

**MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF RANCHLAND NO. 66
IN THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA**

BYLAW NO. 2024-02

BEING a bylaw of Municipal District of Ranchland No. 66 in the Province of Alberta, to amend Bylaw No. 02-03, being the Municipal Development Plan for the municipality.

WHEREAS Municipal District of Ranchland No. 66 Council is amending the Municipal Development Plan to update and ensure the plan is in compliance with the modernized Municipal Government Act and the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan.

AND WHEREAS THE PURPOSE of proposed Bylaw No. 2024-02 is to undertake a series of amendments as identified in the attached 'Schedule A' in order to add policies to promote orderly, economical and beneficial development, ensure provincial land use initiatives are met, address environmental considerations, ensure compatibility with subdivision and development regulations, and enhance efficiency and delivery of municipal services and the protection of municipal infrastructure.

AND WHEREAS the municipality must prepare a corresponding bylaw and provide for its consideration at a public hearing.

NOW THEREFORE, under the authority and subject to the provisions of the Municipal Government Act, Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000, Chapter M-26, as amended, the Council of Municipal District of Ranchland No. 66 in the Province of Alberta duly assembled does hereby enact the following:

1. That the amendments in attached 'Schedule A' are adopted and added into the Municipal Development Plan.
2. That Bylaw No. 02-03, being the Municipal Development Plan, is hereby amended.
3. This bylaw comes into effect upon third and final reading hereof.
4. That Bylaw No. 02-03 is consolidated to incorporate the amendments in 'Schedule A'.

READ a **first** time this _____ day of _____, 2024.

Reeve – Ron Davis

Chief Administrative Officer – Robert Strauss

READ a **second** time this _____ day of _____, 2024.

Reeve – Ron Davis

Chief Administrative Officer – Robert Strauss

READ a **third** time and finally PASSED this _____ day of _____, 2024.

Reeve – Ron Davis

Chief Administrative Officer – Robert Strauss

Schedule 'A'

Bylaw No. 2024-02

Amendments to the Municipal Development Plan Bylaw No. 02-03

The following are amendments, consisting of revisions and additions, to be incorporated into the Municipal Development Plan of the Municipal District of Ranchland No. 66:

Vision and Mission Statement (pg 4) - Replace and Add the following text:

Vision: *The MD of Ranchland's vision is:*

"To serve the ranching community and support the sustainable use of healthy ecosystems and watersheds by creating a sustainable and safe community that harmonizes progressive change with traditional rural values, whilst protecting our natural environment."

Mission Statement:

"To protect and enhance the unique ranching heritage and to promote activities that are sustainable and compatible with it and the environment, and to support ranching and grazing as the mainstay of the municipality in conjunction with healthy ecosystems that support it, such as watersheds."

Emerging out of a series of amalgamations and annexations in 1995, the newly formed Municipal District embraced a vision for their community's future. This vision promotes the protection of the area's ranching heritage while conserving the environment. The Council and the residents share the vision, and they are unfaltering in their belief in it. The municipal development plan and its policies are to be supportive and in alignment of the overall Vision and Mission Statement of the Municipal District of Ranchland.

Plan Goals (pg 5) - Add the following text as Goals:

- To protect the present environment, watershed, local ecosystems, and natural amenities for future generations.
- To ensure land use planning decisions consider the compatibility with ranching and grazing operations and any non-agricultural development is suitably managed to not negatively impact residents, ranching, grazing lands, watersheds, or municipal infrastructure such as roads.
- To protect the Municipal District of Ranchland's interests as they relate to Section 619 of the Municipal Government Act (MGA) and ensure the Province (i.e., Government of Alberta) is aware of local interests and issues as they relate to matters pertaining to Section 619 of the MGA.

Land Use Issues, General Land Use (pg 17) – Revise and Add the following text:

Change the words "Public Lands Division of Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development" to the "Crown".

Add (and remove strikethrough) the following text: The Crown (provincial government) ~~department~~ should require, as a condition of its disposition, that the lessee also receive development approval from the Municipality for any activity that is subject to part 17 of the Municipal Government Act.

Future Land Uses (pg 19) – Revise the text to read:

The Council for the Municipal District of Ranchland endorses the following land use concepts and objectives with regard to future development within its boundaries:

Add the following Land Use Concepts and Objectives (pg 20):

- Mineral extraction, aggregate excavation, mining activities and coal exploration should only be carried out in alignment with the vision and objectives established by the MD and this plan.
- Ranching and grazing activities are considered the principal land use of the MD of Ranchland and other land uses and development should only be considered in regard to compatibility with agricultural operations.

Development Criteria (pg 24) - Revise and add text to read:

- Land Use Bylaw No. 2023-01 establishes the criteria for development within the Municipal District.

Policies

Future Land Use and Growth, Objectives (pg 26) – Revise and add text to read:

- To protect agricultural land for agricultural activities and, in particular, ranching and grazing activities.
- To ensure that non-agricultural development does not negatively impact ranching and agricultural land and that any such development aligns with the overall goals and objectives of this Plan.
- To support consultation and collaboration between the MD and the Province in decision making, especially in regard to development activities on Crown land that may impact the MD of Ranchland, landowners or disposition holders.

Crown Land, Objectives (pg 28) – Revise and add text to read:

- To recognize that activities under section 619 of the Municipal Government Act may impact matters or infrastructure of local importance and these need to be addressed as part of land use decisions.
- To identify a process for maintaining involvement and input into subdivision and development activities within public owned land or the green zone of the municipality with respect to section 619 of the of the Municipal Government Act.

Crown Land, Policies (pg 28 & 29) – Revise and add text to read:

- 3.1 The appropriate government departments having jurisdiction on Crown lands are requested to have regard for the policies established in this plan and follow Part 17 of the Municipal Government Act for any approval that involves subdivision or development.
- 3.2 To ensure proper notification of adjacent landowners and provincial departments, and to address issues of local importance, applicants are ~~requested~~ required to obtain municipal approval for any subdivision or development on Crown land and make an appropriate Development Permit application if required by the municipality.
- 3.3 Prior to the disposition on Crown lands, the appropriate government department is encouraged to inform the Municipal District of the said disposition.
- 3.4 Mining activities and coal exploration are discretionary uses within the MD of Ranchland in accordance with the land use bylaw. These activities may be deemed contrary to the vision and objectives established for the municipality. Should an application for commercial mining activities and coal exploration proceed under section 619 of the Municipal Government Act, the municipality requires a Development Permit application to be made to ensure issues of local importance are addressed.

Municipal Services and Transportation, Objectives (pg 28 & 29) – Add text to read:

- To ensure any subdivision and/or development that may use or impact a municipal road shall be responsible for the upgrades or maintenance of the road infrastructure at the expense of the developer.

Municipal Services and Transportation, Policies (pg 30 & 31) – Add policies and text to read:

- 4.4 The MD shall request that developers include timeframes for active use and the dates for decommission and reclamation for any permits, approvals or agreements being entered into with the municipality for construction of roads, private driveways or access roads, or other linear disturbances.
- 4.5 The MD shall discourage land use and development activities that insert new cut lines, access trails and roadways into what was previously dense forest, as additional access to public land brings added pressure to the environment and disposition holders, as the potential for increased conflict with disposition holders is a concern.
- 4.6 The protection of the MD roads during certain seasonally vulnerable weather periods throughout the year is deemed to be beneficial and the MD may control and manage road use, and may apply conditions through a permitting process, road bans, or through the application of Road Use Agreements.
- 4.7 To address municipal servicing matters, and in particular municipal roads and any potential impacts to them, the municipality will require when deemed necessary that a developer to enter into and abide by a development agreement pursuant to the *Municipal Government Act* as a condition of a development permit or a subdivision approval.
- 4.8 The MD of Ranchland shall ensure that developers are responsible for any costs related to servicing or impacts to municipal infrastructure so as to not place an unnecessary burden on the MD ratepayers. The MD may require the posting of financial security or bonds be provided by developers to ensure that development permit or subdivision approval conditions are met when required by the development officer or the Municipal Planning Commission as a condition of development approval.
- 4.9 The MD of Ranchland shall manage the impacts from development and use of municipal roadways by requiring an applicant or developer to enter into either a Road Use Agreement or Road Use Maintenance Agreement with the municipality to address any road use and upgrades required, new construction, load and weight limitations, or maintenance or repair that may result from development and/or heavy truck traffic.
- 4.10 It is the objective of the MD to better manage timber harvesting (logging) operations that may impact municipal roads and the MD will, through the land use bylaw, identify a size threshold for such operations as a discretionary use that would require a development permit issued by the MD Municipal Planning Commission.
- 4.11 The MD shall strive to limit development impacts to the Highway 22 transportation corridor which is a major transportation route for commercial vehicles. The MD will encourage the Province to consider in its decision making the potential effects and increase in heavy traffic within the municipality which may negatively affect cattle and ranching operations.
- 4.12 The municipality recognizes that the Highway 22 corridor has become a tourist/public attraction as exemplified by the establishment of the Bar U National Historic Site and the designation of

the Cowboy Trail. The MD shall strive to preserve the natural beauty along this corridor from a tourism perspective as a major consideration in any land use/planning decision and the Province is encouraged to do so also.

Petroleum and Gas Facilities (pg 32 & 33) – Revise text to read:

All references to “Alberta Energy and Utilities Board” shall be changed to “Alberta Energy Regulator (AER”).

Add the following policy text (pg 34)

- 6.10 Subdivision and development applicants are required to confirm if there are any abandoned gas wells on the parcel of land subject to the proposal and are responsible for providing an abandoned gas well map to the MD in accordance with the Regulations at the time of application.

Subdivision Criteria and Requirements (pg 37) – Add text to read:

- 8.12 The Subdivision Authority shall refuse to approve any subdivision application where the subdivision of land is not expressly permitted by the Land Use Bylaw or the MD of Ranchland No. 66 Municipal Development Plan.
- 8.13 The Subdivision Authority may request information from an applicant in order to accurately evaluate the application and determine compliance with the Land Use Bylaw or other government regulations. This may include but is not limited to the provision of geotechnical information, soil analysis reports, water reports, soil or slope stability analysis, drainage information, contours and elevations of the land, engineering studies or reports, wetland reports, environmental impact assessments, utility and servicing information, and/or the preparation of a conceptual design scheme or an area structure plan may be required from the applicant prior to a decision being rendered on a subdivision application to determine the suitability of the land for the proposed use.

Development Criteria, Objectives (pg 37 & 38) – Add text to read:

- To ensure that all developments in the Municipal District of Ranchland are compatible with ranching operations and meet the overall land use objectives of the MD.
- To ensure land use activities consider the environment, the protection of grasslands, and do not threaten watersheds.
- To help protect the integrity of Highway 22 historic designation of the Cowboy Trail and the scenic attributes of the eastern slopes and its view scape.

Development Criteria, Policies (pg 38 to 40) – Revise and Add text to read:

- 9.5 No person shall construct or erect more than one dwelling unit on a parcel of land unless authorized to do so in accordance with the Land Use Bylaw and by the issuance of a development permit by the Development Authority.
- 9.6 Developers shall be required when requested by the MD or its Development Authority to enter into a Road Use Agreement or Road Use Maintenance Agreement to control traffic, manage dust control or maintenance issues if access to the development is required from a road under its control or jurisdiction.
- 9.7 The preservation of good agricultural land for ranching and agricultural purposes, in particular Canada Land Inventory Capability for Agriculture classifications 1 to 4, and grazing lands with

classifications 5 and 6, shall be highly encouraged. Land use and development decision making shall have regard to the impacts of non-agricultural development on such agricultural land.

- 9.8 Council requests that the authority having jurisdiction over development on subject lands, either municipal or Crown, shall have regard for how any proposed development may impact adjacent or area livestock, grazing and agricultural operations, water sheds, and how local municipal infrastructure and roads may be impacted prior to approving any use or development.
- 9.9 The MD will manage noxious industry as a discretionary use within its municipal Land Use Bylaw to help mitigate potential issues of such uses that typically are associated with hazardous, noxious, unsightly or offensive by products by nature of the industrial activity, and they may often not be compatible in the environment and/or be contrary to Ranchlands' vision and land use policies.
- 9.10 The following classes of industrial use may be considered in the municipality in accordance with the applicable land use district of the Land Use Bylaw:
 - (a) agriculture-related industries which support ranching and agricultural production;
 - (b) non-labour intensive industries which require relatively large areas of land, but minimal on-site improvements, services, and public amenities;
 - (c) quarries, sand and gravel operations, and natural resource extractive uses, which are governed by the location of a natural resource and provided any potential environmental impacts are adequately addressed.
- 9.11 Land use decisions shall consider the cumulative impacts of the approval in conjunction with current and future land uses, including recreational, economic or development uses or other approvals either applied for or granted.
- 9.12 The Development Authority of the MD shall consider the effects of visual intrusion, dust, noise, traffic, and air and water pollution when evaluating applications for resource extractive type activities.
- 9.13 The MD will adopt standards through the application of the Land Use Bylaw and manage logging on privately owned lands in specific geographic locations within the municipality to ensure municipal roads are protected. Municipal planning requirements may also apply to Crown lands where authorized by the province or through the agreement with lessees.
- 9.14 The developer of lands identified to contain a historic resource shall consult the *Historical Resources Act* and Alberta Culture and Tourism and may be required to conduct a historical resource impact assessment (HRIA).
- 9.15 When making land use decisions, the municipality will:
 - a) utilize and incorporate measures which minimize possible impacts to important water resources;
 - b) determine appropriate land use patterns in the vicinity of significant water resources and other water features;
 - c) establish appropriate setbacks to maintain water quality, flood water conveyance and storage, bank stability and habitat.
- 9.16 To plan and manage development in an orderly manner, an Area Structure Plan, Conceptual Design Scheme or Comprehensive Site Plan shall be required in conjunction with a

redesignation application, industrial development, recreational development, resource extraction and mining activities, or when requested by Council or the Development Authority.

- 9.17 The provision of an Area Structure Plan, Conceptual Design Scheme or Comprehensive Site Plan may be required from the applicant/developer prior to a decision being rendered on a development application to determine the suitability of the land for the proposed use. Such a plan may be required to address geotechnical information, soil analysis, soil or slope stability analysis, storm water management, road and traffic impacts, an emergency or fire response plan, and development setbacks, amongst other matters, to the satisfaction of the municipality.

Environmental Considerations, Objectives (pg 40) – Add text to read:

- To manage subdivision or development activities to ensure they do not negatively impact or threaten the vitality and health of important watersheds in the MD of Ranchland.
- To make aware the public recreational users of land, both private and public, the importance of respecting and protecting grazing lands, the environment, and watersheds, and to regulate such uses where appropriate to do so and where matters are under the jurisdiction of the municipality.
- To help protect watersheds and the headwaters and source waters in the Oldman River watershed.
- To encourage public understanding of cumulative impacts on the Oldman River headwaters and the management actions that are needed to effectively address them.
- To ensure any/all development within the municipality is environmentally balanced.

Environmental Considerations, Policies (pg 41 & 42) – Add text to read:

- 10.5 The Municipality shall discourage any subdivision or development activity that will result in the loss of habitat through the removal of riparian vegetation, especially around stream margins or which may lead to exposure of underlying soils and increased erosion, thereby increasing sediment into waterways.
- 10.6 As all agricultural endeavors depend on water, the MD of Ranchland is committed to working with the greater watershed community to ensure landowners and the greater public interests are supported in helping to maintain and protect the headwaters and source waters in the Oldman River watershed.
- 10.7 The MD supports the action plan of the *Oldman Integrated Watershed Management Plan* to manage and protect the integrity of headwaters and source waters to initiate collaborative stewardship work that will address key issues to headwater health over time, and within the capacity of participating stakeholders and the watershed community.
- 10.8 Through the implementation of criteria, standards and land use regulations in the municipal land use bylaw, the MD shall manage land use and development activities related to recreational development or use to ensure it is compatible with the environment, adjacent or existing area land uses, municipal infrastructure such as roads, and ranching and grazing operations.
- 10.9 Industrial, mining, aggregate and resource extraction related development activity should not be approved if it will negatively impact ranching and grazing operations, the watershed they are dependent on for self-sustainment and healthy grasslands, or the watersheds and associated ecosystems and riparian habitat.

- 10.10 In support of the strategic plan of Council, it is the goal of the municipality to ensure any/all development is environmentally balanced and Council and the Development Authority shall consider such in its decision making on land use matters.
- 10.11 All land use decision making on lands within the MD of Ranchland require consideration for cumulative effects and species at risk, and in particular, any critical habitat for threatened species that may exist and potentially impacted by development activities. Decision makers shall consider whether an activity will impact a species listed under the *Species at Risk Act* and any critical habitat related to that species.
- 10.12 The developer of lands identified to contain an environmentally significant site shall contact Alberta Environment and shall be required to conduct an environmental impact assessment (EIA) when requested.
- 10.13 The municipality through its policy decisions shall work at preserving Alberta native grassland ecosystems and protecting the rolling fescue grassland of the foothills that ranchers rely on for providing the continued diversity and production of native grasses that sustain ranching.
- 10.14 The MD of Ranchland should continue to play a critical role in the Green Zone (Forest Reserve) assisting the GOA in meeting it's own management goals for those same lands both in well-established roles like enforcing the Weed Control Act, Emergency Services, road network and bridges, and less tangible services supplied to help the Province in maintaining habitat integrity and limit cumulative effects from human footprint, as these have direct impacts to the landowners of the MD.
- 10.15 The MD of Ranchland is concerned with public access to Porcupine Hills and the forest reserve north of Highway 3 and land use planning is required to consider the impact of recent activity, especially coal, in the vicinity. The MD of Ranchland is supportive of policies requiring access management that need to be adopted and required following any land exploration or other types of coal development.
- 10.16 The MD of Ranchland is not supportive of coal related activities in the headwaters of the entire South Saskatchewan River Basin due to lack of water resources, conflict with current uses, and biodiversity and environmental concerns.