Help Shape the Future of Foothills County

Foothills County is updating its Municipal Development Plan, or MDP.

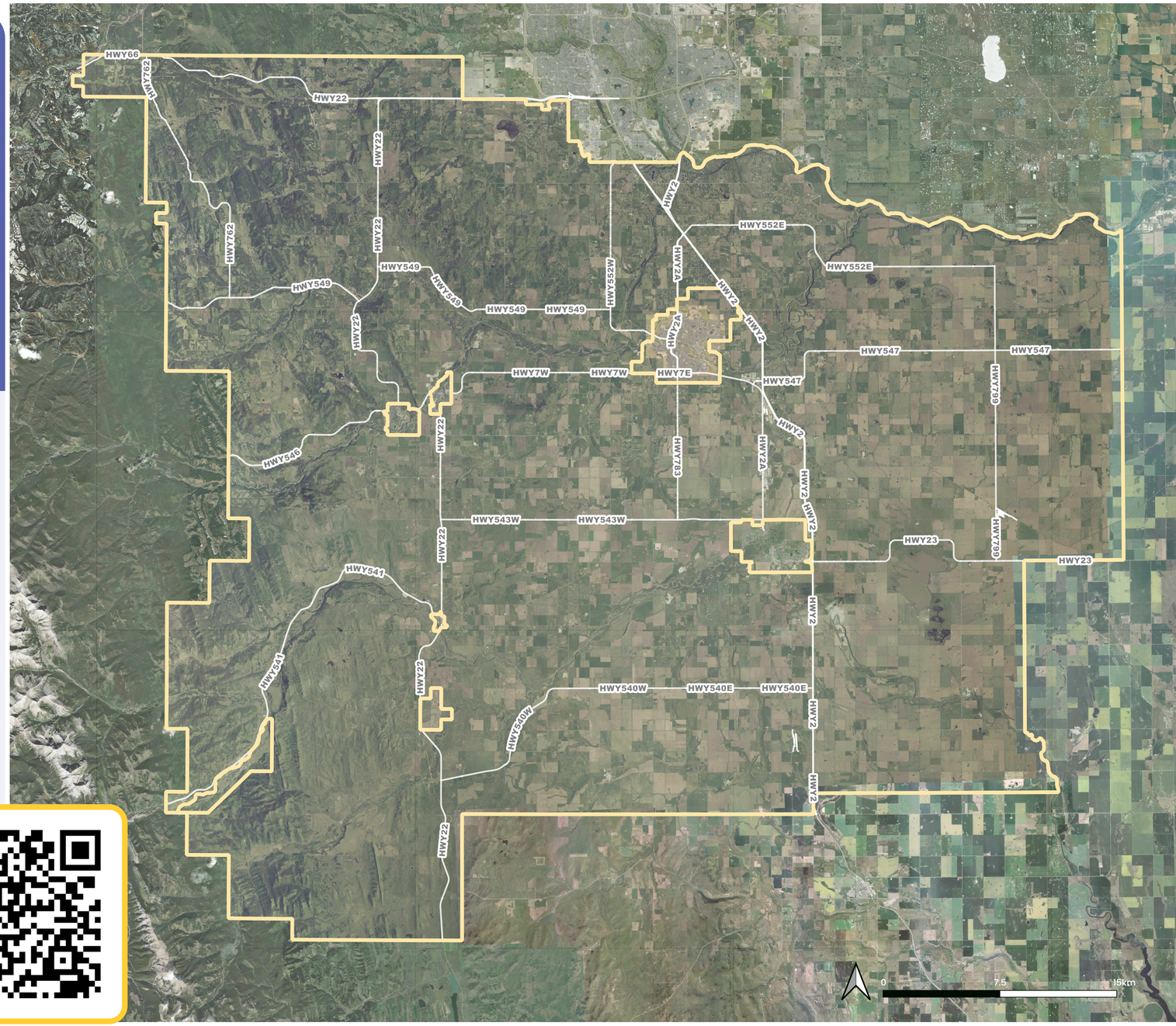
The MDP will provide a long-term vision for how land, growth, infrastructure, agriculture, the environment, and communities are planned over the next 20 years.

This is the first phase of public engagement.

We want to learn:

- What do you value about Foothills County?
- What should be protected or strengthened for the future?
- What issues and opportunities should the updated MDP address?
- What would you like Foothills County to look like in 20 years?
- What should the County consider as it plans for future growth?

There are no draft policies at this stage. We are starting by building a shared understanding of the MDP, gathering community perspectives, and identifying future planning considerations for the County.



Visit each station. Share your ideas. Complete the survey.

Share your thoughts

What is a Municipal Development Plan?

A Municipal Development Plan, or MDP, is Foothills County's high-level plan for future growth and development.

It provides direction for:

- Where and how growth should occur
- Agriculture and rural land
- Housing and communities
- Business and employment
- Roads, infrastructure, and services
- Water, habitat, and natural areas
- Working with neighbouring municipalities

Why Are We Reviewing the MDP?

2010

Foothills County's MDP was adopted

Since then, the County has grown and priorities, information, and provincial requirements have changed.

The review will confirm what is still working and update direction for growth, agriculture, infrastructure, the environment, and communities over the next 20 years.

2047

Updated direction

The MDP can

- ✓ Establish a long-term vision
- ✓ Identify broad growth directions
- ✓ Guide future land use decisions
- ✓ Set goals and policies
- ✓ Coordinate growth and infrastructure
- ✓ Protect agricultural operations
- ✓ Address environmental preservation

The MDP does not

- ✗ Approve a specific subdivision or development
- ✗ Rezone an individual property
- ✗ Prepare a new Area Structure Plan or Area Concept Plan
- ✗ Set the annual municipal budget
- ✗ Replace or act as the Land Use Bylaw

Before today, how familiar were you with the MDP?

Not at all familiar	Slightly familiar	Somewhat familiar	Very familiar

How Does the MDP Guide Decisions?

The MDP sets the County-wide direction.

More detailed plans, bylaws, and decisions must align with that direction.

1

MDP

Sets the direction

2

Area Plans

Map the route

3

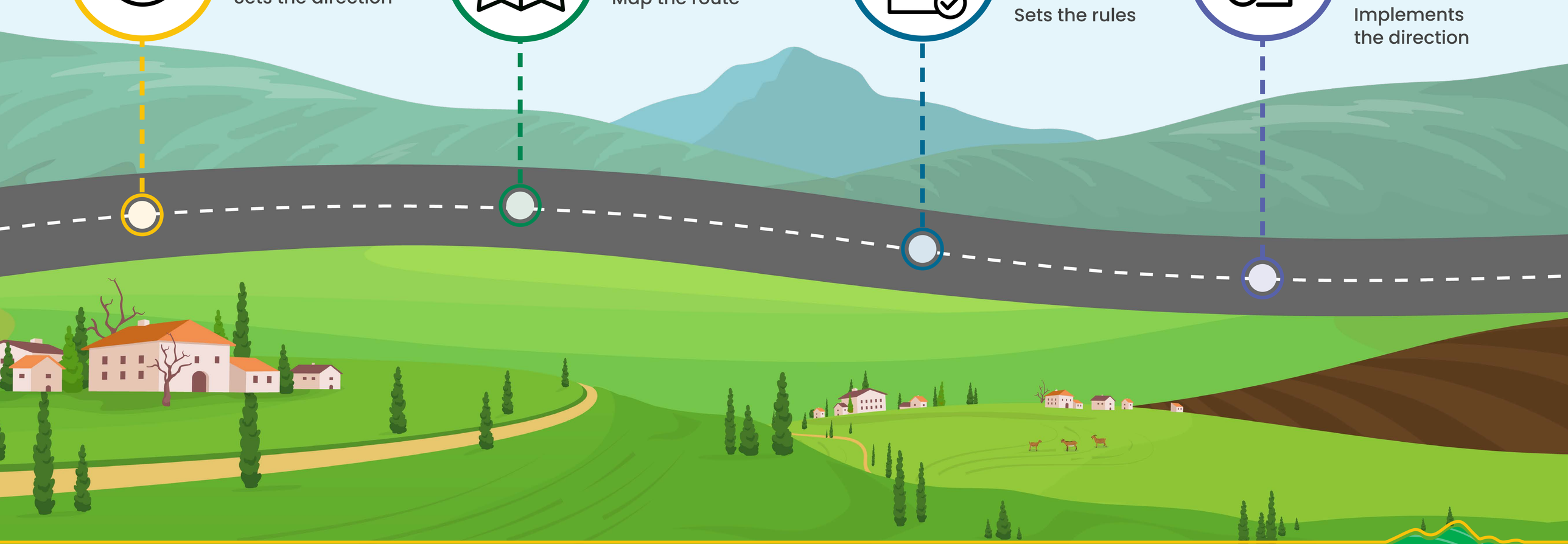
Land Use Bylaw

Sets the rules

4

Development Decisions

Implements the direction



How Could the MDP Affect You?

If you live here

The MDP can influence where new housing is encouraged, how communities grow, and how growth is coordinated with roads, municipal services, recreation, and community facilities.

If you farm or ranch

The MDP can support the agricultural land base, reduce conflicts with non-agricultural uses, and guide opportunities for agriculture-related businesses.

If you value the land and environment

The MDP can guide how agricultural land, water, natural areas, wildlife habitat, scenic landscapes, and other valued features are preserved as the County changes.

If you own land

The MDP can affect the types of future land use changes that may be considered. Existing uses and development rights remain, subject to applicable approvals and the Land Use Bylaw.

If you operate a business

The MDP can identify where employment and commercial growth is encouraged and ensure it is compatible with surrounding land uses. It can also identify the infrastructure need to support growth.



The MDP is a high level plan that does not address individual properties or projects.

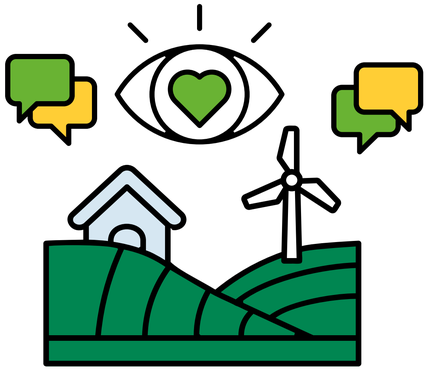
The direction in the MDP influences future decisions that can shape where and how people live, work, travel, farm, invest, and access services in Foothills County.

Which MDP topics are most connected to your life, land, work, or community?

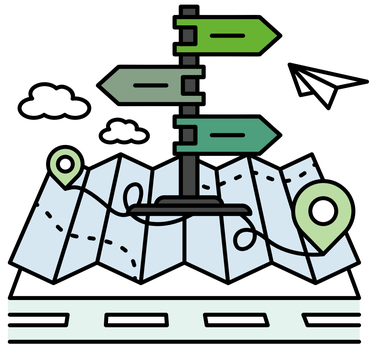
Share your thoughts

Updating the MDP Together

We are here.



Vision & Value



Growth & Policy Direction



Draft Plan Review



Implementation & Monitoring



The next MDP update will move from big-picture ideas to more detailed policies and a draft plan.

Public input, technical information, and Council direction will help guide each step.

Your input is one part of the decision-making process.

Public feedback will be considered together with:

- Provincial legislation
- Regional and intermunicipal plans
- Technical studies
- Planning best practices
- Financial and infrastructure considerations
- Council's decision-making responsibility

What We Value and Our Vision for the Future



Current MDP vision

"The MD of Foothills encompasses a diverse rural landscape in which leadership and planning support a strong agricultural heritage, vibrant communities, a balanced economy and the stewardship of natural capital for future generations."

Does the current MDP vision resonate with what you want for the future of Foothills County?

Very Well	Mostly well	Somewhat
Not very well	Not at all	Unsure

What, if anything, should be added, changed, or emphasized in the updated vision?

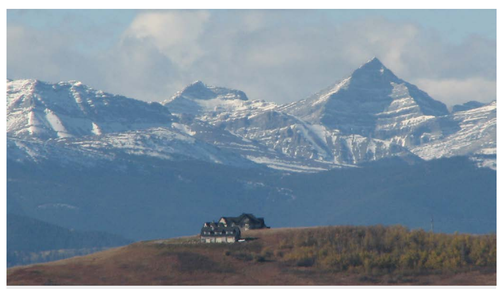
What We Value and Our Vision for the Future

What do you value most? (Pick 1)

The current MDP identified five qualities associated with rural character:



Wide open spaces



Scenic views



Dark skies



Historic and archaeological resources



Clean air, water, soil and biodiversity

What do you value most about living, working, farming, manufacturing, operating a business, or owning land in Foothills County? (Pick 5)



Agriculture



Rural character



Open spaces and scenic views



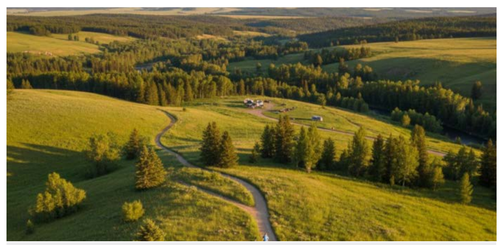
Water, wetlands, and natural areas



Wildlife and biodiversity



Hamlets and community life



Recreation and outdoor access



Local businesses and employment



Heritage and culture



Peace, privacy, and quiet



Transportation and regional access



Manufacturing



Cultivated farming/ranching

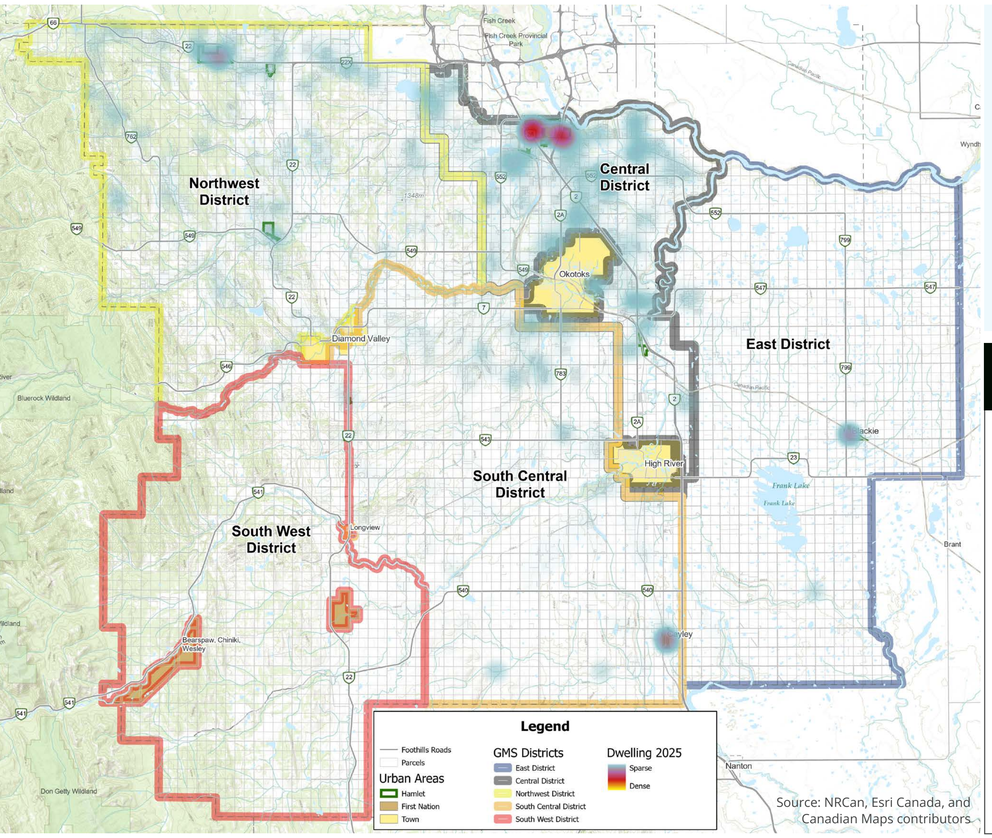


Energy production



Natural resource extraction

Foothills County is Growing and Changing



How the population has changed

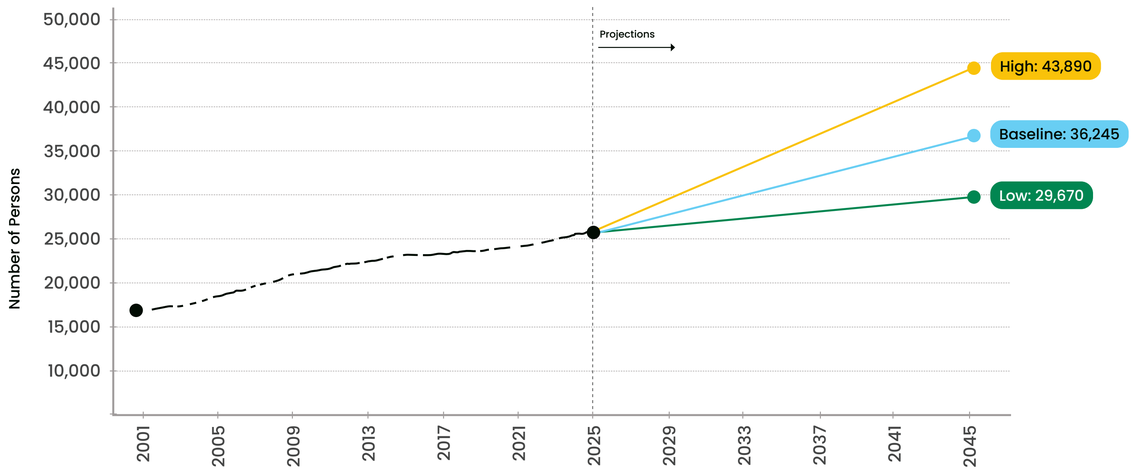
2006
~20,180
people

2025
25,789
people

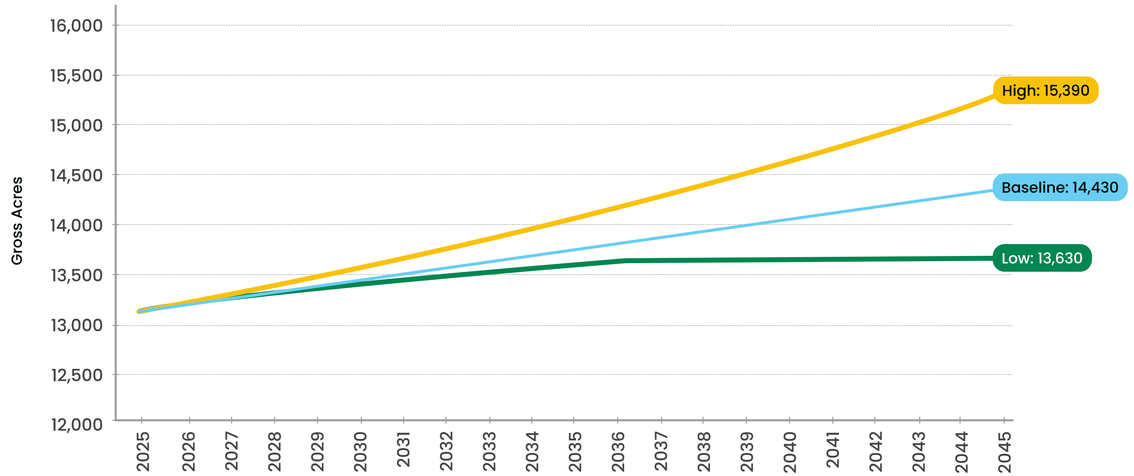
Do these growth projections seem realistic for Foothills County?

Yes, they seem realistic	Growth will likely be higher	Growth will likely be lower	Not sure

Foothills County Population Growth Scenarios



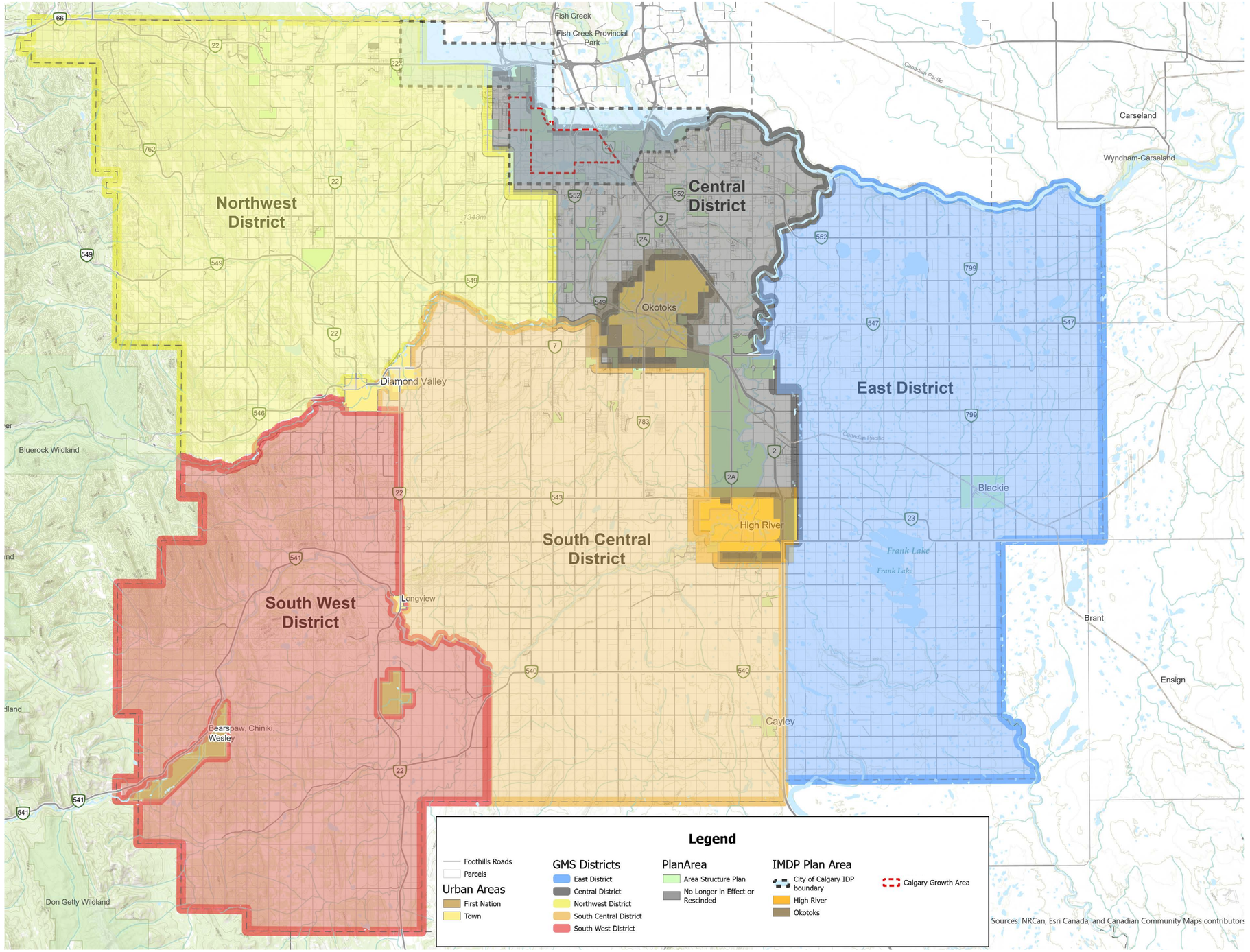
Foothills County Non-Residential Land Area Growth Scenarios



Planning for Growth Over the Next 20 Years

Foothills County is divided into five Growth Management Districts, each with different landscapes, land uses, infrastructure conditions, and growth pressures.

Source: NRCan, Esri Canada, and Canadian Maps contributors



Growing Our Local Economy



Planning for the future means thinking about places to work, operate a business, and access local goods and services.

The MDP can guide where business growth may fit while considering the land, infrastructure, and rural qualities people value.

Opportunities to Explore

- **Local businesses and services:** Places to shop, work and meet everyday needs
- **Agriculture-related businesses:** Local food, markets and businesses that add value to farm products
- **Industrial and employment areas:** Suitable places for businesses that need land, transportation access and services
- **Tourism, film, and recreation:** Visitor experiences that connect with rural landscapes, local businesses and community destinations

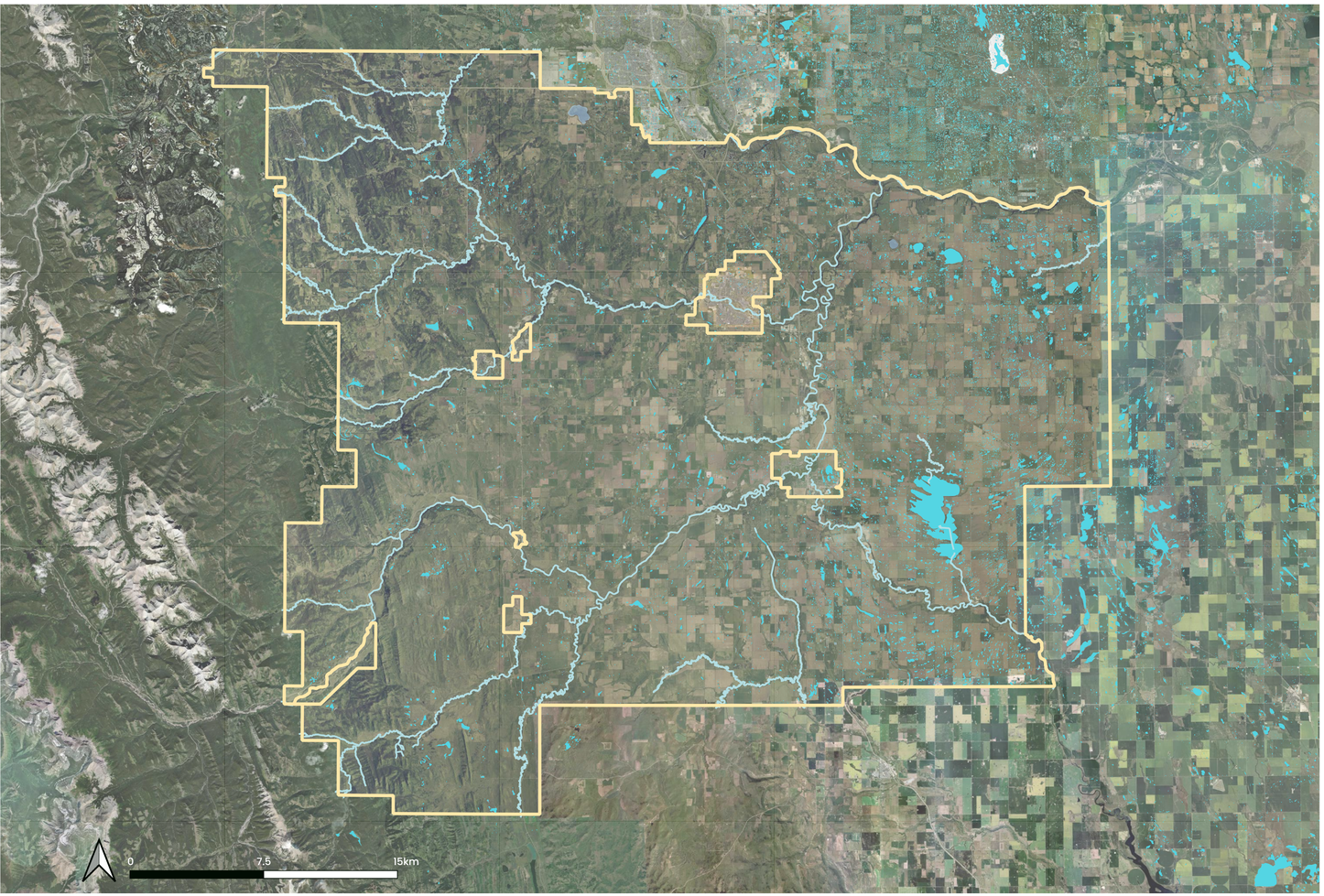
Why this matters for the MDP

The updated MDP can guide the locations and types of future business development. Planning should consider road access, water and wastewater services, nearby land uses, farmland, and natural areas. The MDP does not approve individual businesses or developments.

What kinds of businesses and jobs would you like to see in Foothills County over the next 20 years?

What should the County consider so that business growth fits with nearby farms, homes, and natural areas?

The Environment
Wetlands and Water Bodies



Legend — Foothills County Boundary — River/Stream — Historical Wetland Inventory

Why this matters for the MDP

Planning where growth occurs can help protect wetlands, water bodies, and surrounding natural areas.

Wetlands are valuable natural features, which include marshes, sloughs, and areas that hold water for part of the year.

Together with rivers, creeks, and lakes, they support healthy ecosystems and resilient communities.



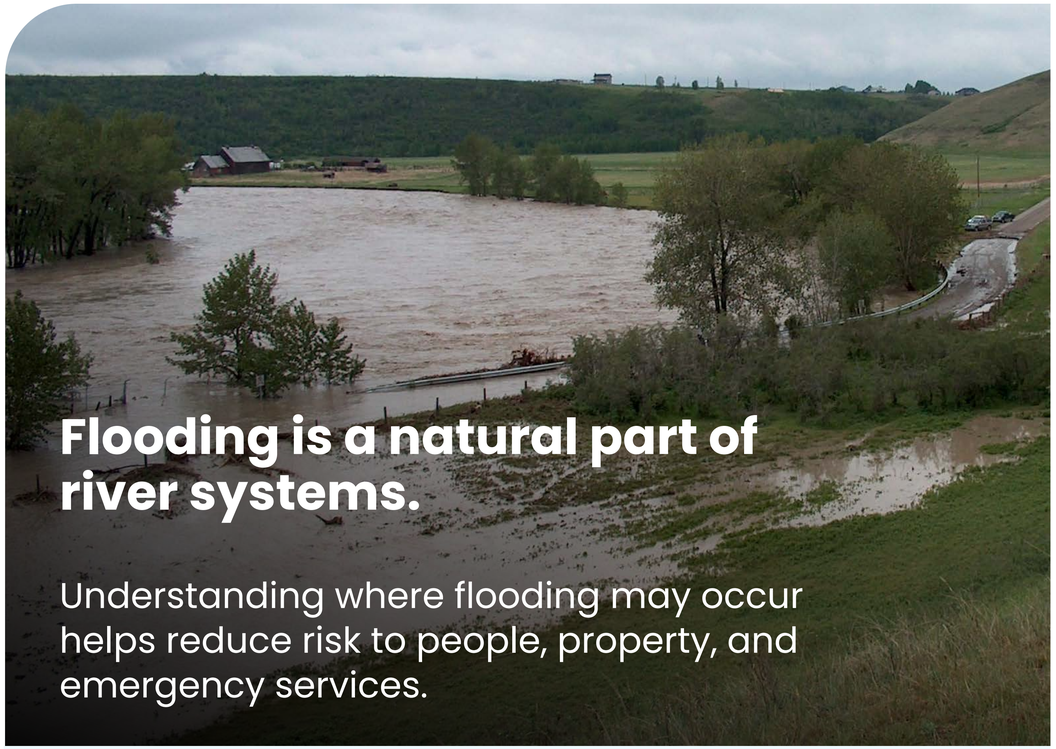
Why wetlands matter

- Store water and slow runoff during heavy rain
- Help keep water on the land during dry periods
- Improve water quality by filtering sediments and pollutants
- Provide habitat for birds, amphibians and other wildlife

Are there wetlands, sloughs, creeks or seasonal water features in your area that are important to protect?

Share your thoughts

The Environment
Planning for Flood Resilience

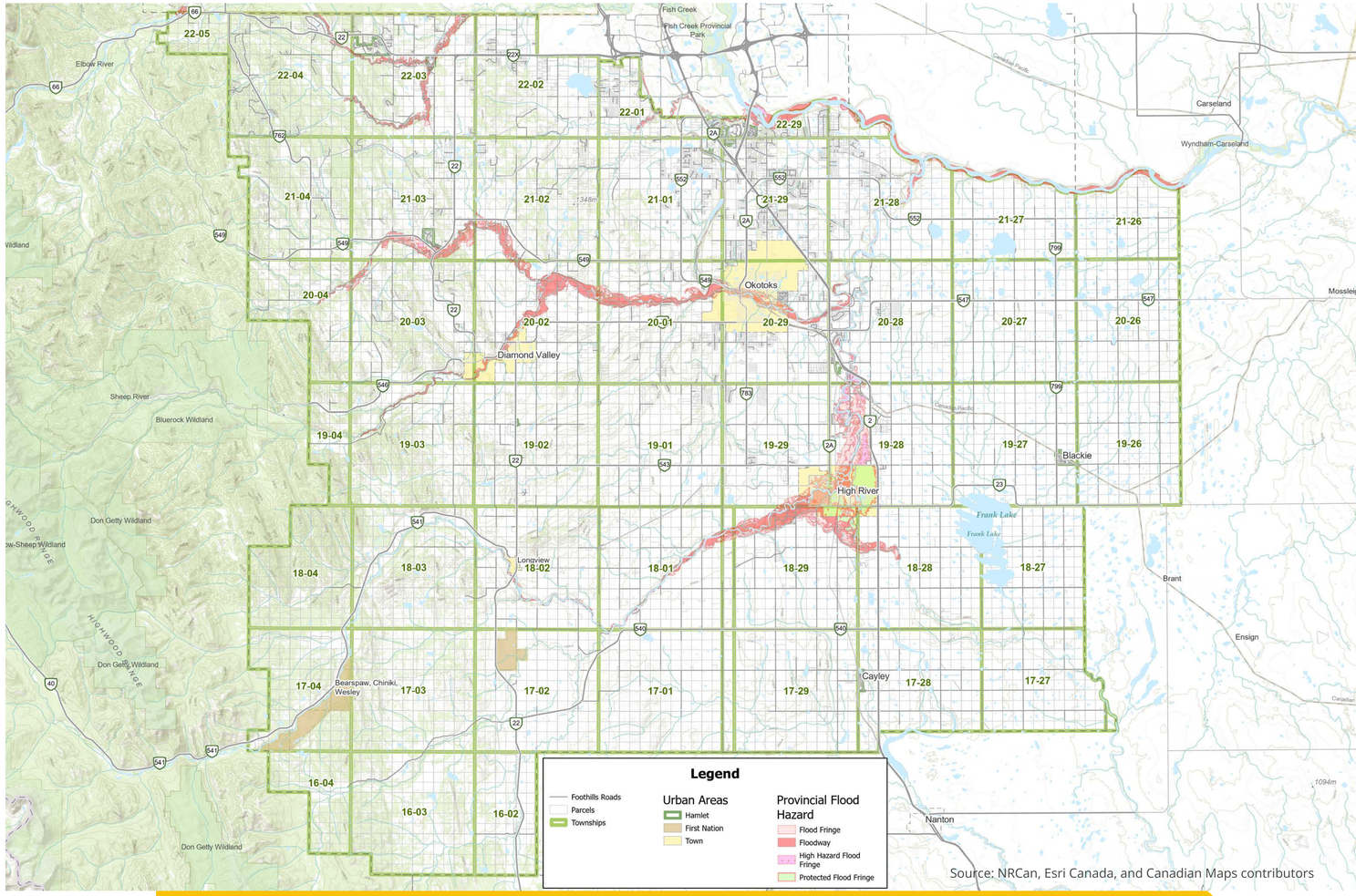


Flooding is a natural part of river systems.

Understanding where flooding may occur helps reduce risk to people, property, and emergency services.

Flood mapping helps identify

- Areas where people, property, and infrastructure may be exposed to flooding
- Places where development needs closer review
- Areas safe for the relocation of development



Why this matters for the MDP

Growth planning should consider potential flood areas alongside wetlands, riverbanks, and other natural features that help manage water.

The map identifies an update to the County's Flood Hazard Protection Overlay to reflect newer Provincial flood studies and mapping.

Ask the project team for more information!

Share your thoughts

The Environment
Landscape Connectivity



Wildlife need connected natural areas to find food, shelter and seasonal habitat.

Rivers, wetlands, grasslands and wooded areas can help connect these places.

Why connections matter

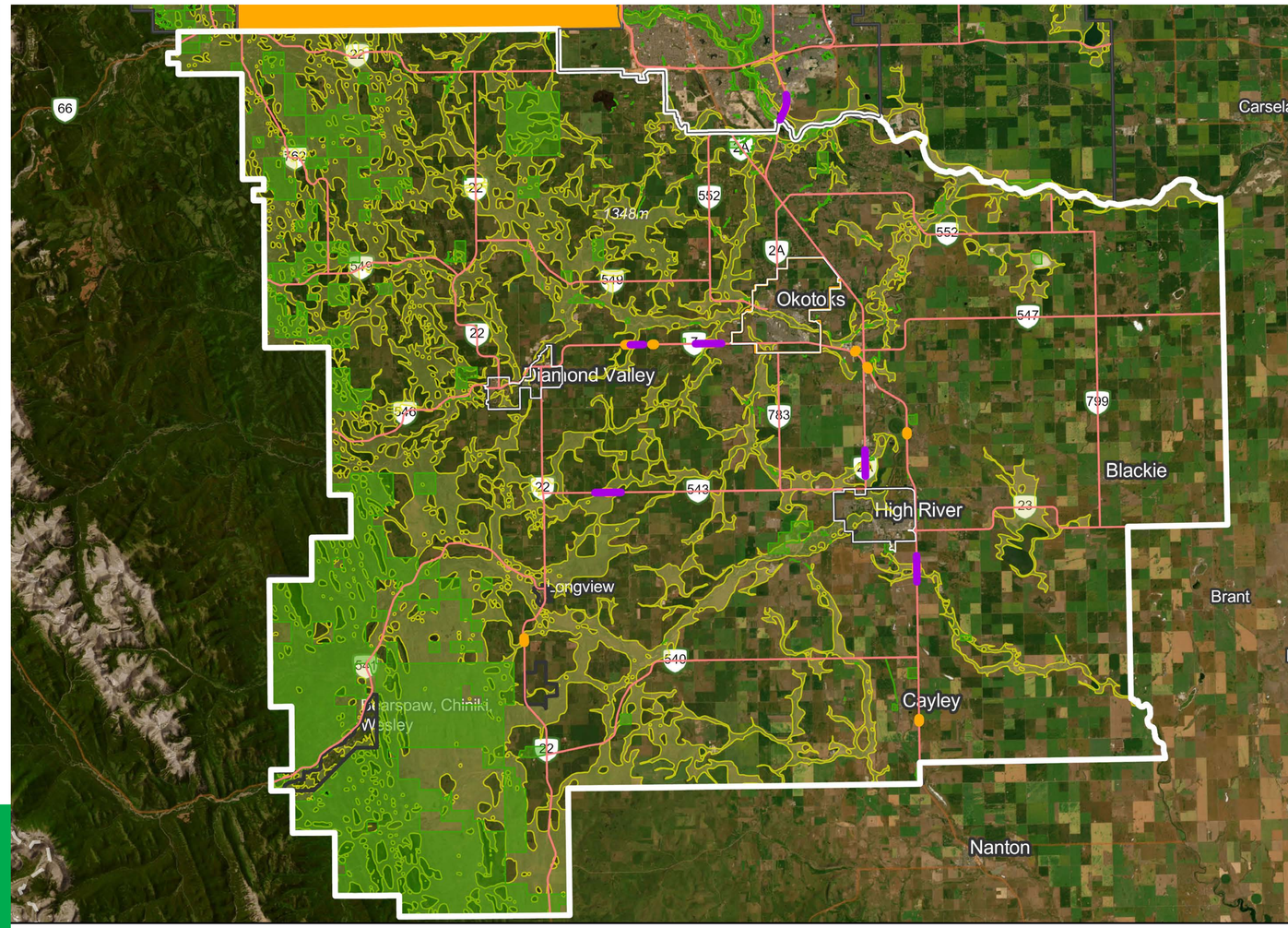
- Help wildlife move between habitats
- Reduce the separation of habitat by roads and development
- Support healthy wildlife populations and increase resilience to a changing environment
- River valleys, coulees, rolling foothills and aspen parkland also contribute to the County's natural beauty and rural character

Which natural areas, wildlife habitats or unique landscapes should be protected for future generations?

Share your thoughts

Why this matters for the MDP

Considering landscape connectivity can help guide growth while protecting the natural features people value.



Legend

Ecological Network

Core area

Corridor

Clusters of AVCs aligning with:

High/medium connectivity

Low connectivity

Agriculture Shapes Our Landscape



Farms and ranches are part of what makes Foothills County unique.

Raising cattle and horses, growing crops and producing local food support jobs and rural lifestyle.

Why Agriculture Matters

- Provides food, jobs and business opportunities.
- Preserves rural character and open landscapes.
- Supports care for farmland, water and natural areas.

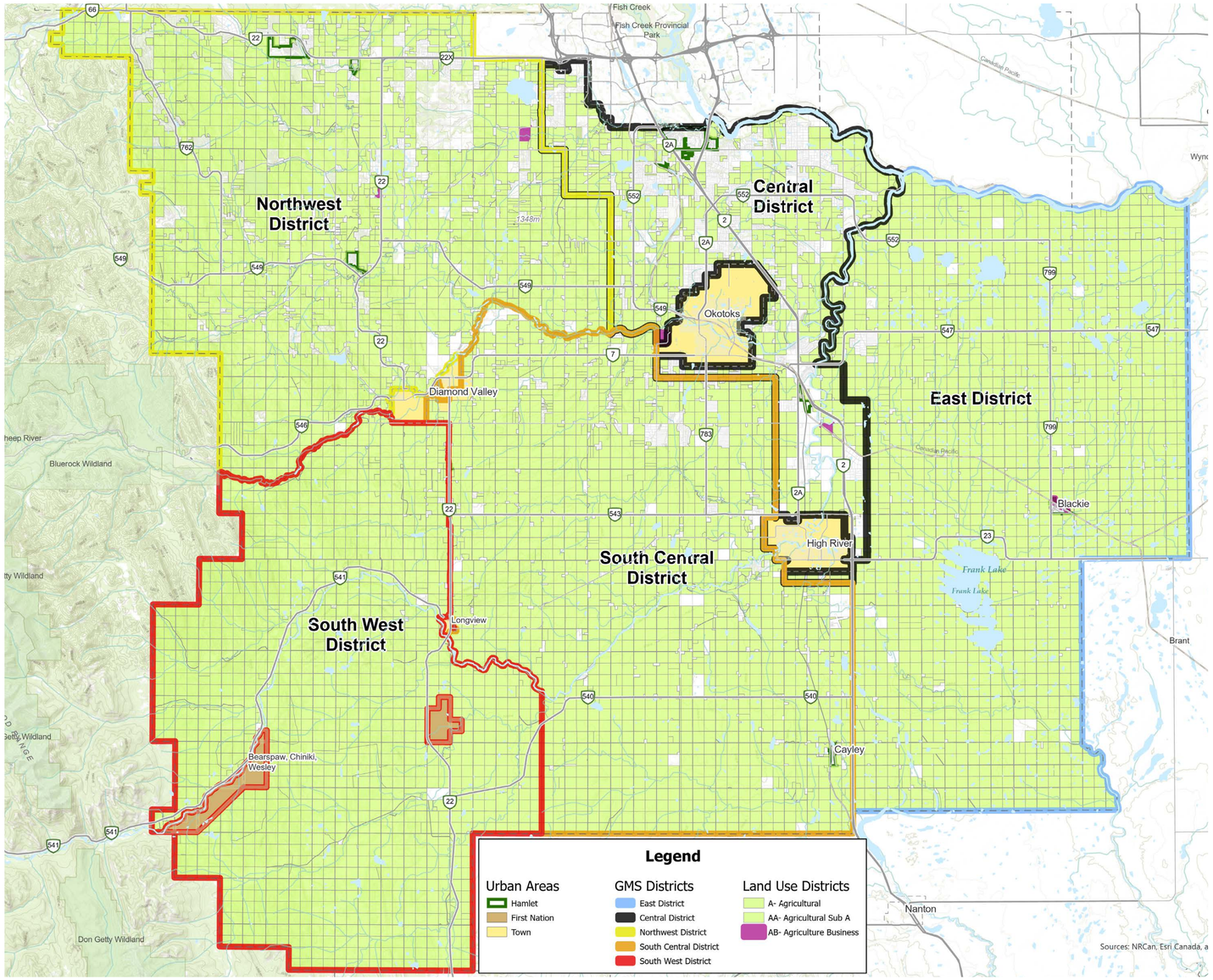
Beyond the Farm Gate

Agriculture also supports local markets, food producers and businesses that turn farm products into food and other goods. These businesses create jobs and add value to what farms produce.

How the Current MDP Supports Agriculture

The current Municipal Development Plan (MDP) recognizes agriculture as a main land use. It aims to:

- Avoid unnecessary subdivision farmland into smaller parcels
- Guide growth to suitable places
- Reduce conflicts between farming and other land uses
- Support farm-related businesses and new ways to add value to farm products
- Maintain the County's rural character and farming heritage



Source: NRCan, Esri Canada, and Canadian Maps contributors

What should the County consider when balancing future growth with agriculture?

Share your thoughts

The Future of Agriculture

New technology, markets and business ideas are changing agriculture.

As the Calgary region grows, demand for local food and rural living increases—and more land is sought for other uses.



Challenges to consider

- Rising costs for supplies, land and equipment
- Farmland subdivided into smaller parcels
- Pressure from growth
- Conflicts with nearby land uses
- Climate change
- Trade disputes between countries

Opportunities to consider

- Reaching local and international markets
- Selling directly to customers and processing farm products
- Welcoming agriculture related tourism
- Trying new farm businesses and partnering on renewable energy
- Using new technology, improving transportation and creating jobs
- Supporting the next generation of farmers and ranchers

What are the biggest opportunities and challenges facing agriculture in Foothills County over the next 20 years?

Why this matters for the MDP

The updated plan can help farms and ranches succeed while balancing business opportunities, care for the environment and future growth.

Infrastructure
Roads and Connections



Roads and bridges connect our homes, farms, businesses, and communities.

Maintaining this network is an important part of planning for the future.

2,150 km
Total County Roads

Roads and connections facts

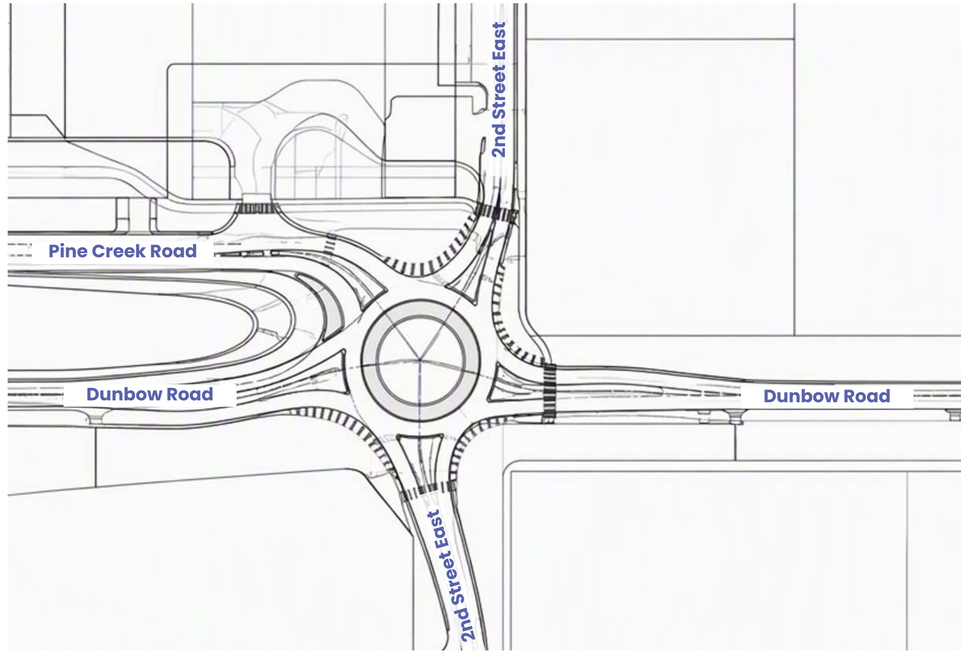
1,100 km gravel

1,050 km hard-surface

Keeping services reliable

Operators test water, maintain equipment, and respond to interruptions.



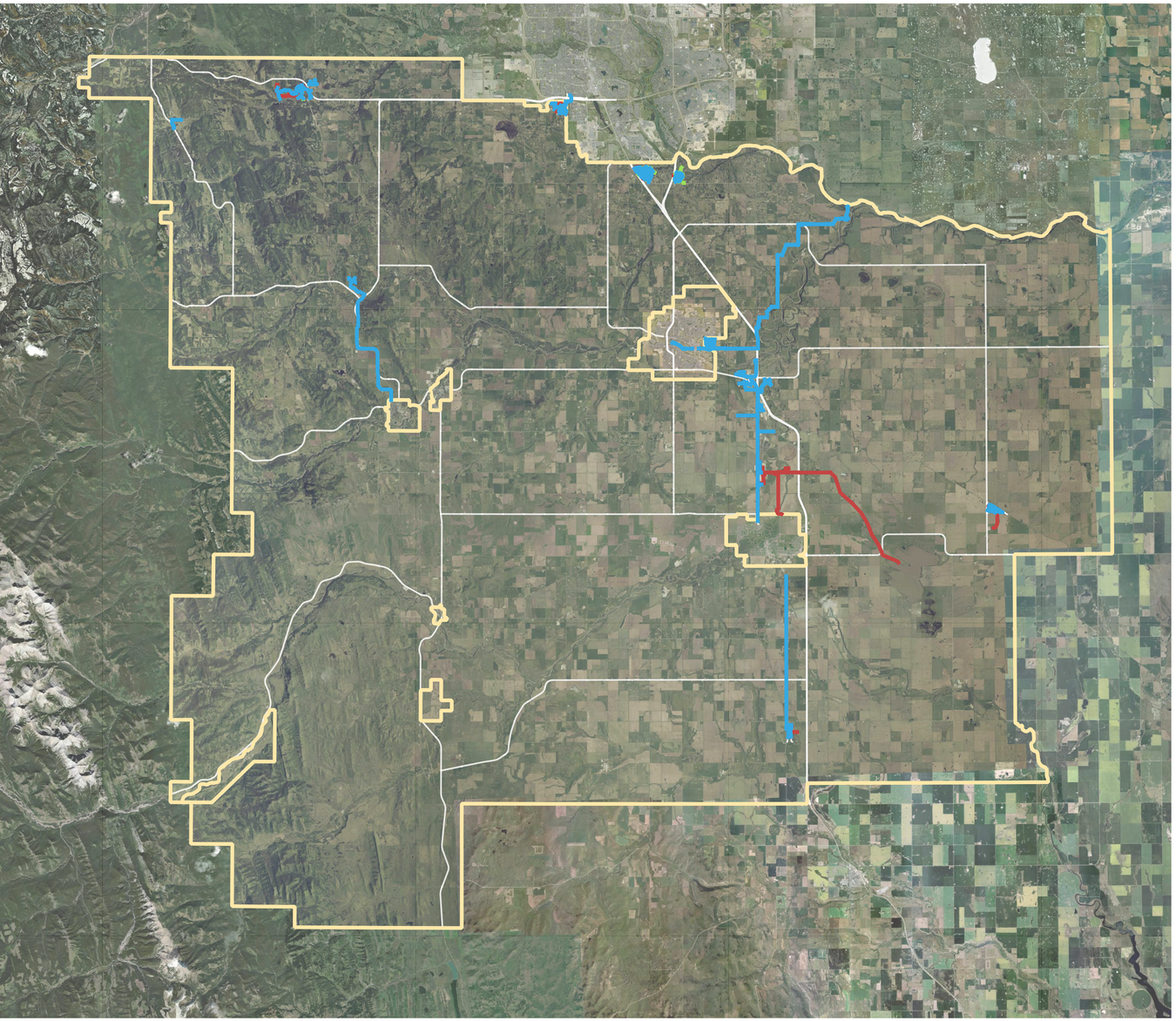




What should the County consider about infrastructure when planning future growth?

Share your thoughts

Infrastructure
Water and Wastewater Services



Services vary across Foothills County. Where systems exist, and what they can support, helps guide future growth.

The County's Public Works Department operates water, wastewater, and stormwater facilities across the Priddis, West, and East service areas.



43+
Utility Facilities

How the systems work

Water: Treats, stores, and delivers water

Wastewater: Collects and treats used water

Stormwater: Manages rain and snowmelt

Keeping services reliable

Operators test water, maintain equipment, and respond to interruptions

Why this matters for the MDP

Growth needs reliable services. Planning must consider water, wastewater, and transportation infrastructure.

Building Long-Term Water Security

Infrastructure projects help maintain reliable services and support community needs.

Planning for growth also means considering the cost of operating and maintaining these systems.



Aldersyde Water Treatment Plant

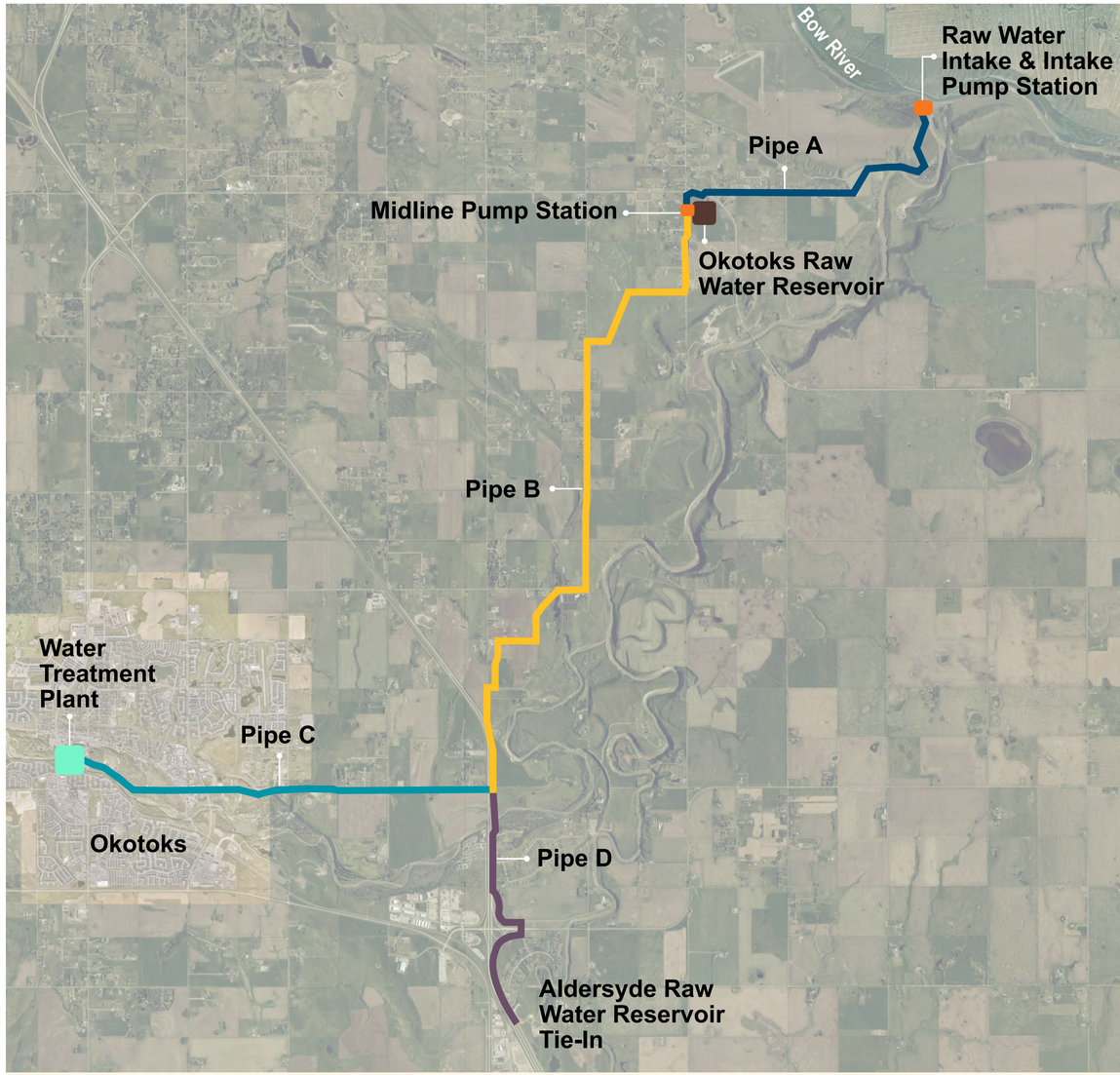
The new plant is under construction and is scheduled to be operational by the end of 2026.

500,000 m³ raw-water reservoir

The reservoir stores raw water before treatment and is currently filled from the Highwood River.

Pipe D + regional system

Pipe D connects the broader regional system toward the Aldersyde reservoir and treatment plant. The source describes the shared regional system as approximately 25 km of pipeline with the intake, pump stations and reservoirs.

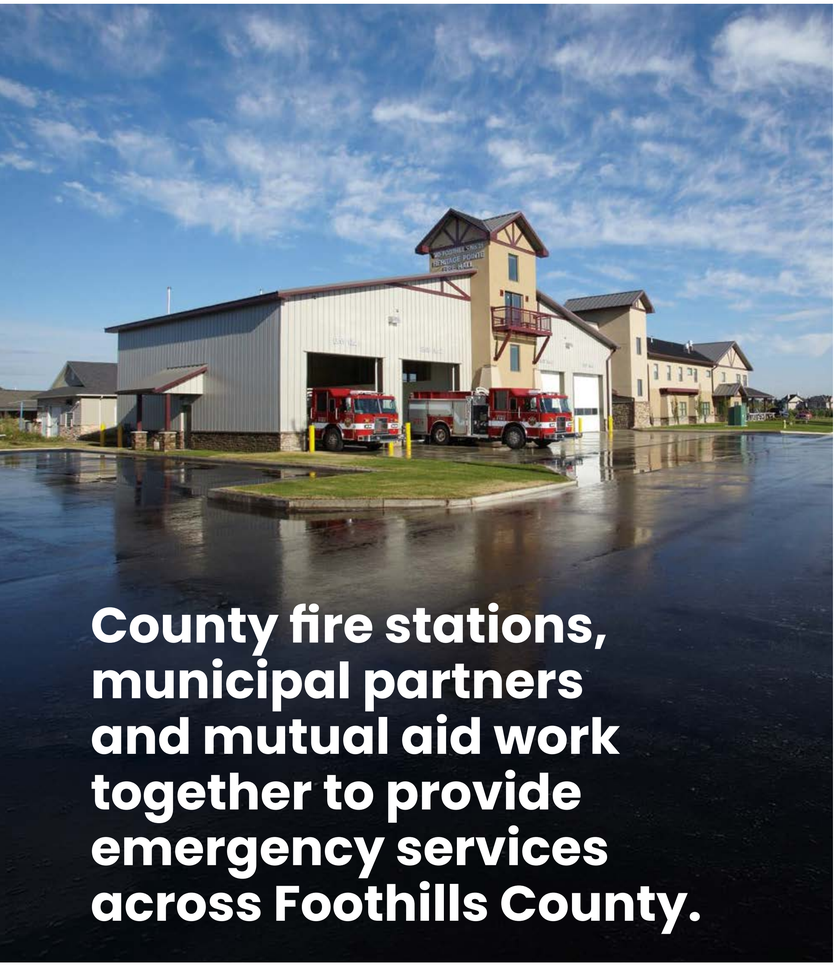


Foothills Okotoks Regional Water Project Construction Progress as of September 14, 2026

Legend

- Pipe A
- Pipe B
- Pipe C
- Pipe D
- Midline Pump Station & Raw Water Intake & Intake Pump Station
- Okotoks Raw Water Reservoir
- Water Treatment Plant

Safe and Prepared Communities



County fire stations, municipal partners and mutual aid work together to provide emergency services across Foothills County.





Why this matters for the MDP

Different locations have different risks, travel distances and service needs. Considering these differences alongside future growth can help connect land use planning with emergency service capacity and preparedness.

As Foothills County grows, what should we keep in mind to help communities stay safe and prepared?

Places and Supports That Bring Us Together



Parks, sports fields, campgrounds, recreation facilities and community halls give residents places to be active and gather.

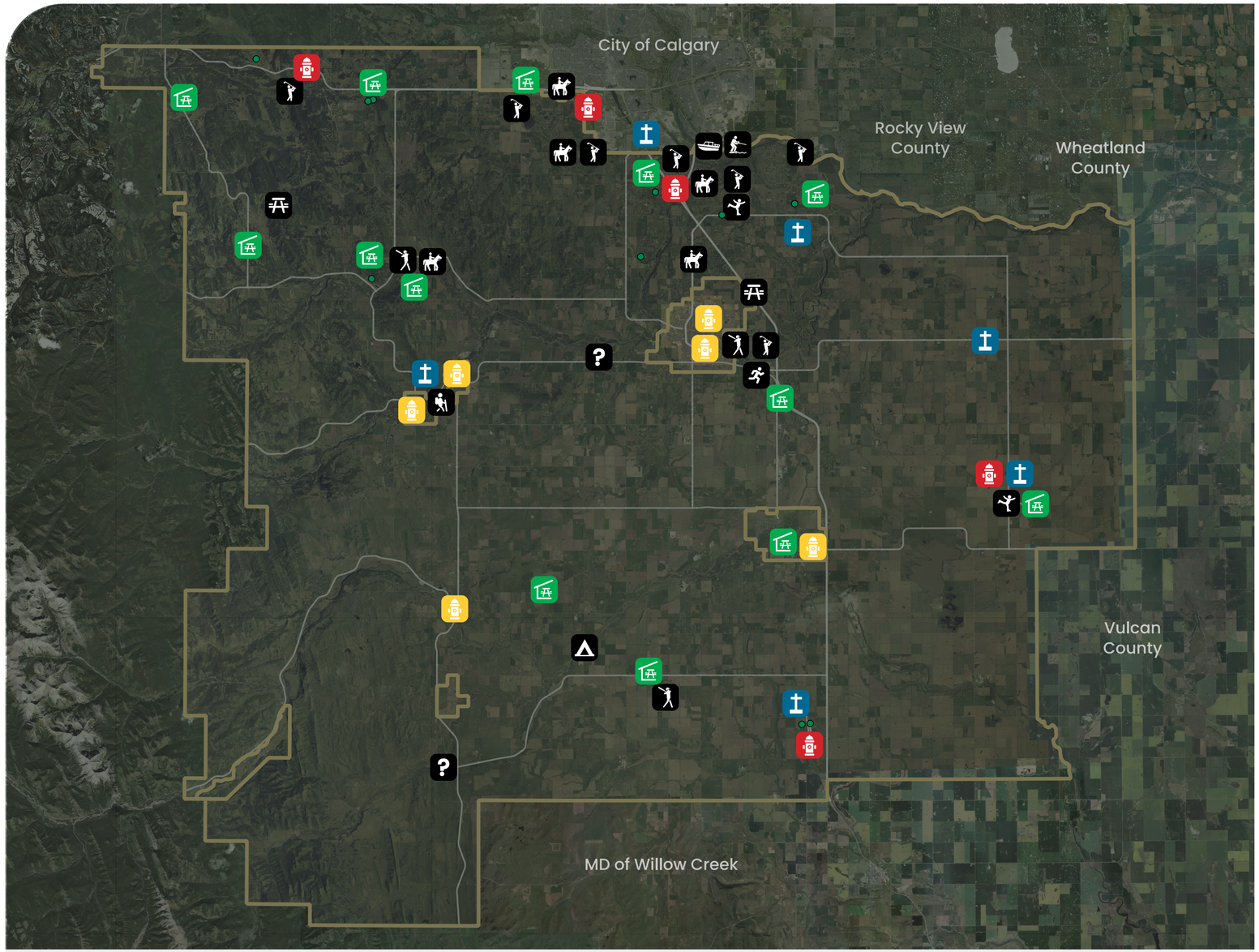
Family & Community Support Services (FCSS) supports preventive programs, local organizations and volunteerism. Cemeteries provide places for remembrance.

Why this matters for the MDP

As communities grow and needs change, access to gathering places, recreation, and community supports is an important part of planning. Existing facilities also need ongoing maintenance and long-term investment.

What community spaces, facilities, or services will be needed as the County grows? Tell us what is needed and where it should be located.

Working Together as We Grow



Legend

Recreation Facilities
- Golf Course
- Tourism Site
- Arena
- Park
- Field House
- Esquestrian
- Hogg Park
- Ball Diamond
- Trail
- Boat Launch
- Water Ski
- Recreation Fields

Community Halls
- Community Hall

Cemeteries
- MD

Fire Services
- Mutual Aid
- Foothills





The County works with nearby municipalities and local groups to share services and facilities.

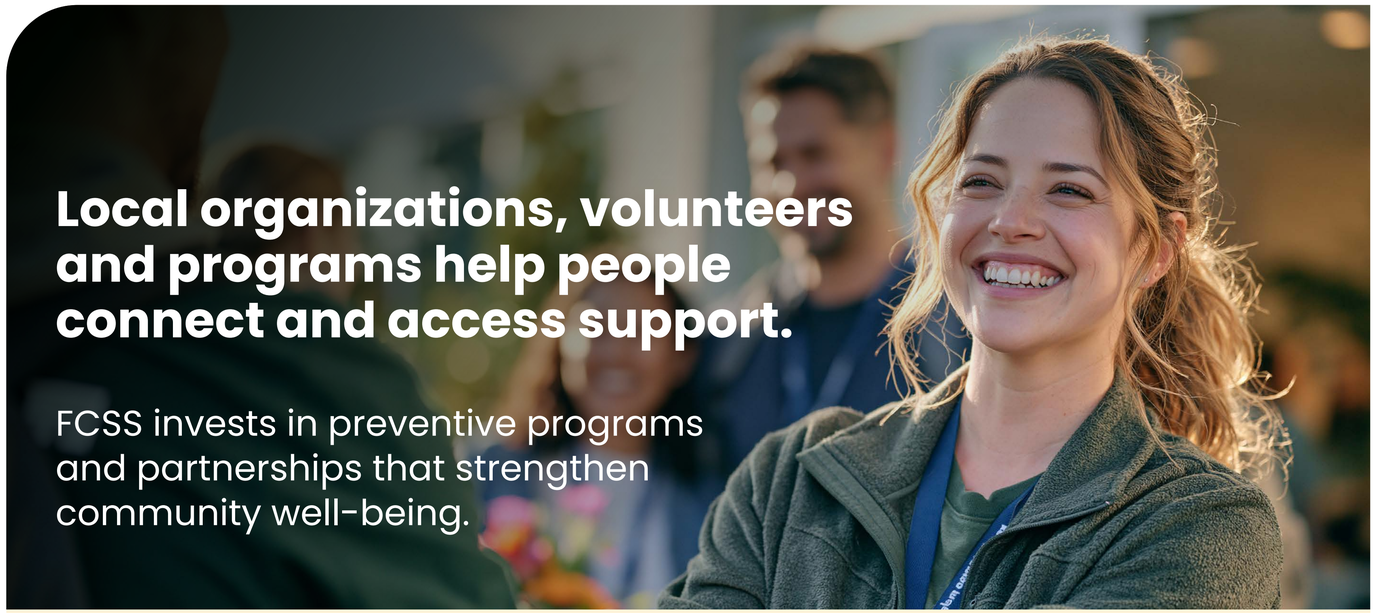
Why this matters for the MDP

Growth planning should consider services beyond municipal boundaries, with clear roles, fair cost-sharing, and long-term planning.

Where could shared facilities or regional partnerships better support the County's future growth?

Share your thoughts

Connected and Supported Communities



Local organizations, volunteers and programs help people connect and access support.

FCSS invests in preventive programs and partnerships that strengthen community well-being.

Building Community Connections

Community well-being



Preventive programs that support individuals, families and communities.

Local partnerships



Organizations that connect residents with supports.

Volunteer connections



Opportunities for residents to contribute to community life.

Why this matters for the MDP

As the County grows and community needs change, planning should consider how people access community supports and opportunities to connect. The MDP can guide broad land use decisions, but it does not set program funding or approve individual services.



What community supports or connections will become more important as the County grows?

Tell us what is needed and where.

Share your thoughts

Planning for Growth Over the Next 20 Years

Future residential growth should primarily be directed to... (Pick 2)



Country residential development



In or near exising hamlets



Area with existing or planned servicing



Areas already affected by development



No development should take place



Central growth district

Future non-residential growth should primarily be directed to... (Pick 2)



Existing business parks and employment areas



Central growth district



Agricultural areas for agriculture-related businesses



Hamlets and established communities



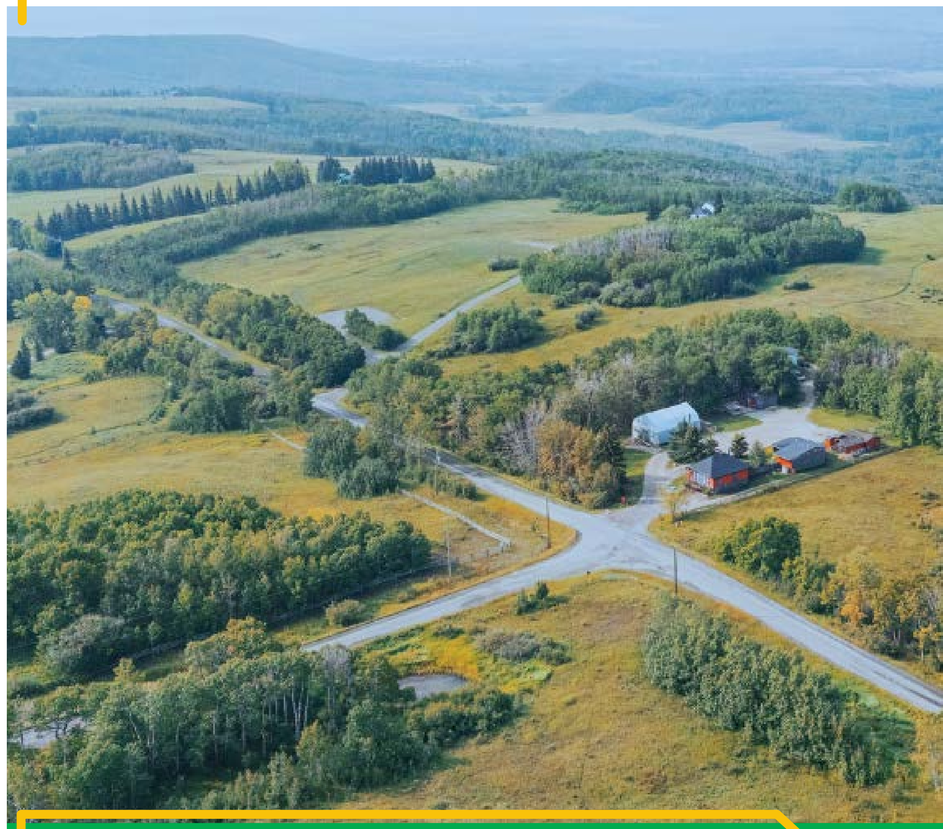
Tourism and recreation destinations



Small-scale rural and home-based businesses, where compatible with surrounding uses

Foothills County is growing.

The updated MDP will help decide where future growth makes sense and how to protect the things people value.



How could growth positively or negatively affect what you value about Foothills County?

Share your thoughts

The Vision Forward



Now that you have explored the issues, what should the future vision say?

Has anything you learned today changed how you think about the vision for Foothills County?

When you picture Foothills County 20 years from now, what do you hope has stayed the same and what has changed?

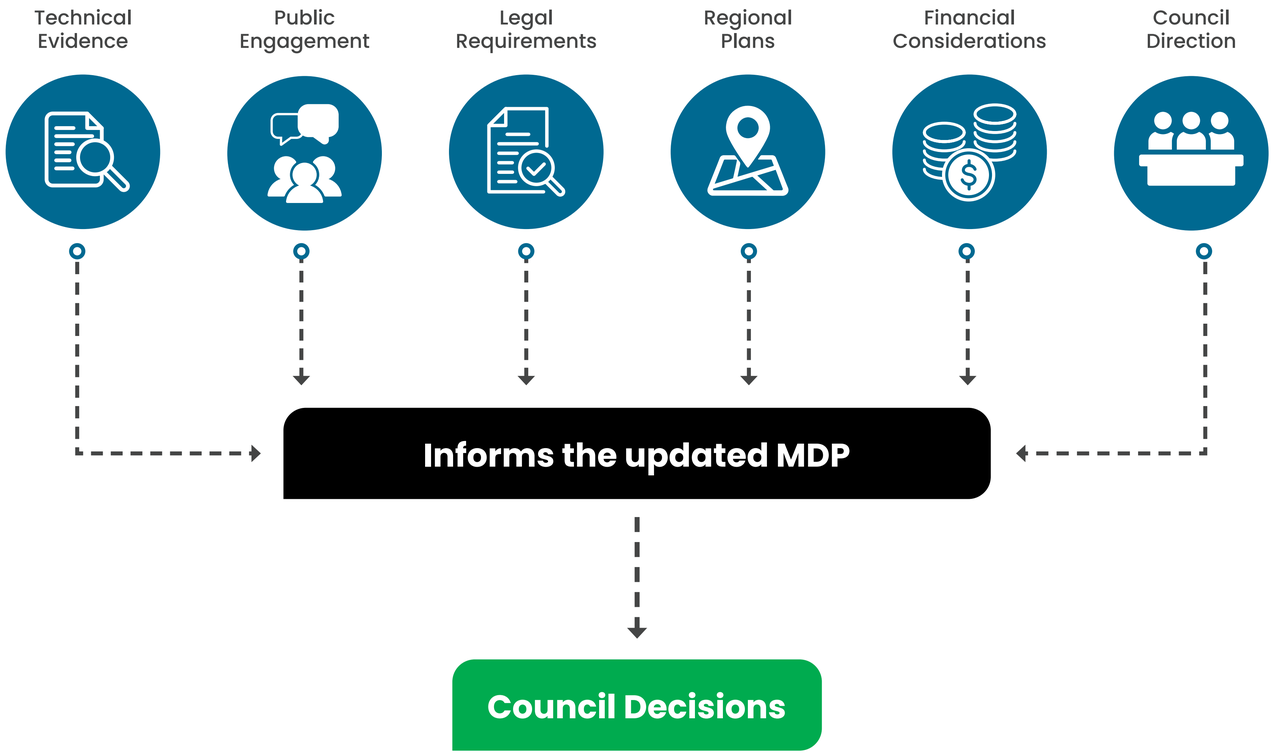
Protect What should we protect for future generations?	**Strengthen** What should we build on or improve?	**Change** What needs to be different in the future?

What Happens Next?

All feedback from engagement events will be reviewed by the project team.

The Phase 1 engagement report will summarize:

- Who participated
- What engagement activities occurred
- Key themes
- Areas of agreement
- Different or competing perspectives
- Issues requiring further study
- How the findings will inform the next phase





Before you Leave

Complete the Phase 1 survey and add any final comments.

Visit **engagearcadis.com/foothillsmdp** or scan the QR code for updates, join the mailing list, and the What We Heard report.