

Town of Oyen
Municipal Development Plan
Bylaw No. 825-13



**BY-LAW NO. 825-13
A BY-LAW OF THE TOWN OF OYEN
IN THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA
TO ADOPT A MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

WHEREAS

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 632(2) of the Municipal Government Act, as amended, the Council of the Town of Oyen may, by Bylaw passed in accordance with Section 692 of the Municipal Government Act, adopt a plan to be known as:

"THE TOWN OF OYEN MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN"

AND WHEREAS

a Public Hearing was held on 9 April, 2013 as required by Section 230 of the Municipal Government Act.

NOW THEREFORE

The Council of the Town of Oyen, in the Province of Alberta, duly assembled, enacts as follows:

1. This Bylaw may be cited as "The Town of Oyen Municipal Development Plan".
2. Council adopts as the Municipal Development Plan for those lands contained within its civic boundaries, "The Town of Oyen Municipal Development Plan."
3. Bylaw No. 683-93 being the "Town of Oyen Municipal Development Plan" currently in effect is hereby repealed including all amendments thereto and replaced by Bylaw No. 825-13.
4. This Bylaw takes effect on the date of the third and final reading.

Read a first time this 13th day of March, 2013.

Mayor

Chief Administrative Officer

Read a second time this 9th day of April, 2013.

Mayor

Chief Administrative Officer

Read a third time and passed this 9th day of April, 2013.

Mayor

Chief Administrative Officer

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Introduction

The Municipal Development Plan is a statutory statement including goals and objectives to guide the growth and development of the Town of Oyen. It is a statement of intent for the future of the Town. The plan is intended to serve as a comprehensive guide for Council, the public, developers, and others making future oriented decisions. The Plan reflects a balanced concern for the economic, social, aesthetic, and management aspects of the Town of Oyen.

Section 632(2) of the Municipal Government Act, Ch M-26.1 as amended provides that a municipality having a population of less than 3500, may, by bylaw, adopt a MDP which must address:

- i. future land uses within the municipality;
- ii. the manner of and proposals for future development in the municipality;
- iii. the coordination of land use, future growth patterns and other infrastructure with adjacent municipalities if there is no IDP;
- iv. the provision of the required transportation systems either generally or specifically within the municipality and in relation to the adjacent municipalities.
- v. the provision of municipal services and facilities, either generally or specifically;
- vi. policies compatible with the subdivision and development regulations to provide guidance on the type and location of land uses adjacent to sour gas facilities;
- vii. policies respecting the provision of municipal and school reserves; and
- viii. policies respecting the protection of agricultural operations.

may contain:

- i. proposal for the financing and programming of municipal infrastructure;
- ii. the coordination of municipal programs related to the physical, social, and economic development of the municipality;
- iii. environmental matters within the municipality;
- iv. the financial resources of the municipality;
- v. the economic development of the municipality;

- vi. any other matter relating to the physical, social or economic development of the municipality;
- vii. statements regarding the municipality's development constraints;
- viii. goals, objectives, targets, planning policies, and corporate strategies; and
- ix. sites where confined feeding operations are not allowed and why.

The Town of Oyen has had a Land Use Bylaw in place since April of 1966. The Land Use Bylaw is intended to achieve the orderly and economic development of land by regulating and controlling the use and development of land and buildings within the municipality. A land use district map for the Town has therefore been developed and is in use.

The community's MDP establishes the long-term goals and objectives for future growth and development; while the Land Use Bylaw provides a mechanism for controlling the community's built form in order to achieve those goals. The process of preparing the Oyen MDP has evolved through three stages: data collection, data analysis, and policy formation. The Plan itself is divided into two parts consisting of a Background Study and Policies.

The Oyen MDP is intended to be a statement of the community's goals for the next twenty-five years, to be reviewed on a five year basis to ensure the plan remains relevant. The MDP is intended to be the basic framework upon which development will take place and in which both public and private decisions can be made.

Over the last 20 years, Oyen has experienced a slight but steady increase in population. The average age has increased similar to the general trend across the Province. This has resulted in a demand for different types of housing such as Seniors Lodges and other low maintenance lifestyle options.

Community Goals

The Town of Oyen functions as a service centre for the surrounding rural population, the agricultural industry and to some degree for the oil and gas industry. Oyen is in need of more economic diversification. Despite the difficulties that Oyen has experienced, the Town has managed to maintain a stable population. In fact, the population has remained stable throughout the past 20 years.

In order to accommodate development demands efficiently, Council has focused on the aspirations of the development of the Town. A clear set of objectives are established in pursuing the noted community goals. The following goals provide the basis for guiding future growth in the Town of Oyen.

Objectives**Community**

- a) To maintain balanced and controlled growth by:
 - i) Encouraging the provision of adequate and economically serviceable development sites for future residential, commercial and industrial uses, and
 - ii) Keeping up servicing requirements and community needs for the anticipated development.
- b) To maintain an attractive living and working environment by:
 - i) Providing sufficient open space and recreation facilities;
 - ii) Maintaining high standards of design in residential, commercial and industrial developments; and
 - iii) Discouraging the location of incompatible land uses for future development sites.
- c) To develop an efficient land use pattern by designating short and long-term development areas.

Residential

- a) To ensure a variety of dwelling types are provided for the community demographics and demands.
- b) To ensure orderly development and redevelopment of land for housing minimizing capital and maintenance costs.
- c) To prevent the intrusion of land uses which would adversely affect the safety and amenity of residential districts.
- d) To maintain the low density residential character of the community, while recognizing specific areas for higher density residential development.

Commercial

- a) To promote professional trade and a diversified range of commercial activities to locate in Oyen.
- b) To strengthen the development of a compact, central, retail commercial core balanced with highway commercial areas that require larger parcels and visibility beyond the immediate community.

Industrial

- a) To ensure that adequate land be reserved to meet future requirements.
- b) To encourage industry to locate in appropriately designated areas for the proposed land uses (i.e. Industrial parks).

- c) To promote a diversified industrial mix that will provide a variety of employment opportunities.
- d) To promote the development of safe and attractive industrial areas by providing adequate buffering and screening for the protection of adjacent incompatible land uses.

Recreational and Institutional

- a) To provide open space and recreation facilities to adequately serve the Town and region.
- b) To provide easy and safe access to recreational and institutional areas.

Environmental

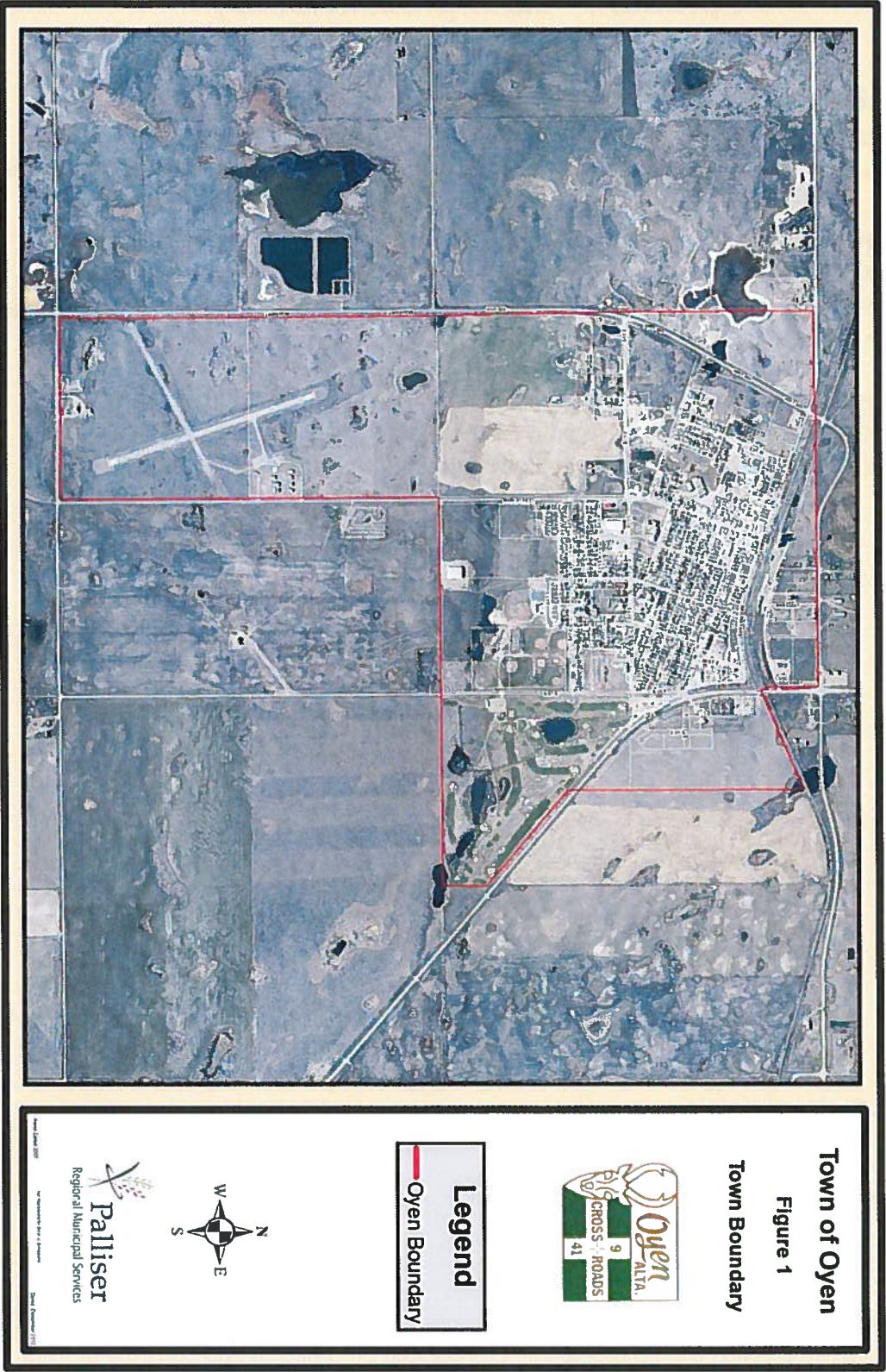
- a) To ensure that a healthy environment be maintained in all aspects of future planning and development.

Volume I - Background Study

1.0 Physical Landscape

The Town of Oyen is located in the southeast Central portion of the province, approximately 403km (250 miles) east of Calgary and 191km north of Medicine Hat. It is served by major north-south (Highway No.41) and east-west (Highway No.9) transportation routes. Mixed grain farming, livestock, and oil and gas extraction are the primary industries of the region. Oyen acts as a service centre for these industries in addition to meeting the general commercial and service needs of the surrounding rural population.

Figure 1 depicts the boundaries of the Town of Oyen. The topography of the area is very flat with some low rolling hills surrounding the town site. Oyen is situated on Highway 41 approximately 4 kilometers south of the junction with Highway 9.



2.0 Oyen, The Community

2.1 History

The Town of Oyen, named for pioneer Andrew Oyen, is a friendly, thriving community of approximately 1000 people. Situated in the prairie- grasslands region, Oyen experiences warm, sunny summers and long, cold winters. The dry climate enhances outdoor recreation, especially in the summer. Hunting is a popular pastime in the fall for residents and visitors alike.

Oyen was established as a village in 1913 just south of the crossroads of Highways 9 and 41 by settlers who came to homestead. The early town site included a Mounted Police post, a hotel, a school and a newspaper, The Oyen News.

In the 1960's, Oyen became a town. Today the Oyen Echo, a local weekly, keeps the region in touch by distributing throughout a 40 to 50 mile radius. Oyen is an important service centre which is served by good highways, a bus line, and a small airport. Two school divisions are located in the Town of Oyen, the Prairie Rose School Division and the Christ the Redeemer Catholic Schools Division. The Town now contains three schools including the Oyen Public School with K-9 education, Assumption Roman Catholic School provides K-6 and South Central High School provides Grades 10-12.

Medical and health services include the Big Country hospital and medical, dental and optometry Clinics, which provide services to the Town and surrounding rural communities. Thoughtful planning and effort is on-going with regard to the development of recreation and leisure facilities.

The history of Oyen is preserved by the on-going efforts of the Oyen and District Historical Society. Volunteers and members continuously gather artifacts, documents, and photographs toward the further development of an archive, and the Crossroads Museum.

2.2 Population

Oyen has shown a steady increase in population since its incorporation in 1913 (**Figure 2**). Only in 1941 was there a recorded decline in population as a result of the depression of the 1930's. During this time farmers abandoned their homesteads and unproductive land in the Oyen area for larger urban centres. So many people leaving the area was certain to have a negative impact on Oyen's role as an agricultural service centre. Through the 1940's and 1950's the economy improved and the population significantly increased. Since 1981 the population of Oyen has remained relatively stable at approximately 1000 people.

Typically the largest age group in Oyen is the working age group that ranges in age from 24-44 years (**Figure 3**). This age group is slightly higher in percentage in Oyen than that of the provincial average. The percentage of residents aged 5-14 is lower than the provincial average and has been declining since 1971.

As is characteristic of the Palliser Region, Oyen has a high percentage of seniors, making Oyen a retirement centre for the surrounding rural population. Currently, 25% of the residents of Oyen are 65 years and older (**Figure 3**). Often, those retiring from area farms and small communities prefer to move to local centres because of community familiarity and convenient shopping and medical facilities. A 62 person senior's lodge is located in Oyen, providing accommodation for the elderly through the Acadia Foundation. The number of elderly people moving from the rural areas to Oyen appears to be declining, possibly because the overall number of those farming is decreasing. Conversely, the portion of persons over 65 living in Oyen is increasing. This increase could be explained by the general aging of Oyen's population and a decline in the birth rate.

Future land requirements are based on anticipated populations. For the Town of Oyen, the current growth of approximately 8 people per year is expected to continue. Projected growth, estimated at an average of 0.5% annually, is shown in **Figure 4**. This growth can perhaps be attributed to economic diversification, oil and gas activity and people retiring to Oyen. The rate of growth could be significantly altered if changes occurred in the oil and gas markets, the agricultural market or with the infusion of other capital and industry. **Figure 2** details the population change over the last 30 years. In the past few decades, growth has leveled off in Oyen. This is typical of most small rural urban centres of the prairies. Demographic changes in the surrounding rural area have impacted upon the Town.

Rural populations are steadily declining as fewer farms exist and farm holdings continue to get bigger. The nuclear family can no longer manage financially without the help of extended family or a partnership of some type. Commonly, farm families have incorporated into multiple family operations to create larger land holdings to be put into agricultural production providing more manpower and resources. The majority of farm families are forced to retain off-farm employment for additional income.

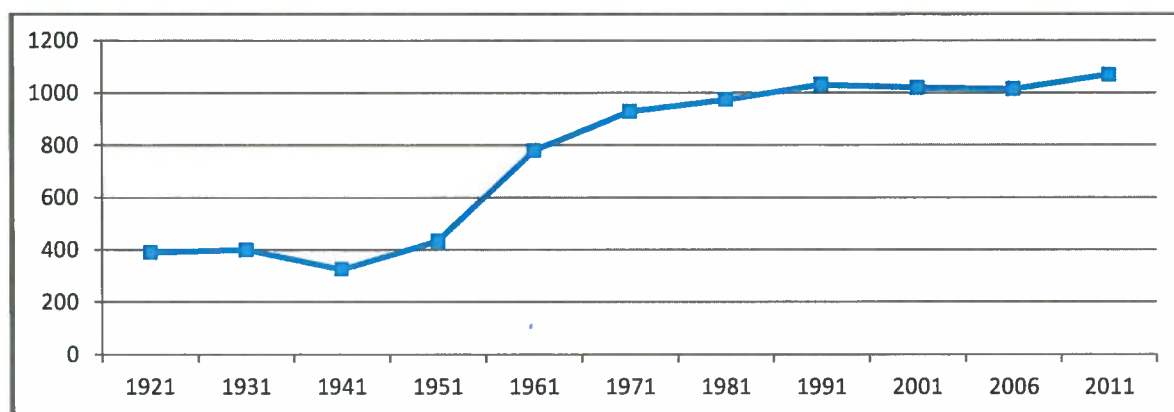


Figure 2 Population in Oyen 1921-2011

Town of Oyen

Alberta

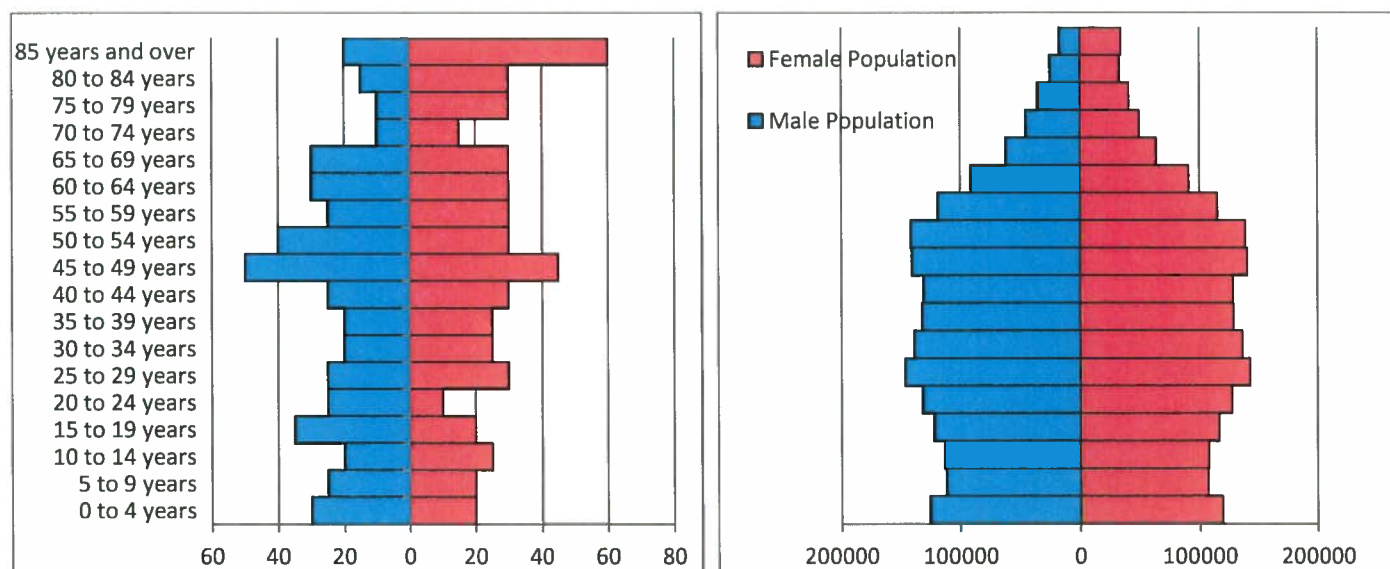


Figure 3 2011 Population Pyramids

Figure 4 Population Forecast

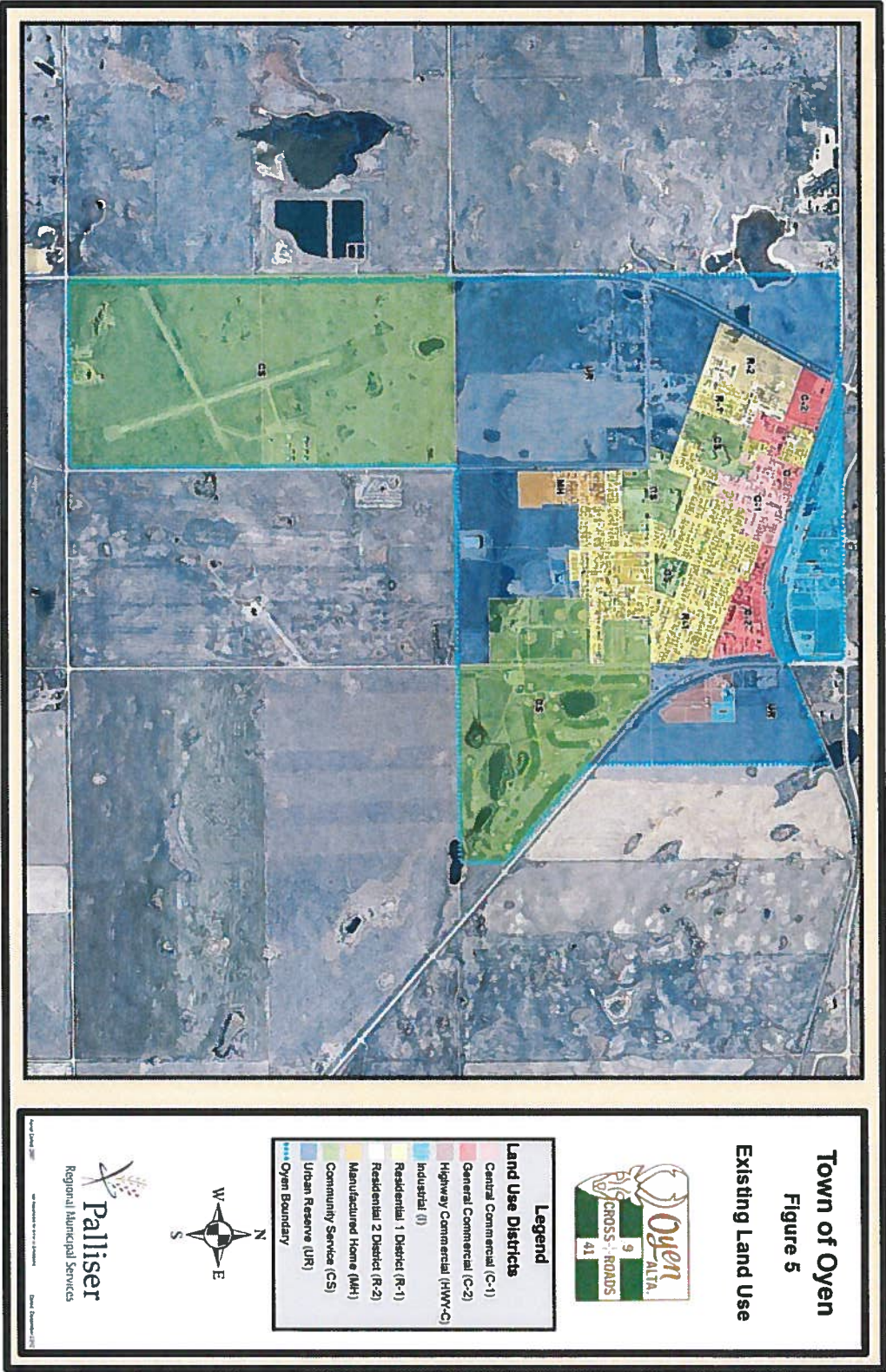
Assume 0.5% average annual growth

Year	Projected Population	Population Increase
2012*	1070-Actual	5/year=25
2016	1095	5/year=25
2021	1120	5/year=25
2026	1145	5/year=25
2031	1170	5/year=25
2036	1195	

* 2012 municipal census

3.0 Development Pattern

Oyen, like most prairie communities, has established a development pattern with streets and avenues running parallel and perpendicular to the railway. An industrial/commercial strip has developed along the railway while the main retail commercial core has developed perpendicular to the railway along Main Street. Subdivided highway-commercial and industrial property exists along the town's eastern boundary off Highway 41. The subdivision is serviced and ready for development in accordance with the Buffalo Trail Area Structure Plan (**Figure 6**). The Plan has been in place since April 5, 1988.



3.1 Residential Development

The majority of the housing, approximately 68%, is comprised of single detached dwellings. Manufactured homes make up 9% of all housing while multi-unit dwellings and other types contribute 23% of total. The percentage of manufactured homes in Oyen is slightly lower than the Provincial average of 12%. Manufactured homes tend to be more acceptable in rural communities than in large urban centres, perhaps it is because they provide more immediate and affordable housing. The optimal type of subdivision for accommodating manufactured homes is one which allows only manufactured homes, but is incorporated with other surrounding residential development. Any future development for manufactured homes in Oyen will be accommodated by this type of subdivision. Currently, there is space available in an existing, privately owned manufactured home parks.

Because there are very few multi-unit dwellings in Oyen, council is interested in providing lots for this type of development. This type of residence comprises just less than 5% of all dwellings in the Town, while the provincial average for similar sized municipalities is 5%. These numbers indicate that new multi-unit dwellings could be absorbed into the housing market. Oyen has a high number of single, senior residents that are creating a need for multi-unit, low maintenance housing.

Population density in Oyen is approximately 197.4 persons per km². The average of 2.3 persons per household is slightly lower than the provincial average of 2.4. The average actual lot size is approximately 6,200 sq.ft. calculated by dividing the population of Oyen by the total acreage of property in residential use. This number is somewhat larger than the average urban lot size of 5,000 sq.ft. This difference in average lot sizes may be partially explained by a preference of rural residents for larger residential lots which is fairly common in rural communities across the province. Just over one half of the existing homes in Oyen were built between 1961 and 1981. Very little rental accommodation is available in Oyen.

Multiplying the projected population of Oyen by the number of persons per acre gives an estimate of land required for future residential purposes; however, these projections are based on maintaining current densities. A factor which can influence development densities is the cost of servicing lots. Costs of servicing can be kept lower if the lot sizes are kept to a minimum.

The 2011 Municipal Census depicts the population of Oyen to be 973. A municipal census was completed in 2012 and the population was adjusted to 1070. It is estimated that Oyen's population will reach 1095 by the year 2016. At current density levels, one new building lot will be required per year with consideration for infill lots (i.e. 5 lots minimum) between 2011 and 2016. This growth can be accommodated by subdividing

and servicing new areas on the periphery of the current built up area as shown in concept plans developed in the early 2000's.

The potential for infill development in the residential district is limited. There are few vacant lots existing in the developed area and although there are several old houses, few are in poor enough condition to require demolition. In some cases these are being utilized with the residential development on the adjoining lots. Several older houses in poor condition exist throughout the developed area. Some infilling is possible in certain areas and it would be desirable for the community to develop approximately 1.5 acres every 5 years based on the growth projections in this plan. The total number of new dwellings needed between 2011 and 2036 is 52 at approximately 1 to 2 lots per year. The land required would be 7.5 acres.

The Oyen Land Use Bylaw stipulates the minimum lot width for residential development is 50 feet (15.2m); the actual average frontage is 62 feet (18.9m). All of the vacant lots that are currently available meet this minimum standard. Given the current land prices within the community and the apparent preference for larger lots it would appear that this minimum size is still appropriate as the demand appears to be for larger lots.

For serviced residential lots, demand is being met through a small parcel of 1.5 ha (3.7ac) in the southeast quadrant adjacent to the recreation facilities and a parcel of 2.48 ha (6.13ac) in the northwest quadrant adjacent to the seniors lodge. Both parcels are currently owned by the Town. Both future growth areas contain conceptual drawings for potential future residential development options with single family and multi-unit residential. Once this property is fully developed, expansion could continue to the west using land already in town ownership.

3.2 Commercial Development

Commercial development is centered on Main Street between Railway Avenue in the north and 3 Avenue in the south. Characteristically, residential development surrounds the established commercial area (**Figure 6**), restricting growth within the core. Land for expansion has been provided to the east beyond Highway 41 in the Buffalo Trail Subdivision.

Commercial activity extends one block each to the east and to the west, and caters mainly to local business. The types of businesses operating in this area include restaurants, grocery stores, clothing stores, banks, government offices, gift shops and various other professional services.

Buildings in the Commercial District have a broad age range of relatively new to over eighty years of age. The overall quality of commercial buildings is good. The Oyen Hotel dates back to 1912. The newer buildings generally house government and institutional

offices. These include the Special Are No.3 office, the Toronto Dominion Bank, the Alberta Provincial Building, and some recently constructed retail shops.

A better variety and abundance of commercial businesses are desirable in Oyen. There has been a gradual loss of retail stores and services over the past few decades. Council is actively pursuing light industry and services for Oyen.

There are a few vacant lots available which are designated for commercial use and future commercial core development is becoming a concern. Several older houses in poor condition exist throughout the commercial area which will provide potential for infilling.

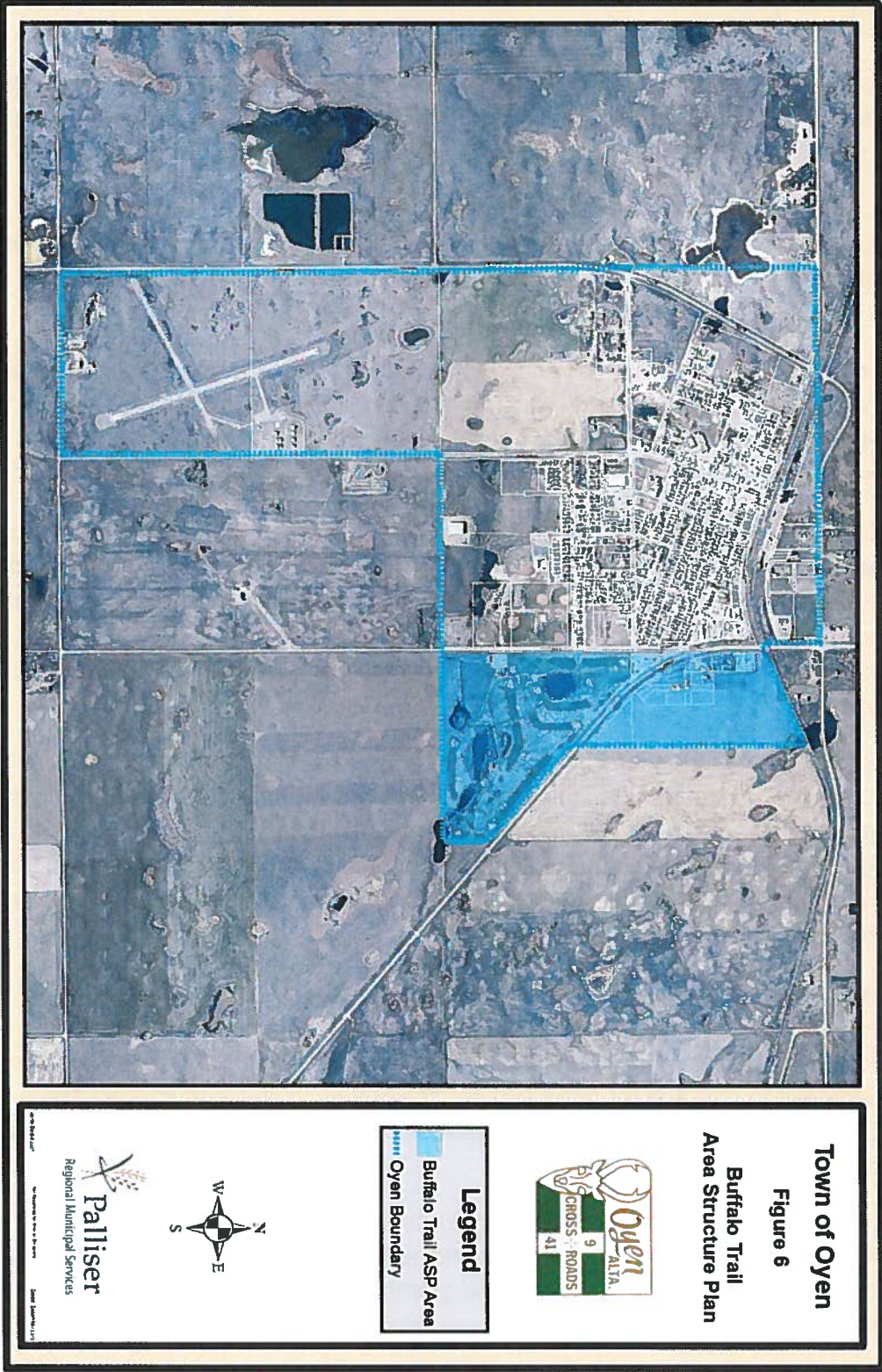
The other commercial area within Oyen is along Highway 41. Businesses located here include a research organization and industrial storage. It is anticipated that future businesses in this area will cater to highway generated business from both local clientele as well as travellers

The Buffalo Trail subdivision (**Figure 6**), allow uses that require high traffic exposure and easy access. A good deal of traffic passes through this highway commercial section connecting travellers from Highway 9 to the Trans-Canada Highway providing a good location for motels, service stations and restaurants. There is a need for serviced highway commercial/ industrial areas as majority of potential development areas are currently unserviced.

The number of home occupations is beginning to increase. This kind of commercial activity is becoming more popular in small urban centres with the need for economic development and diversification. Home occupations may not be developing in Oyen as quickly as in other small urban centres in the region; however, local entrepreneurs are becoming more active. Oyen has an active Economic Development Organization with an appointed Economic Development Officer.

Over the past twenty years Oyen has seen a fluctuation in the number of retail and service trade establishments. These establishments were fairly stable with a variety of businesses operating from 1969 through 1971. Along with a downturn in the economy, comes a decrease in demand for retail and service outlets. Reduction in retail and service businesses can also be attributed to a loss of patronage from local clientele to larger centres.

In recent years roads have improved making it easier for local residents to travel to larger centres, particularly to Calgary and Medicine Hat, to do their shopping. The larger centres offer a greater selection of goods and '*perceived*' lower prices than those available locally.



3.3 Industrial Development

Industrial businesses are located in the north along Railway Avenue. Vacant industrial and highway commercial property is available to the east of Highway 41 in accordance with the Buffalo Trail Area Structure Plan, of which 2.6ha (6.7ac) has been subdivided. Both of these locations offer access to Highway 41 thereby reducing the disturbance of industrial traffic in residential areas. Oyen's industrial businesses are comprised mainly of agricultural services, oil and gas related services and government maintenance yards (local, regional and provincial). Agricultural services make-up the largest portion of industries in Oyen, with some oil and gas related services as well. The land typically consists of a small office building and a large yard used for storage of equipment and materials, or in the case of a maintenance yard, road maintenance equipment and supplies, such as sand and gravel. Little or no actual manufacturing takes place in the industrial area. Work done here is typically repair based (i.e. welding and machining).

Vacant Industrial land is available along Railway Avenue. Property on the east side of Highway 41 is appropriate for industrial expansion and is identified in the Buffalo Trail Area Structure Plan. This area is privately owned and has been annexed by the Town. This area would entail higher servicing costs than on the west side of Highway 41, because of the need to cross the highway and connect with the Town's services. A highway commercial component is planned with the incorporation of a service road to reduce the number of highway access points from the area. If future demands necessitate further expansion, this may occur to the east of Highway 41 in accordance with the Buffalo Trail Area Structure Plan.

Few conflicts have occurred to date with the industrial property located in the north adjacent to Railway Avenue. As industrial property becomes scarce, there will be no more land designated for industrial use within the town site. Future industrial development will be encouraged to locate in the subdivision east of Highway 41. At present there is sufficient industrial land available to accommodate anticipated development however serviced parcels or land for sale that is designated for industrial may be difficult to find with most of the land in private ownership.

4.0 Community Facilities and Services

4.1 Recreation

The Town of Oyen owns and operates:

- Hockey Arena
- Junior Olympic Pool with waterslide
- Ball Park Facility with 6 ball diamonds

- Campgrounds
- Tennis Courts
- Horseshoe Pits
- Fishing Pond

Other facilities in Oyen include:

- A 9 hole golf course with grass greens and club house,
- Curling Rink
- Library
- Skateboard Park
- Playgrounds
- Indoor Riding Arena – Agriplex
- Fitness Centre
- Seniors Recreational Centre

The Oyen and District AgriPlex includes a large indoor facility with dirt floor for agricultural and community events. The outdoor pool was replaced in 2004 with an upgraded facility including a water slide and junior Olympic pool. Priorities were determined by the Oyen Recreation Master Plan including a long range priority to construct a new Sports Complex. No plans have been identified to add or upgrade facilities geared specifically for seniors.

4.2 Health Care

The Big Country Hospital provides a modern 10 beds active treatment hospital and 30 auxiliary care beds. At full complement, a staff of 96 includes two doctors, both full-time, casual nursing and other staff serving the town and the surrounding community. Other health care is provided by Alberta Health Services. A 62 bed Seniors Lodge is also located in Oyen. The lodge provides individual bedrooms with communal eating and living areas. The lodge is currently filled to capacity.

An addition of 8 self-contained suites and 12 senior life leases was recently completed. Two to three doctors is desirable for the size of the care facilities and the community. Expansion of the hospital for auxiliary care, sitting areas, a smoke room and windows to provide better natural lighting was completed in 2008. Expansion onto the Seniors Lodge including more sitting areas, a recreation area, a boardroom and a chapel to allow in-house church services was also completed in 2010.

Other professional health care available in Oyen includes Ambulance service, part time physiotherapy, Chiropractic care, a Medical/Dental Clinic, and an Optometrist.

4.3 Police

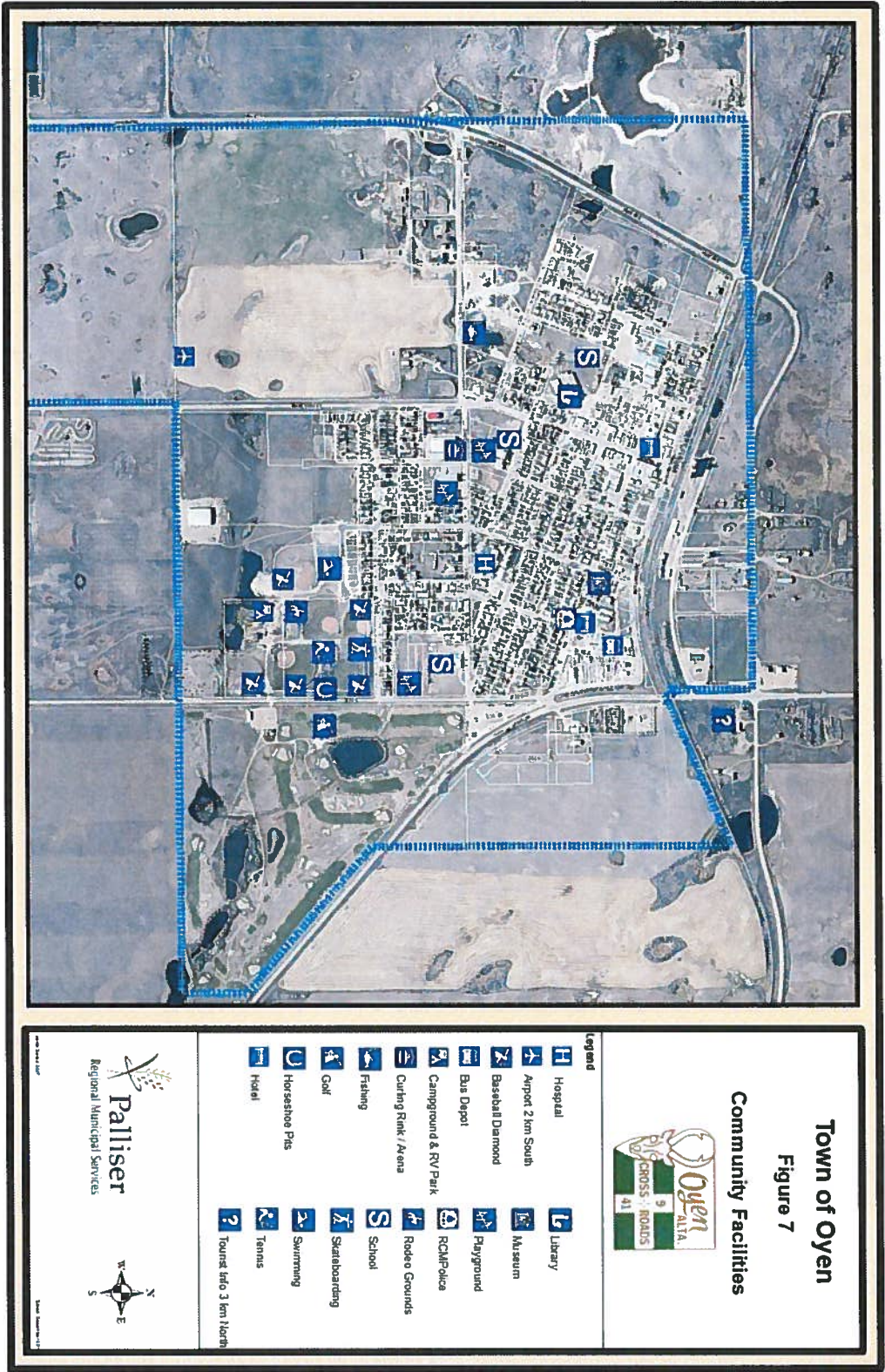
The Town of Oyen and area is served by a 4 man detachment of the R.C.M.P., with barracks and full facilities located in Oyen.

4.4 Business and Tourism Facilities

Oyen offers first rate meeting facilities in the Provincial Building, the Legion Hall and Oyen Senior Citizens Recreation Centre. To accommodate both business visitors and tourists there are two hotels: the Super 8 motel and the Antelope Inn. Camping and Recreational Vehicle facilities are available west of and adjacent to the golf course.

Oyen is one of the urban communities participating on the SAMDA Economic Partnership. An active Chamber of Commerce and several service clubs contribute to business activities and economic development in Oyen.

A Provincial Visitor Information Centre is located on the corner of Hwy 9 and 41 and is operated by the Town May through September.



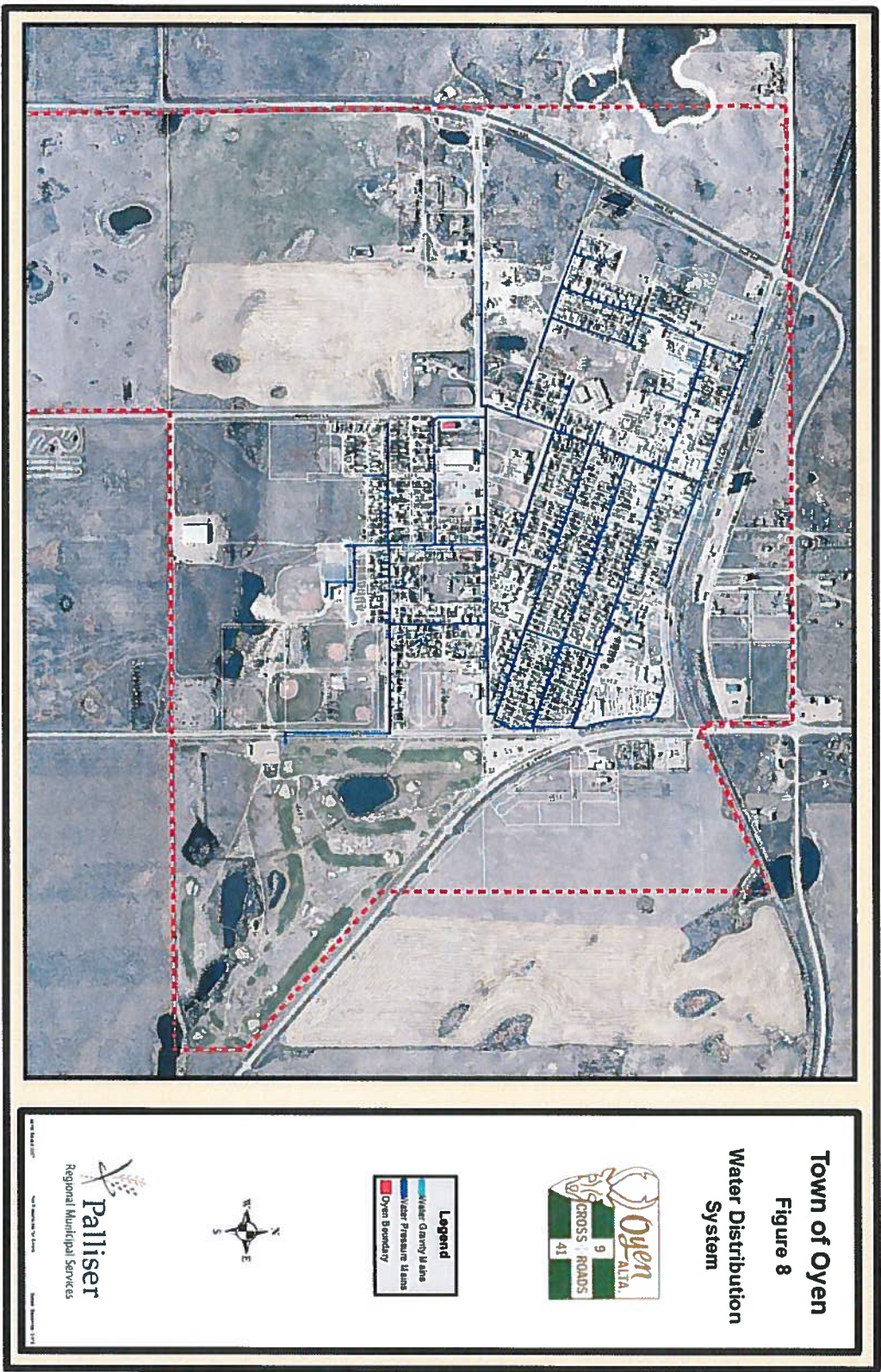
5.0 Utilities

The community's infrastructure is in good condition and no additions to the system are required in the near future. Water supply and sewage treatment are adequately sized for expected populations well into the future.

5.1 Water Distribution System

The Town is serviced with water from the Henry Kroeger Regional Water Commission (**Figure 8**). Like other communities in the region, Oyen had problems with maintaining a self-sufficient water supply until the construction of the treated water pipeline from Hanna.

One phase remains with the completion of town water distribution system, which involves the replacement of all 4 inch water lines with 6 inch lines. This will bring the system up to capacity for water supply, including fire protection. The recommended minimum diameter for water mains is 150mm (6in), or 200mm (8in) in high pressure valve areas, which is adequate for all development of moderate size.

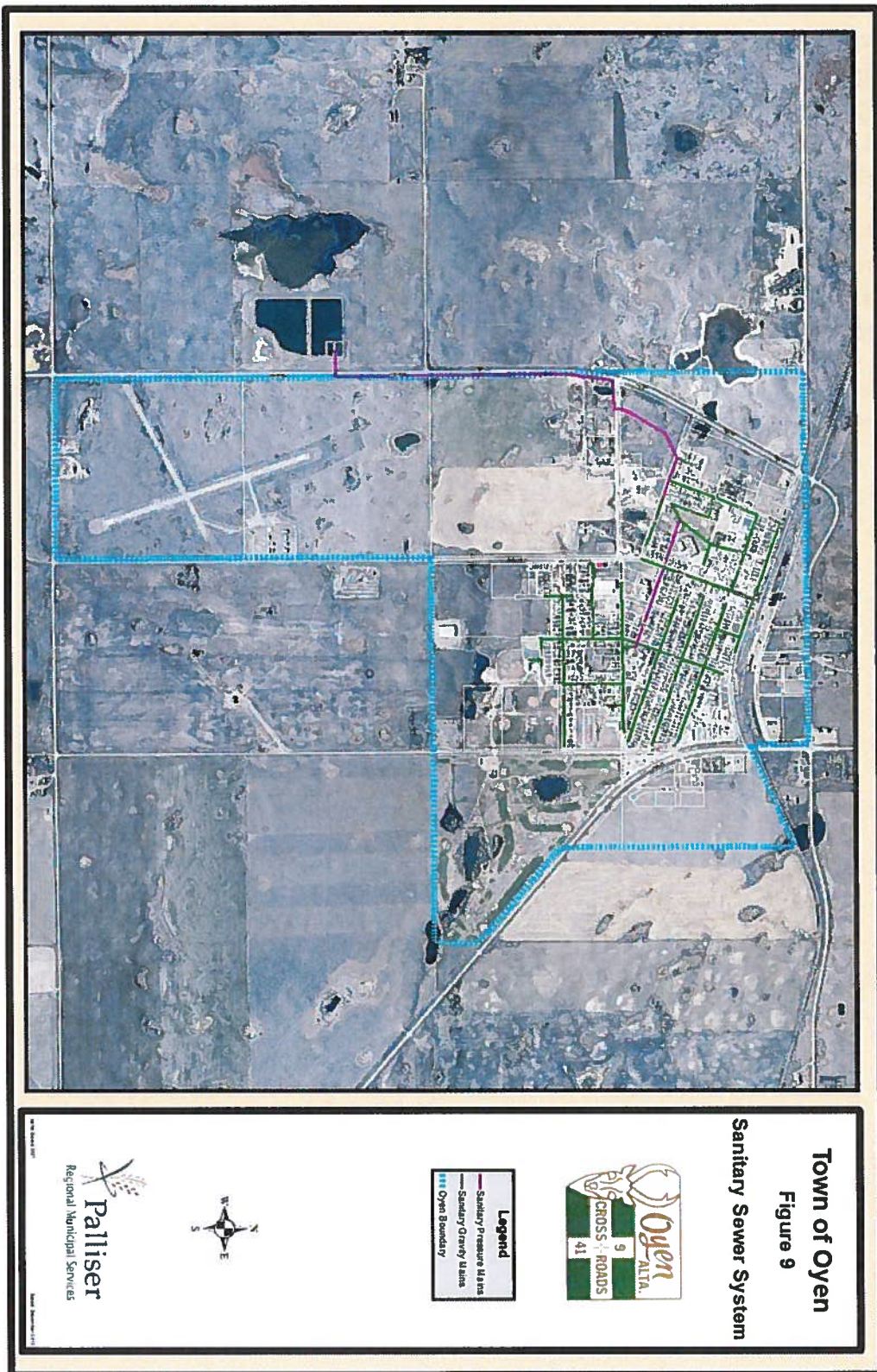


5.2 Sanitary and Storm Sewer Systems

Oyen's sewage system (**Figure 9**) is comprised of a gravity flow collection system, a main sewage pump station and associated force main, gravity sewage outfall and a sewage lagoon. In order to maintain the minimum required depth of 2.5 metres, two sewage lift stations have been installed. The gravity collector mains have capacity to serve current development and future infill development.

The effluent is discharged to lagoons located in the NE ¼ Sec 28-27-4-W4M (**Figure 9**). The lagoons consist of two anaerobic ponds, one facultative cell and one storage cell. Since construction in 1988, these lagoons had a life expectancy of 50 years. The lagoons are designed to accommodate population growth for several decades.

Storm water run-off is handled by a system of swales and ditches which take the storm water to the golf course and trout pond.



5.3 Solid Waste Disposal

Oyen is a participating member of the Big Country Regional Waste Authority. Waste is collected at a waste transfer site in Oyen and transferred to Youngstown. A recycling program is in operation in Oyen including paper, glass and tin products with convenient drop off and pick up areas.

6.0 Transportation

The original layout of Oyen was based on the traditional grid pattern established when the rail lines came through early in the twentieth century. New development, as is occurring in the north-west area of the community, maintains the grid pattern with easy access to all areas of town. In the subdivision designed for the area south of 7th Avenue, a crescent pattern has been used which helps to minimize through traffic providing quieter and safer residential areas.

The construction of Secondary Highway 895 was a cooperative project by the Town of Oyen and the Special Areas Board. The new road runs along the west Town boundary, then crosses the railroad tracks and turns east along the north boundary of town. The new route takes heavy trucks and farm vehicles around Oyen rather than through the centre of town as was originally planned.

No traffic problems occur at the main entrance to town at Highway 41 from the east. There is some difficulty however, manoeuvring the turn when entering Oyen off Highway 41 from the south. Trees have been planted for beautification of the entrance. Sidewalks and street lighting is upgraded and replaced on an on-going basis.

Volume II – Policies

A. Summary of Trends and Issues/ opportunities

Volume 1 of the Plan establishes objectives to guide the growth and development of the Town of Oyen. Specific policies for implementing a planning strategy are contained in Volume 2. A summary of major trends and issues are as follows:

(a) Rural Population

The surrounding area has seen a steady decline in population through most of the century. Beginning in the mid 1940's, rural people started to move to the cities. This was accompanied by a decline in economic activity, impacting negatively on the Oyen economy. Rural populations are still experiencing a decline due to increased size of farms due to economies of scale with mechanized agriculture.

(b) Urban Population

Oyen has a slow, limited growth rate, but in recent years the population has become relatively stable. During the past few years the growth rate has been approximately 8 people per year or slightly less than 1%. Recent activities (1990-1992) indicate a projected growth estimated at 1% annually.

Oyen provides a retirement centre for seniors moving off the farm. Oyen's population has become relatively mature. With 25% of the residents being over 65 years of age, there is a high number of single seniors living in Oyen.

The history of younger people leaving the community is beginning to turn around as employment opportunities improve.

(c) Land Use

There is a need for diversity of housing types such as multi-unit dwellings and manufactured home subdivisions. New subdivision and development is necessary.

There is limited in-fill potential, both residential and commercial. New residential growth may occur to the west of 3rd Street and south of 7th Avenue. Commercial/ Industrial infill and expansion is possible on Railway Avenue and to the east of Highway 41.

A Council priority is being ready for growth and development of residential, commercial and industrial areas with serviced sites.

(d) Residential Development

Oyen is experiencing a shortage of certain types of housing and a shortage of rental accommodation. Population characteristics and affordability have created a demand for

low maintenance, adult housing, manufactured home subdivisions and multi-unit dwellings.

Housing in Oyen is dominated by single-family dwellings. Only 21% of current housing is multi-unit dwellings.

There is an inadequate supply of serviced single family residential lots available to accommodate anticipated demand in the short term (5 to 10 years). The municipality has been the main developer of residential land and is likely to continue while the pace of development activity is too restricted for interest from private developers.

(e) Commercial Development

Council encourages the growth of the highway commercial area west of Highway 41. Some commercial services are lacking in Oyen, such as plumbing, building supplies, construction and automotive services.

The declining agricultural base creates a need for economic diversification and development. Home occupations are encouraged and there has been some increase in oil and gas extraction activities.

Beautification of the commercial area by theme development, landscaping, tree planting, etc. is desirable. Some changes may be required for parking space and standards for commercial core along Main Street.

(f) Industrial Development

There is need for more industry such as agricultural services, oil and gas services, and manufacturing. Adequate serviced land may be lacking.

An economic development strategy to attract a diversified industrial base to the Town is essential. This would aid in the marketing and development of existing vacant, serviced industrial land as well as expanding the population and tax base.

(g) Infrastructure

Secondary Highway 895 routes heavy traffic around the perimeter of town on the west side and away from the downtown core. This highway corridor may be suitable for future industrial/ commercial development as the demand warrants.

The two remaining 6 inch sewer lines are to be upgraded to 8 inch lines in the near future. The remaining 4 inch water lines will be upgraded to a minimum size of 6 inches to improve circulation and fire safety.

(h) Parks and Recreation

The dry climate provides potential for expanding outdoor recreation (e.g. Trail systems). The development of indoor recreation and leisure facilities, both private and public, is desired (i.e., indoor pool).

Age-orientation of recreation programming may be required to meet the needs of the changing population structure with proportionately less people under the age of 15 years and a higher percentage of adults and senior citizens.

There is a lack of small scale recreational facilities (i.e. tot lots) in the residential areas.

The Oyen Recreation Master Plan will continue to guide development in the future.

(i) Human Services

Oyen's population and medical facilities require two full- time doctors. Attraction and retention of doctors in rural areas is a constant challenge. There is a need for counselling services, both social and educational.

A larger police staff is desired by Oyen and the surrounding community but is not financially feasible at this time. There are currently four R.C.M.P. members in Oyen.

B. Plan Policies

The policies contained in this plan are recognized and established as a means of dealing with the principal land use activities in Oyen. Their purpose is to provide a broad framework for future land use and development and act as a planning guide for the management of growth in an efficient, economic and orderly manner. The policies are intended to provide a broad overview for dealing with the various categories of land uses in different locations throughout the municipality, yet be flexible enough to accommodate a variety of different circumstances that may be encountered.

1.0 Administrative

The Municipal Development Plan identifies development areas to accommodate urban activities (e.g. commercial, industrial, housing and recreation). New development should be phased in as shown on **Figure 10 - Future Development Pattern**. This will ensure that new development takes place in the most orderly manner to minimize capital and maintenance costs.

1.1 The Long Range Plan, as shown as **Figure 10**, is hereby adopted in order that future development may occur in an orderly and economic manner. This map indicates the future land use areas within the Town.

1.2 The MDP shall be reviewed every five years by Council and Palliser Regional Municipal Services to ensure that the plan is receptive to the changing needs and development of the community.

1.3 The Land Use Bylaw shall be amended to conform to the Municipal Development Plan. Lands must be reclassified to the appropriate district before a subdivision or development occurs.

1.4 Prior to the adoption of a land use district amendment an Area Structure Plan or Conceptual Scheme may be required to provide development details and a transparent decision making process.

1.5 Proposed Land Use Bylaw amendments shall conform to the land uses identified in **Figure 10** and all provisions of the Municipal Development Plan.

1.6 The subdivision approving authority shall not approve the subdivision of land within the Town of Oyen unless the proposed land use conforms to the Municipal Development Plan.

1.7 Council shall ensure that the Town of Oyen Land Use Bylaw and development agreements are in keeping with the content and purpose of this Municipal Development Plan.

2.0 General

The following general policies are intended to provide Council with guidelines to evaluate development proposals. The guidelines are meant to apply to all forms of development.

2.1 To minimize the cost of future growth, new development should be encouraged, where possible, to be located on available vacant parcels, many of which are already serviced in the established residential and commercial districts of the Town.

2.2 To ensure that the urban fringe within 5km of the Town boundaries is developed in a compatible manner, Oyen and Special Area No.3 shall meet periodically to consider:

- The compatibility of present and future land uses
- The location of transportation routes and other servicing aspects
- The orderly conversion of agricultural uses to more intense development

The Town of Oyen and Special Area No.3 may wish to establish an Intermunicipal Development Plan as a means of planning for growth in the urban fringe area.

2.3 Changes in population should be reviewed annually and the implications reported to Council regarding the maintenance and development of services and facilities.

2.4 Community marketing along the Highway 9 and 41 corridors is a priority of Council to establish Oyen as a tourism opportunity for travellers.

3.0 Residential

Residential development takes up approximately 30% of Town land area. The majority of housing is provided by single detached dwellings. Some accommodation is met by multi-unit dwellings and manufactured homes; however the mix of single vs. multi-unit dwellings is below the provincial average and similar to surrounding rural communities. This ratio is not expected to change in the future. There is sufficient land within the current municipal boundaries to accommodate residential expansion for at least the next 25 years.

3.1 Council shall adopt a new residential district in the Oyen Land Use Bylaw to accommodate small acreage type development within the town boundaries

3.2 Council shall try to ensure that there is a two year supply of serviced residential lots available at any time. At current growth rates, 2 to 3 residential lots are required each year to provide for expected population increases.

3.3 Council shall encourage the development of a mixture of housing types within the Land Use Bylaw, while recognizing the low density residential character of the

community. These types shall include single detached dwellings, semi-detached dwellings, multi-unit dwellings, and manufactured home subdivisions.

3.4 Council should require that developers enter into development agreements with the Town that cover the cost of servicing and the provision of walkways, sidewalks and streets.

3.5 Future development of manufactured homes in Oyen will be accommodated by manufactured home subdivisions which will consist of small clusters (8-15 lots) within appropriate areas and through the expansion of manufactured home parks.

3.6 Council encourages the development of vacant lots and the removal of poorer quality structures within the existing residential areas prior to expansion onto undeveloped land (i.e. infill). This minimizes costs providing services such as utility lines, garbage collection, police and fire protection, street cleaning and snow removal.

3.7 Affordable housing options that recognize the existing community and provide quality design and appearance shall be supported in the Town.

3.8 Rental housing development options shall be supported to provide a better quality rental housing stock and increase rental options within the Community.

4.0 Commercial

Declining rural populations along with increased mobility has decreased the demand for local goods and services. This change has forced communities to re-evaluate their traditional economic role.

4.1 The commercial shopping core along Main Street shall be maintained as the dominant business centre.

4.2 Council encourages the development of vacant lots and the removal of poorer quality structures within the existing commercial area prior to expansion onto undeveloped land. This will minimize servicing costs such as utility lines, garbage collection, police and fire protection, street cleaning and snow removal.

4.3 The downtown business area may require expansion in future years. Growth of the downtown retail core shall be directed along the north side of 1st Avenue.

4.4 Further development of the Buffalo Trail Commercial Area is recommended for highway commercial and light industrial uses. The Buffalo Trail area allows uses that require high traffic exposure and east access to capitalize on the highway traffic and tourism market.

5.0 Industrial

It is essential to ensure that there are adequate land reserves for anticipated industrial requirements. Industrial use should be separated from residential areas to minimize negative influences.

5.1 Council recommends that subdivision for industrial land use provide a variety of lot sizes and levels of serving to accommodate a wide range of industrial activity. It should also provide adequate access to and circulation within the industrial area, buffering and screening for protection of adjacent land uses.

5.2 Council should maintain communication with property owners within the Special Areas to the north of the community with respect to the potential for annexation should the town require additional industrial/ highway commercial property as well as for the expansion of the cemetery.

5.3 All future bulk oil and gasoline storage, propane sales, fertilizer and agricultural chemicals storage shall be located in the industrial designated areas and shall not present potential public safety and environmental hazards

5.4 All industries which may be offensive or hazardous to human health, safety and well-being shall not be developed appropriately and shall have consideration for comments from Alberta Health and all other relevant provincial departments.

6.0 Recreational and Institutional

An important component in enhancing the quality of life in Oyen is the availability of community services such as medical and educational facilities, police and fire protection services, and recreational facilities. With the increasing cost of providing these facilities adjoining municipalities may wish to take a closer look at joint cost sharing for major projects to enhance the region to the benefit of all users.

6.1 The town and Recreation Board should evaluate the Community Recreation Master Plan on an ongoing basis to address recreational and programming needs.

6.2 Community programming and facilities should be catered to the growth of the community and the socio-economic character of the Town and the surrounding area.

6.3 The Oyen Council and recreation Board should meet annually with Special Area No.3 Recreation Board to discuss joint cost sharing (capital and maintenance) arrangements for the recreational facilities and programs based in Oyen.

6.4 Council, in conjunction with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, should conduct an evaluation to determine options for new facilities and preferred sites for a new detachment in Oyen.

7.0 Infrastructure

The community's infrastructure is made up of the facilities and services required to sustain all activities in the Town. It is commonly thought of as the sewer and water lines, gas and electrical services and streets. In order for the community to expand, the infrastructure has to be in place and able to support the amount of development envisioned. Most services are expensive to install and maintain, so it is important that the community does not proceed too quickly and overdevelop its infrastructure. The community should however maintain an adequate supply of developed property to ensure that it is able to meet anticipated demand.

7.1 New roads in residential subdivisions should be developed on a curvilinear and bay pattern to slow traffic and promote safety.

7.2 The development of an efficient transportation pattern is emphasized. This will minimize the cost of development and provide the appropriate level of separation between local residential traffic and inter- area traffic movements.

7.3 All land developers will be required to enter into an agreement with the Town for the provision of public roadways, walkways and the installation of services. The cost of developing land should be the responsibility of the land developer and not the community.

7.4 A Town Entrance Study may be developed which will outline recommendations in the following:

- Beautification (landscape plan)
- Traffic turning movements
- Lighting
- Pedestrian traffic
- buffering

7.5 Open space areas shall be provided as "buffer" areas along highway routes, railway lines, and as links to school and community facilities.

8.0 Environmental

Oyen is surrounded by rare and unique landforms that provide habitat for numerous species of birds and animals. These features support a tourism market based on hunting and wildlife viewing which in turn has a positive impact on Oyen's economy.

8.1 In dealing with all developments and renovations, council shall apply measures of appropriate site principal for the best use of sun, air, wind, view, privacy, energy and water resources, landscaping and circulation.

8.2 The conservation of resources (e.g., water and energy) should be encouraged in all existing, new and renovated developments. The Town should also play a lead role in all recycling efforts by utilizing collection techniques for:

- Newsprint
- Magazines
- Glass
- Metals
- Oil
- Paint
- Plastics

9.0 Inter-municipal Cooperation

Oyen is surrounded by Special Area No. 3. The Special Areas and Town of Oyen maintain a positive relationship with cooperation on mutually beneficial services such as roads, economic development, tourism, and recreational facilities that service the Town and surrounding rural areas. This positive relationship is valued by the Town and future mutually beneficial developments/ projects are proposed to be in consideration of consultation and cooperation with the Special Areas Board. The following policies are intended to provide a basis for inter-municipal considerations:

9.1 To ensure that incompatible rural land uses including intensive agriculture are located appropriately in consideration of sufficient land to serve as buffer from existing and future growth areas.

9.2 The location of future land uses within the town should take into account existing land uses outside of the Town boundaries that may pose a land use conflict.

9.3 The Town shall refer statutory plan/ land use bylaw amendments, development permit/ subdivision applications and other planning matters that may affect the surrounding area to the Special Area No. 3 office.

9.4 The Town shall support regional initiatives that provide a mutual benefit and better economies of scale for efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of municipal services.

9.5 The Town shall collaborate with the Special Areas to find solutions to common concerns through an inter-municipal planning process that is based on open communication and consultation.

