content/dam/dalhousie/pdf/dept/sustainability/NS%2520ICI%2520Waste%2520Management%2520Guide%2520Final%2520%2528897%2520KB%2529.pdf%20%20</i></p>
Key Performance Indicators	<p>A key performance indicator is a quantifiable value that gauges the success of reaching a pre-determined target.</p> <p><i>Retrieved May 29, 2017 from https://www.clearpointstrategy.com/18-key-performance-indicators/%20</i></p>
Land Use Balance	<p>This refers to conducting an inventory of current use and availability of agricultural, commercial/industrial, and residential land categories. Having a current inventory of land use patterns, densities and relationships will assist in developing policies and practices relating to future development.</p> <p><i>Retrieved May 29, 2017 from https://www.uwsp.edu/cnr-ap/clue/Documents/Comprehensive_Planning/Land_Use_Resource_Guide_Chapter_3.pdf</i></p>



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Natural Capital	Natural capital is all components of the living ecosystems (land, air, water and, biota) and their associated interactions and functions.
Resilience	Resilience is the capacity of a system to withstand and bounce back intact from environmental or human disturbances.
Rural	Rural relates to the countryside and the people who live there instead of urban centres.
Rural Character	Rural character refers to an individual’s perception of the aspects that make up a rural area. See rural.
Social Capital/Attributes	<p>Social capital is the sum of the networks of relationships composed of values, norms, and understanding that facilitate cooperation within or among groups. The value of social capital resides in the overall positive consequences resulting from the creation and maintenance of social contracts. For example, social capital may include: flow of information, trust, reciprocity, co-operation, and productivity.</p> <p><i>Retrieved May 29, 2017 from http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-652-x/89-652-x2015002-eng.htm%23n1%20;%20http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/economics/four-interpretations-of-social-capital_5jzbcx010wmt-en%20%20</i></p>
Source Water Protection Policy	<p>This policy would align with North Saskatchewan River Watershed Alliance Watershed Management Plan (2012), and include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identifying and creating an inventory of land-use contaminants with potential to impact watershed health• Conducting a vulnerability assessment of potential land use impacts to watershed health and drinking water supplies (GIS Mapping)• Creating land-use bylaws to manage for identified risks—such as storm water management requirements for new development, liquid waste management for industry, and/or defining on-site management best practices in land-use applications.• Communicating and educating key stakeholders on best management practices for a variety of land uses with the objective of protecting watershed health <p><i>Retrieved May 29, 2017 from http://www.nswa.ab.ca/sites/default/files/documents/IWMP%2520Final%2520Report%2520F%2520May%252031.pdf%20</i></p>



Sustainable Economic Development Zones	This would be a classification or zoning of an area based upon an assessment of land-use balance and economic assets, to encourage or drive development and investment into these areas.
Transfer of Development Credits	The Transfer of Development Credits (TDC tool) is designed to help communities deal with the rapid conversion of their valued landscapes while simultaneously promoting appropriate landscape development. The tool allows for the transfer of development potential from areas desired to be protected (based on community desire to see its character and function maintained), to areas more suited for proposed developments (based on their capacity to accept greater development activity). <i>Retrieved May 29, 2017 from http://www.tdc-alberta.ca/basics.html</i>
Water Conservation-Based Rate Structures	Inclining-block rate structures encourage water conservation by implementing higher costs for greater usage. An inclining block rate structure can be implemented as net-revenue neutral, penalizing high residential water users while keeping rates low for those that conserve. This program works well with coinciding water conservation (rain barrel) and community education programs. <i>Retrieved May 29, 2017 from page 19 of http://www.okotoks.ca/sites/default/files/pdfs/publications/Okotoks%2520Water%2520CEP%2520Plan%25202014_FINAL.pdf</i>



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