



Bonanza Area Structure Plan

Saddle Hills County

DRAFT

August 2021





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1.0 Introduction

The purpose of the Bonanza Area Structure Plan is to provide a detailed framework for the future development of lands in the Bonanza area for agricultural, residential, commercial, recreational, and industrial land uses. The Bonanza area is identified as a *Potential Growth Area* in the County's Municipal Development Plan, and as such, is recommended to have an ASP prepared for the area.

The ASP was prepared in collaboration with a Planning Advisory Committee, comprised of County staff and two members of Council, and is based on consultation with residents and property owners in the area. The ASP is also informed by a Background Study that provided information on (add list).

This ASP provides a land use concept and associated policies to direct Council, administration, residents and property owners on future development decisions within the ASP area.

1.1 Location

The Bonanza ASP applies to 118.1 km² (45.6 mi²) of land in the west portion of Saddle Hills County as illustrated in Figure 1.1. The ASP area is located adjacent to the British Columbia border on the west. The north portion of the ASP area generally aligns with Township Road 802 and the south is bounded by Township Road 794 and the Bay Tree Area Structure Plan. Central to the ASP area is Bonanza, an unincorporated rural settlement.

The primary road network in the ASP area includes Highway 719 which runs north-south through the centre of the ASP area, including through Bonanza. Additional key corridors are Township Roads 800 and 801 running east-west through the Plan area. Township Road 801 intersects with Highway 719 in Bonanza while Township Road 801 also provides a connection across the Pouce Coupe River valley in the west end of the ASP area.

1.2 Existing Conditions

1.2.1 Physical Features and Topography

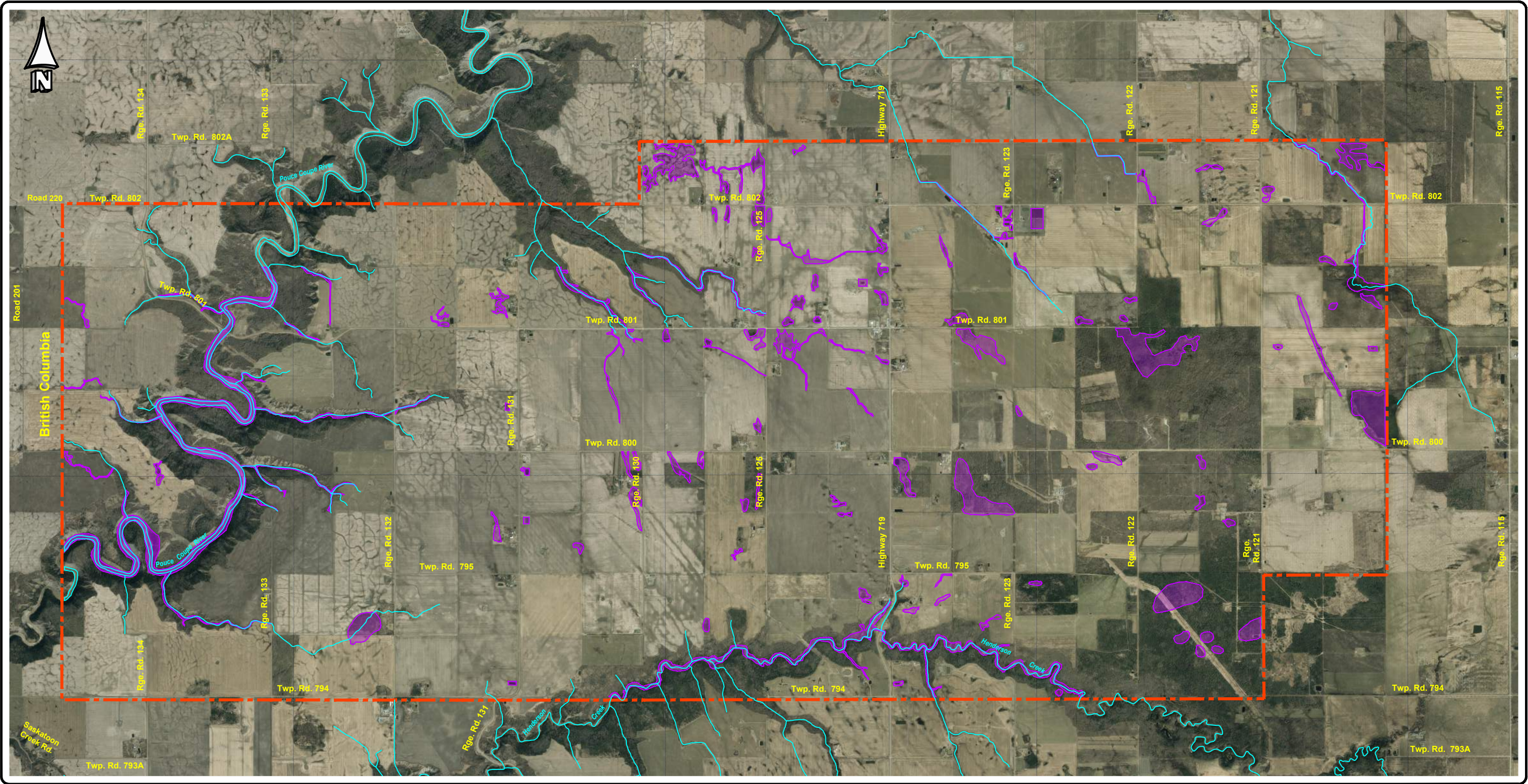
Most of the ASP area is best described as flat to gently rolling farmland with the exceptions of lands located in the west and south portions of the ASP area. The high point is located in the southeastern/central portion in the ASP area with the drainage pattern flowing generally outwards from there, as illustrated in Figure 1.2.

As shown in Figure 1.2, the dominant physical feature is the Pouce Coupe River valley which runs north-south through the west side of the Plan area and the Henderson Creek valley that traverses the south end of the ASP area. Both these valleys are characterized by steep slopes, which creates a significant constraint to development but offers potential opportunities for recreational uses.

A number of tributary creeks extending from the Pouce Coupe River valley and Henderson Creek valley also cross the ASP area. The presence of these watercourses results in the creation of fragmented parcels of land which may facilitate future non-agricultural development. There is a significant amount of erosion and soil slumping along these watercourses. There are multiple wetlands present in the ASP area as shown in Figure 1.2, but no Crown-claimable wetlands have been identified. There are also no naturally occurring water bodies (lakes, large sloughs, etc.) in the ASP area.

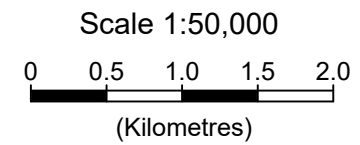


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LEGEND

-  ASP Boundary
-  Wetlands



**Bonanza
Area Structure Plan**

PHYSICAL FEATURES

Figure 1.2

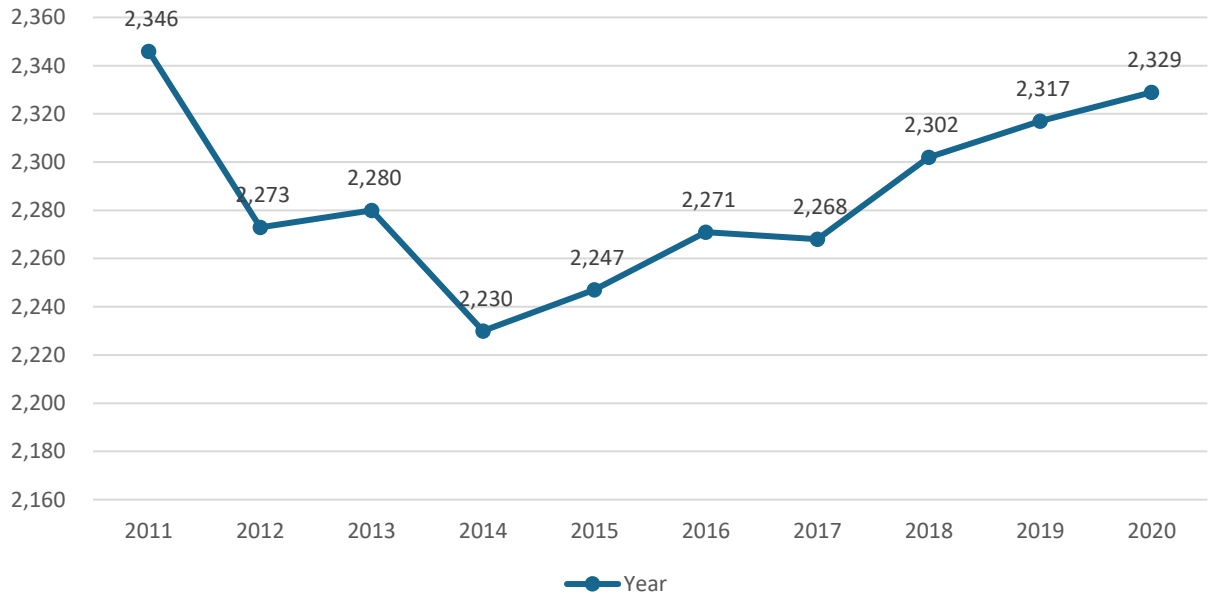
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1.2.2 Population

Population data for the County is available from the Province. County population declined from 2011 to 2014; however, since 2014, the population has, for the most part, been increasing as shown on Figure 1.3 below. While there is no current population data specific to the Plan area, stakeholders indicate that Bonanza school enrollment rates are the highest they have been in the last ten plus years.

Figure 1.3 Saddle Hills County Historic Population (2011-2020)



Source: Adapted from Statistics Canada, Population Estimates (custom data request) and Alberta Municipal Affairs Population Lists.

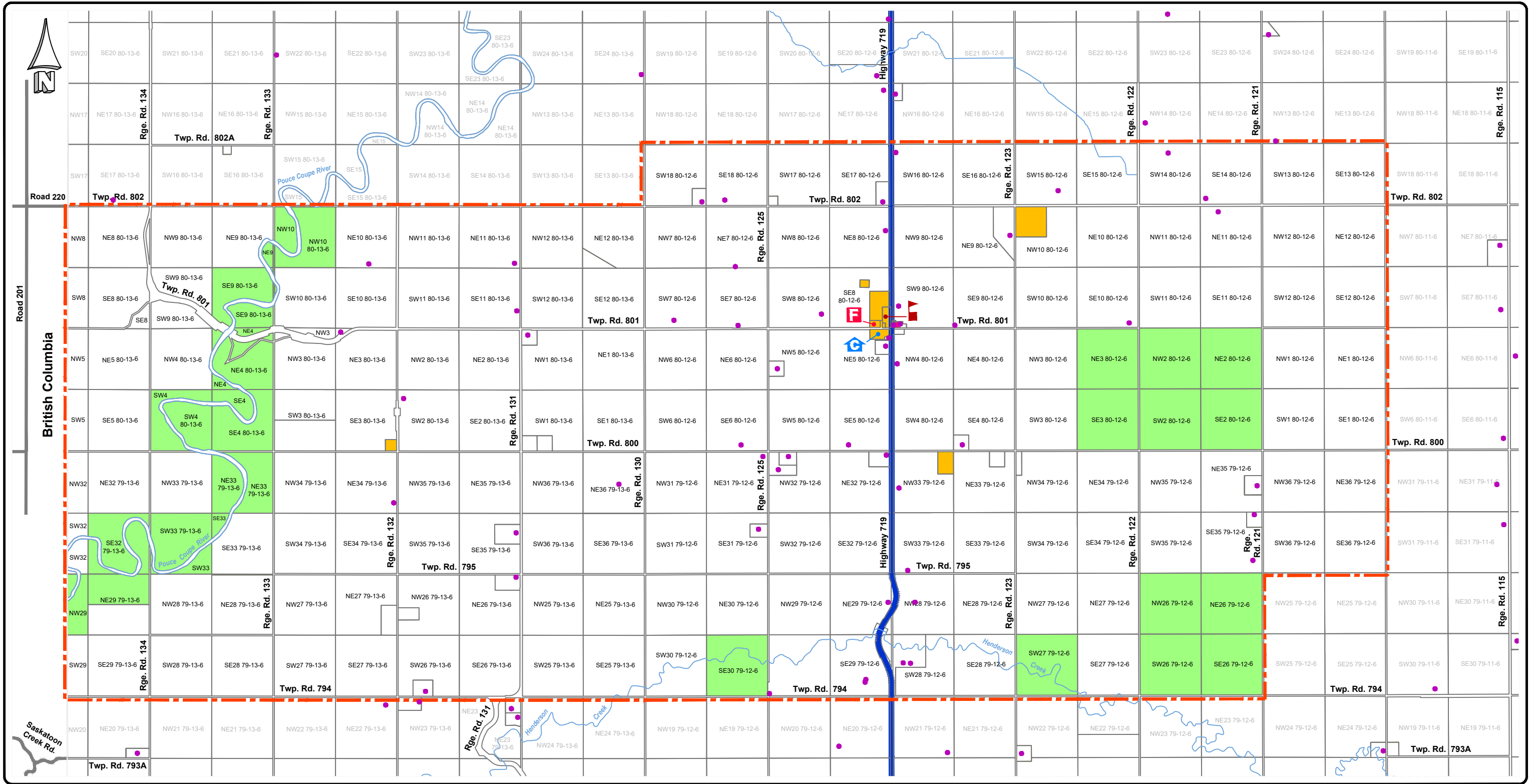


1.2.3 Existing Land Use










The ASP area contains approximately 11,800 hectares (29,000 acres) of land, the majority of which is used for agricultural purposes (cultivated or pasture) as illustrated in Figure 1.4. Non-agricultural development primarily consists of farmsteads, single lot country residential subdivisions that are located within Bonanza, as well as scattered throughout the ASP area, and Crown Land. Commercial activity is primarily located within Bonanza proper and includes the Bonanza General Store and Bowling Alley. The Bonanza School, Community Hall and Fire Department are also located in the community.

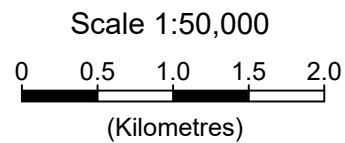
The other significant development activity in the ASP area is associated with petroleum production, as numerous well sites are located in, and several pipelines traverse, the ASP area as illustrated on Figure 1.5.

According to CLI ratings, 9,830 ha (24,290 ac) of land in the ASP area has a Class 4 or lower rating. This equates to a majority of the ASP area, approximately 83%, of the total land base. The lands of the lowest quality are located along the Pouce Coupe River and Henderson Creek valleys in the west and south-central portions of the ASP.



LEGEND

- | | | | |
|---|--------------|---|----------------|
|  | Crown Land |  | Residence |
|  | Public Use |  | Fire Hall |
|  | Commercial |  | Community Hall |
|  | ASP Boundary |  | School |
|  | Highway | | |



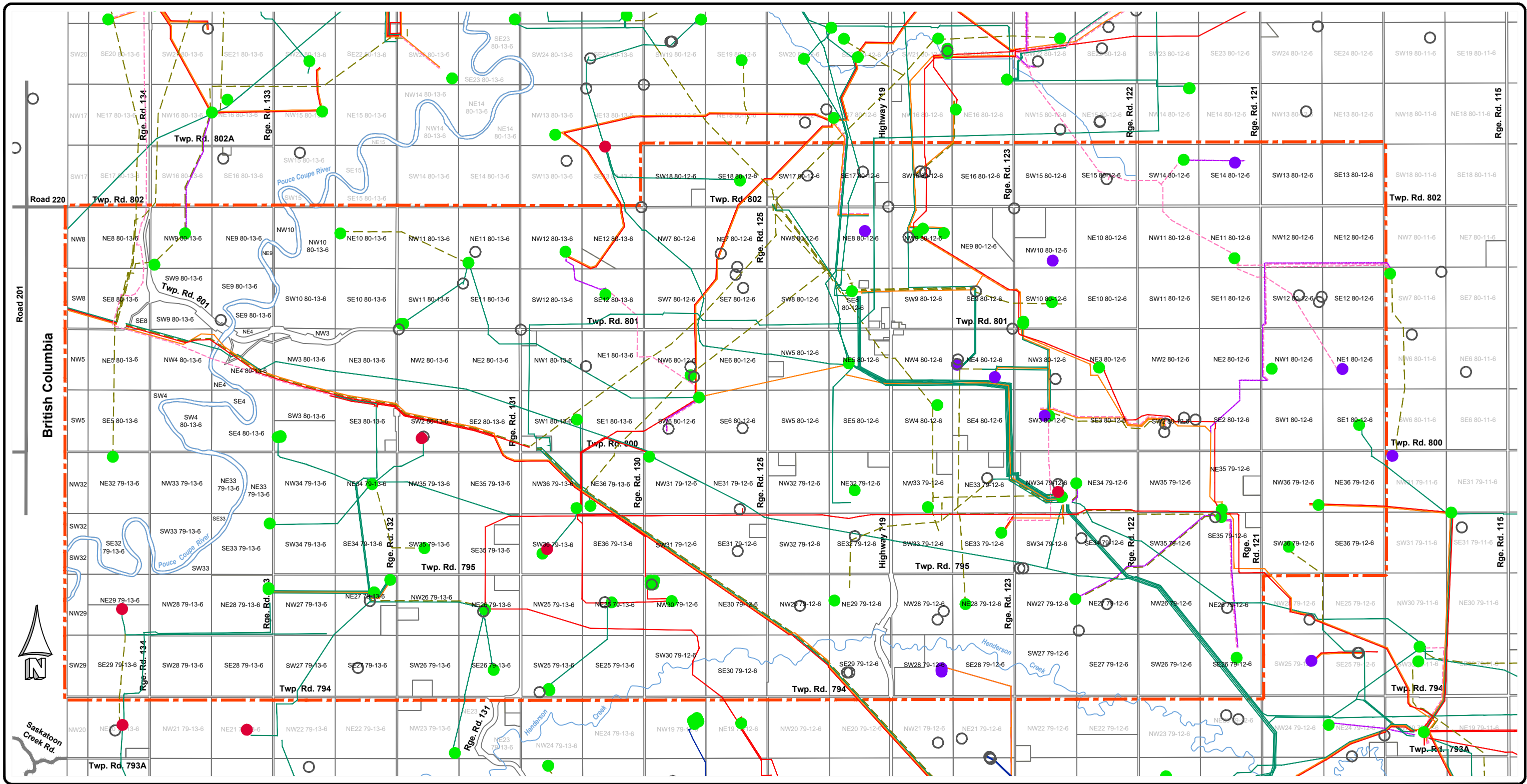
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EXISTING DEVELOPMENT

Figure 1.4

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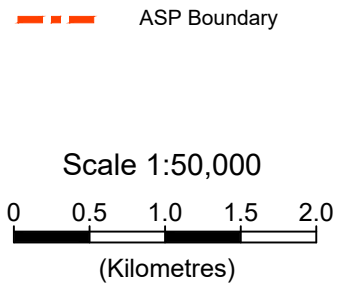




Saskatoon Creek Rd.

LEGEND

- | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | Pipeline - Natural Gas - Operational (under 10,000 ppm H2S content) | | Pipeline - Oil and Miscellaneous - Discontinued or Abandoned |
| | Pipeline - Natural Gas (Sour Gas) - Operational (10,000 ppm or over H2S content) | | Pipeline - Under Construction or Planned |
| | Pipeline - Oil - Operational | | Well - Natural Gas - Operational |
| | Pipeline - Miscellaneous Product - Operational (including Fuel Gas, High Vapour Product (HVP), others) | | Well - Oil - Operational |
| | Pipeline - Natural Gas - Discontinued or Abandoned | | Well - Miscellaneous Product - Operational |
| | Pipeline - Natural Gas (Sour Gas) - Discontinued or Abandoned | | Well - Drilled & Cased or Suspended or Abandoned |



ASP Boundary



Bonanza Area Structure Plan

ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE

Figure 1.5

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1.2.4 Transportation and Utilities

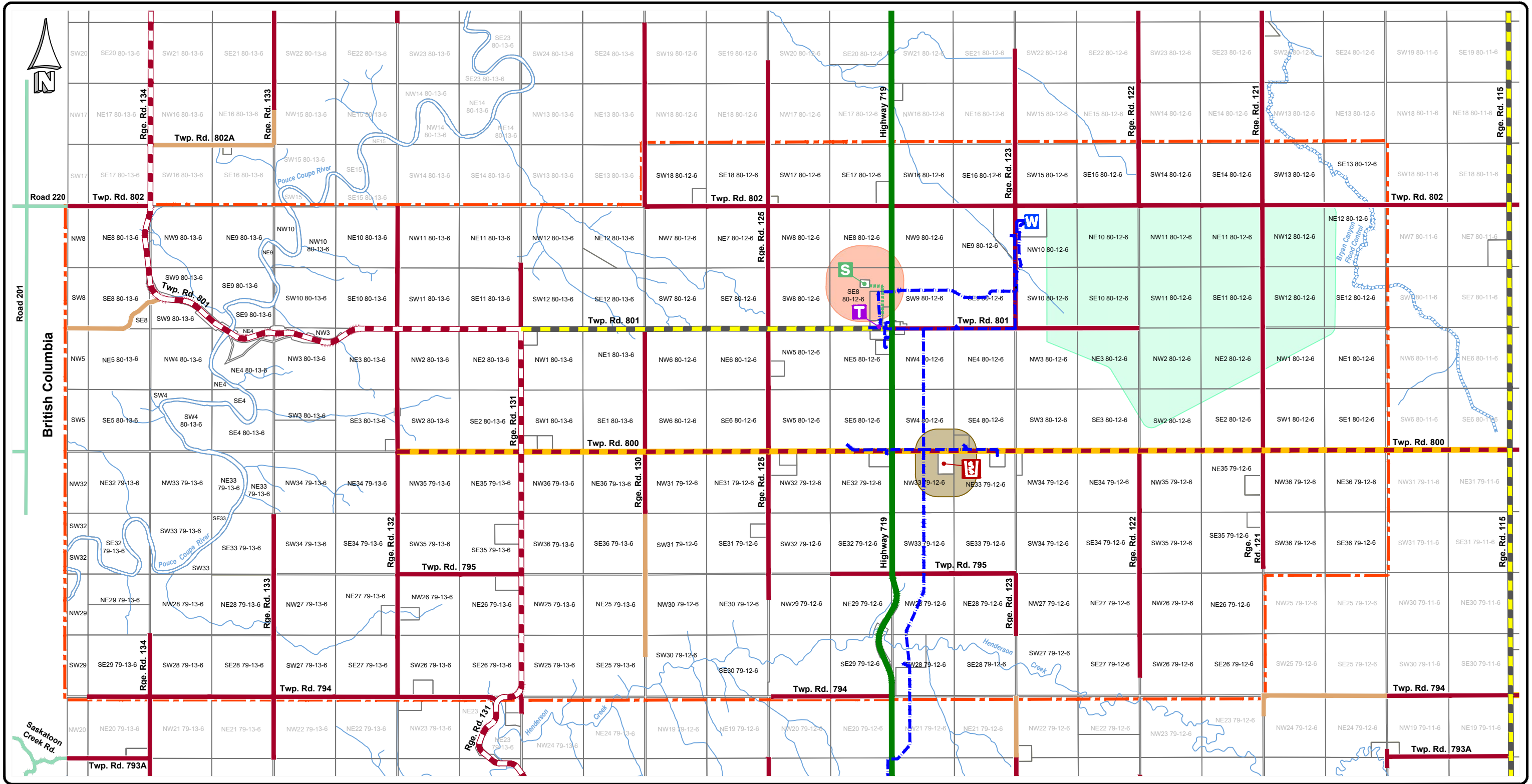
The primary transportation corridor in the ASP area is Highway 719, a two-lane highway that runs north-south through the centre of the ASP area, including through Bonanza, as illustrated on Figure 1.6. Additional key transportation corridors in the ASP area are Township Road 800, a Collector Road running east-west through the ASP area, and Township Road 801, also running east-west and intersecting with Highway 719 in Bonanza. Township Road 801 also provides a connection across the Pouce Coupe River valley to the west.

A water reservoir fed by surface runoff is located northeast of Bonanza. The reservoir is primarily fed by flows through the south ditch along Township Road 802 with natural overland draining occurring towards the northwest. A water line runs north-south, east of Highway 719, to Bonanza, connecting the reservoir to a truck fill station. The water line also serves an area 1-2 quarter sections in width both east and west along Township Road 800 providing local connections, and also connects south to the settlement of Bay Tree. Outside of this serviced area, most of the domestic water needs are addressed by way of on-site systems such as dugouts, wells and cisterns.

Municipal sanitary sewer service in the plan area is limited to a small low-pressure system that serves the core area of Bonanza. All other development in the plan area is served by private on-site systems.

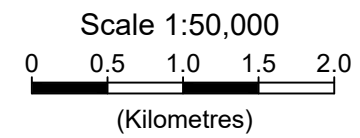


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LEGEND

- | | | | | | | | |
|--|------------------------|--|----------------------------|--|--|--|------------------------------|
| | Provincial Highway | | Farm/Implement Access Road | | Solid Waste Transfer and Recycle Station | | Water Lagoon |
| | Arterial Road - Paved | | Other Jurisdiction Road | | Waste Transfer Setback (300m) | | Water System Catchment Area |
| | Arterial Road - Gravel | | ASP Boundary | | Truck Fill Station | | Sewage Lagoon |
| | Collector Road | | Drainage Ditch | | Sewage Lagoon | | Sewage Lagoon Setback (450m) |
| | Local Road | | Water Line | | Low Pressure Sewer Line | | |



Bonanza
Area Structure Plan

INFRASTRUCTURE

Figure 1.6

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1.3 Legislative Framework

1.3.1 Municipal Government Act

This ASP has been prepared in accordance with Section 633 of the *Municipal Government Act*, SA 2000 (MGA). The MGA enables a municipality to adopt an ASP to provide a framework for future development of an area. Section 633 stipulates that an ASP must describe:

1. the sequence of development proposed for the area,
2. the land uses proposed for the area, either generally or with respect to specific parts of the area,
3. the density of population proposed for the area either generally or with respect to specific parts of the area, and
4. the general location of major transportation routes and public utilities.

An ASP may also contain any other matters, including matters relating to reserves, as the council considers necessary. As part of the ASP preparation process property owners, businesses, interested members of the community, and school boards must be given the opportunity to provide input in the planning process and an ASP must be adopted by bylaw, which requires a public hearing to be held on the proposed plan.

The MGA also requires that all statutory plans be consistent with the Provincial Land Use Policies. The Bonanza ASP is consistent with those policies.

1.3.2 Municipal Development Plan

An ASP must also conform to a municipality's Municipal Development Plan. The MDP is the primary policy document used at the municipal level that provides a framework for the ongoing development of Saddle Hills County. The MDP guides the future by describing the County's development vision, goals and objectives. It is intended to minimize the occurrence of incompatible land uses and provide support for the preparation of other statutory planning documents, including this ASP.

There are several MDP policies that are relevant to the Bonanza ASP:

1. A majority of the lands in the ASP area are currently being used for agricultural purposes and are guided by the Agriculture Land Use Policy Area (Section 5.3) of the MDP.
2. Policy 5.3.5 establishes the parameters for the development of lands in Agricultural Policy Areas, for non-agricultural industries, country residential development, highway commercial uses, home-based businesses, public uses and utilities, recreational uses, resource extraction industries, greenhouses, and rural industrial development.
3. Policy 6.3.1 indicates that the development of multi-lot country residential subdivisions shall not be permitted on Better Agricultural Land, unless in accordance with provisions of an approved ASP.
4. Policies 8.3.1, 8.3.3, 8.3.4, and 8.3.5 establish the location criteria for new industrial development, including proximity to established industrial operations and highways, servicing requirements, and compatibility to adjacent land uses.
5. Policies 8.4.1 and 8.4.2 provide for the development of rural commercial uses in *Potential Growth Areas* and other appropriate locations.



6. Policies 9.3.1, 9.3.2, 9.3.3, 9.3.5, and 9.3.6 encourage residential, including seniors and affordable housing, local commercial, light industrial, institutional and recreation uses to locate within *Potential Growth Areas*.
7. Policy 10.3.2 requires that ASPs confirm the location and geographic extent of any Environmentally Sensitive Areas.

1.3.3 Land Use Bylaw

The purpose of the Saddle Hills County Land Use Bylaw (LUB) No. 324-2018, as amended, is to regulate the use and development of land and buildings within the County, and implement the policies of statutory plans, such as an MDP or ASP.

The majority of the lands within the ASP area boundary are currently zoned under the Agriculture (A) District. The balance of the ASP lands are zoned as Crown Land (CL), Country Residential One (CR1) (one lot), Rural Light Industrial (RLI) (one lot) and Rural Commercial (RC) (one lot).

1.4 Public Consultation

Plan area landowners, stakeholders and the broader community were engaged at key milestones during the planning process to provide input into the preparation of this Plan. The community engagement process involved:

Phase 1 Engagement

Several opportunities were provided for residents and stakeholders to get involved in the project during the first phase of engagement. An online survey was available from May 13 to June 10, 2021 and three (3) submissions were received. Hard copies of the survey were also available upon request for residents who preferred to provide written feedback. On May 27, 2021, the County and ISL hosted a live virtual online session for the project. The purpose of the session was to provide background information to residents about the development of the ASP, facilitate discussion on community development issues and respond to questions. A total of four (4) participants attended the live session.

The live session included a brief presentation describing the purpose of the project and provided background information about existing conditions in the ASP area including several associated maps (topography, existing land use, pipeline infrastructure, road network). Following the presentation, attendees were able to ask questions of the project representatives.

A summary of the key themes that emerged from feedback received through the survey and live session that are applicable to the Bonanza ASP is provided below.

Likes

- Peaceful rural lifestyle with the access to amenities such as potable water

Disadvantages

- Distance to amenities and road conditions
- Concerns about ability to support local business with smaller population



Undesired types of development

- Development that pollutes the environment
- Large animal processing facilities

Suggested areas for residential development

- Bonanza and consider expanding to include Gordondale
- Closer to the BC border (closer to employment areas)

Suggested areas for industrial development

- Areas with reliable access to water
- West of Range Road 131

Suggested areas for recreational activities and areas

- Recreational development approvals need to be considered with other adjacent industry approvals, such as oil and gas, to protect overall experience
- Suggestions include camping sites, activities and programs such as horse camps, dance classes, hockey, and mini-golf, multi-use trails, and facilities such as a little book library, splash park, and options for indoor recreation in the winter
- Opportunity to incorporate camping into the Bonanza area in the future

Phase 2 Engagement

[To be updated following Phase 2]



■ 2.0 Land Use

2.1 Goals of the Plan

Based on information from the background technical review and input obtained through the community engagement process, land use concepts for the ASP area and the Bonanza Community Centre have been prepared. The concepts, illustrated in Figure 2.1 and Figure 2.2, identify generalized land use areas for agriculture and future residential, commercial, and industrial development opportunities.

The ASP is intended to achieve the following goals:

1. Promote Bonanza as a future growth area and provide residents with a long-term vision for the community.
2. Minimize conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses.
3. Encourage new development in proximity to areas where development of a similar nature is already established and servicing is available, to promote efficiencies in land use and service delivery, and reduce impacts on agricultural lands.
4. Protect the community water source and environmentally sensitive areas from negative impacts.
5. Address the future development of Confined Feeding Operations (CFOs) in the Plan area.

2.2 Plan Interpretation

The boundaries of the land use areas shown in this ASP are approximate except where they coincide with roads or property lines. Minor variances may be permitted without an amendment to this ASP at the discretion of the County provided such variances do not significantly alter the intent of this ASP.

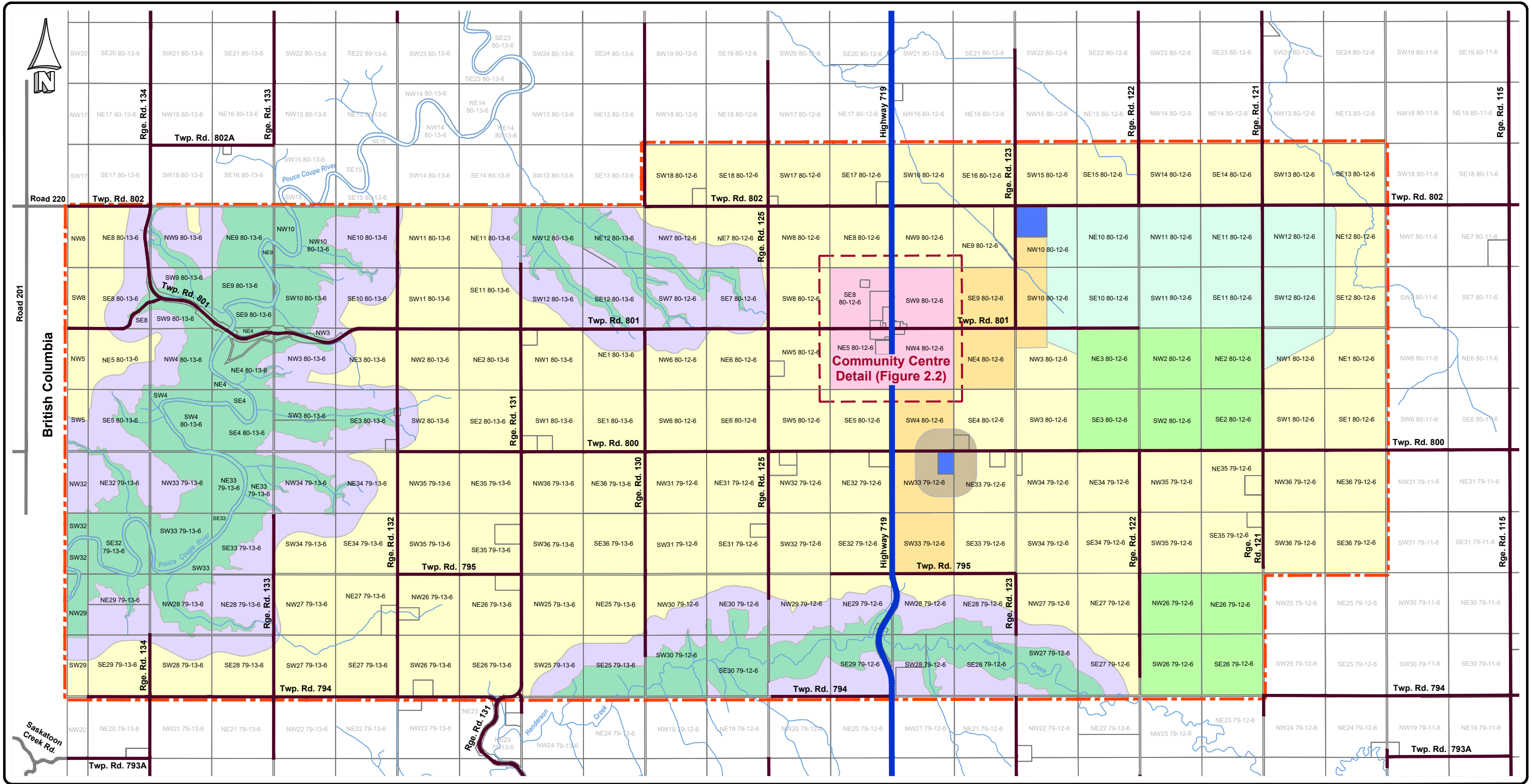
The policies contained in this ASP only apply to private lands located in the ASP area. With respect to Crown Lands the policies are advisory but represent the position of the County in the future development or disposition of these lands by the province.

In addition to the provisions contained in this ASP, all development proposals are required to conform to the County's MDP and LUB, as well as any provincial policies that may apply. In the event a matter arises that is not addressed by this ASP, the policies of the MDP shall apply.

Compliance with policies in this ASP shall be interpreted and applied as follows:

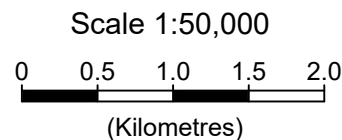
1. "Shall" and "will" mean mandatory compliance,
2. "Should" means compliance in principle but is subject to the discretion of the County where compliance may be undesirable or impractical due to the specific circumstances associated with a particular issue,
3. "May" means discretionary compliance or choice in the application of policy.

Unless otherwise stated, all words and expressions used in this ASP shall have the meanings assigned to them in the MGA, MDP and LUB.



LEGEND

- ASP Boundary
- Agriculture
- Bonanza Community Area
- CFO Exclusion Area
- Country Residential
- Crown Land
- Natural Area
- Public / Community
- Waste Management Buffer (300m)
- Water Catchment Area
- Highway 719 Corridor
- County Road



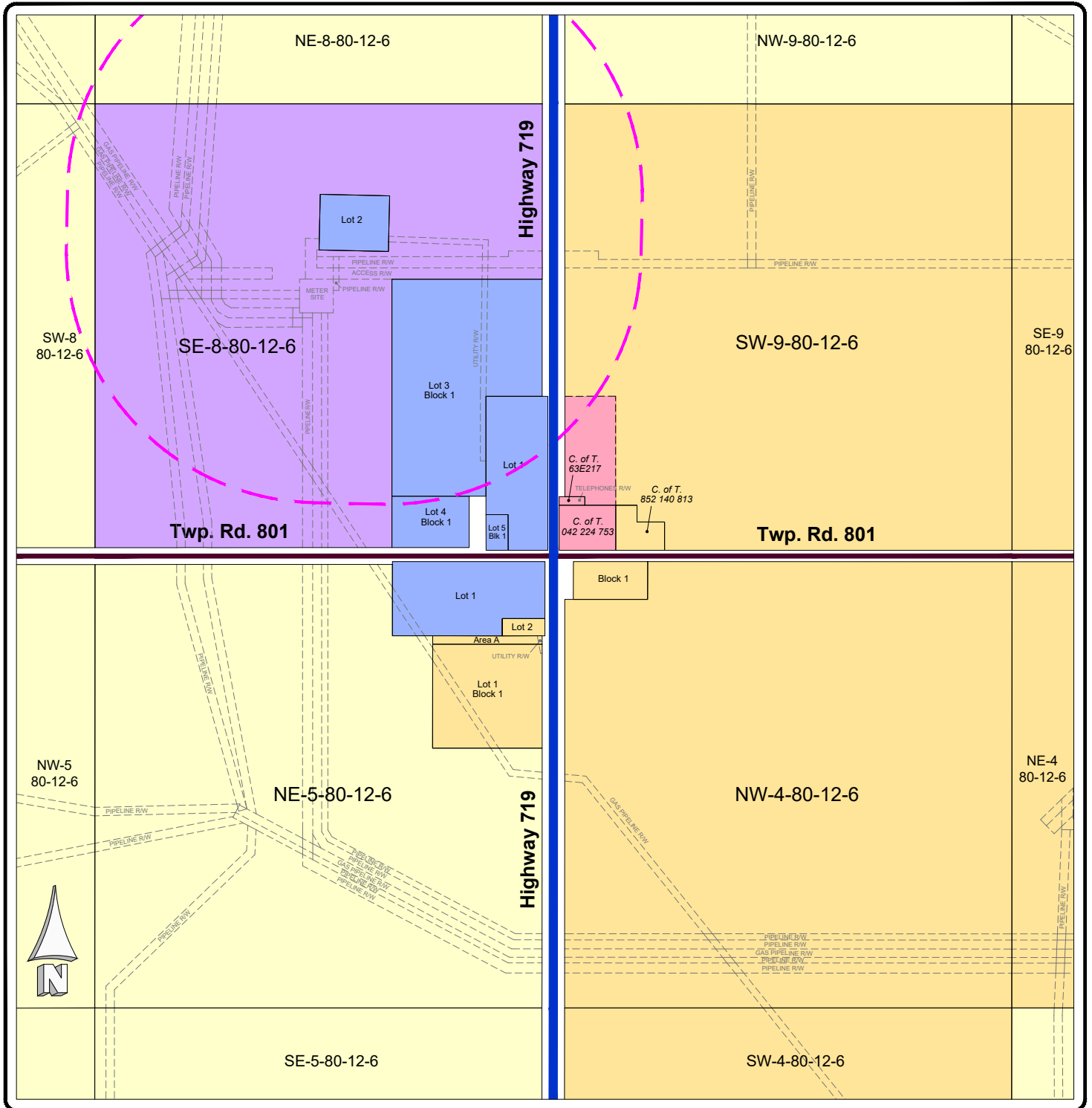
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FUTURE LAND USE

Figure 2.1

September 2021





LEGEND

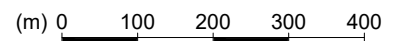
- Agriculture
- Commercial
- Country Residential
- Industrial
- Public / Community
- Highway 719
- County Road
- Sewage Lagoon Setback (450m)



Bonanza
Area Structure Plan
BONANZA COMMUNITY CENTRE -
FUTURE LAND USE CONCEPT

Figure 2.2

Scale 1:10,000



September 2021

2.3 Agriculture

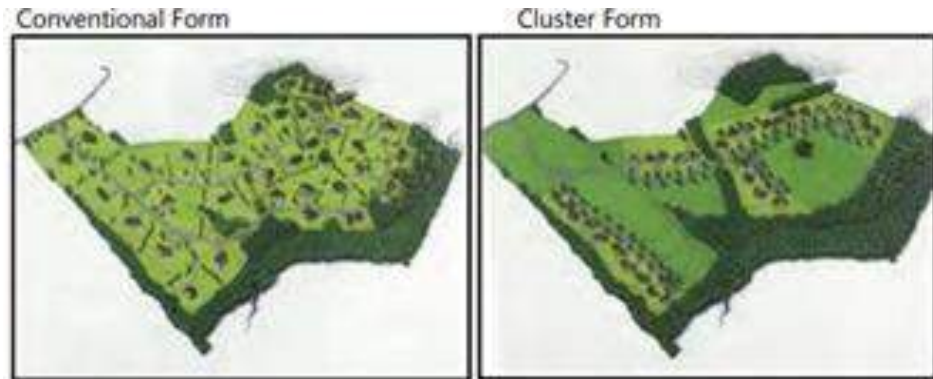
1. Agriculture is the predominant land use in the ASP area and agricultural operations are intended to continue in a majority of the Plan area.
2. Incidental subdivision such as farmstead separations, vacant first parcels, and severances shall continue to be considered in accordance with County MDP policy and LUB requirements.
3. Non-residential development in the form of institutional uses (e.g. churches, community halls) and home- or farm-based industrial or commercial uses shall continue to be considered on a case-by-case basis.
4. The subdivision of a maximum of three (3) lots plus the balance on lands that are not considered to be *Better Agricultural Lands* without requiring rezoning shall continue to be allowed in the Agriculture area, in accordance with the County's MDP policies and LUB requirements.
5. The resubdivision of existing lots in the Agriculture area may be allowed if the site requirements of the LUB can be met and the maximum density of three (3) lots is not exceeded.
6. Country residential subdivision in excess of one (1) lot plus the balance if located on Better Agricultural Land or in excess of three (3) lots plus the balance if not located on Better Agricultural Land will be subject to rezoning to either the Country Residential One (CR1) or Country Residential Two (CR2) Districts under the LUB. All rezoning and subdivision applications proposed will continue to be reviewed on their individual merits and decision based on the merits of the individual applications.
7. Confined Feeding Operations (CFOs) shall not be permitted:
 - a) Within a CFO Exclusion Area or the Water Catchment Area, or
 - b) Within 3.2 km (2 mi) of a Country Residential area, the Bonanza Community Area, a community or public use, or a provincial or municipal park in accordance with the MDP, or
 - c) Within 1.6 km (1 mi) from an adjacent municipality in accordance with the MDP, or
 - d) Within 3.2 km of a residence, or
 - e) Any other areas where a potential conflict may occur.
8. No livestock confinement practices, including winter feeding sites, shall be permitted on lands located within, or in the opinion of the County would negatively impact, the Water Catchment Area, as shown on Figure 2.1.

2.4 Country Residential

1. Future multi-lot country residential development is proposed for the Bonanza Community Area, and Country Residential areas, both east and south of Bonanza, along Highway 719 and Township Road 801, as shown on Figures 2.1 and 2.2.
2. Multi-lot country residential development should be directed to these areas due to:
 - Being adjacent to the existing water line,

- Bonanza having been identified as a Potential Growth Node area in the MDP, and
- The proximity of community services and amenities.

- Multi-lot country residential should be developed in a clustered form to optimize servicing and infrastructure and to reduce impacts on agricultural land.



- Multi-lot country residential development shall be rezoned to either the Country Residential One (CR1) or Country Residential Two (CR2) district under the LUB prior to subdivision approval.
- Existing natural features, including mature tree stands, are to be preserved wherever possible by integrating these features into the design of new subdivisions.

2.5 Commercial

- Commercial development in the ASP area shall be limited to the settlement of Bonanza, in the vicinity of existing commercial uses and to optimize proximity to Highway 719, as shown on Figure 2.2. This limitation on commercial development does not apply to home- or farm-based commercial uses.
- Notwithstanding the above, commercial development may be considered elsewhere in proximity to Highway 719 if the site-specific requirements of the development warrant the proposed location.
- Commercial development will be subject to the requirements of the Rural Commercial (RC) District as described in the LUB. All rezoning and subdivision applications proposed for commercial development shall be subject to review and decision based on the merits of the individual applications.
- Lighting and signage associated with future commercial development shall be designed in such a matter as to minimize impacts on traffic movement and mitigate potential impacts to adjacent residential uses.

2.6 Industrial

- Industrial development shall be encouraged to be developed in the industrial node, located in Bonanza, as shown on Figure 2.2. Locating in this area:
 - Supports MDP policies by locating in a *Potential Growth Area*, and being in proximity to established industrial operations and along highways or other high-grade roads

- Optimizes service efficiencies
 - Reduces impacts of development on agricultural lands
 - Limits fragmentation of land by locating adjacent to existing industrial uses
2. Industrial development shall not be supported in the Water Catchment Area, as shown on Figure 2.1, and in the ASP area where, in the opinion of the County, it would conflict with other land uses as a result of unsightly appearance, traffic generation, noise, odour, or environmental impact.
 3. Existing residential uses located within industrial nodes will be permitted to continue. Development permit applications for new industrial uses will be reviewed to ensure that new industrial developments provide appropriate buffering (e.g., setbacks, landscaping and screening) from established residential uses. New residential development will not be allowed in an Industrial area.
 4. All rezoning, development, and subdivision applications proposed for industrial development shall be subject to review and decision based on the merits of the individual applications and in accordance with the MDP.
 5. All rezoning, development and subdivision applications in the ASP area located in proximity to a pipeline, as shown in Figure 1.5, shall be referred to the pipeline operator, as required based on applicable Federal or Provincial legislation and protocols.
 6. Landscaping, buffering and screening shall be provided to the satisfaction of the County to minimize potential negative impacts between industrial development and adjacent non-industrial land uses.

2.7 Natural Areas and Crown Lands

1. Environmentally sensitive areas have been identified in the ASP area, as shown on Figure 2.1 as Natural Areas. These lands are intended to be preserved as Natural Areas due to their environmental significance.
2. The boundaries of identified Natural Areas are approximate and subject to confirmation at the time of development or subdivision through an environmental review and/or determination of the top-of-bank by survey.
3. The County may require the following lands to be dedicated as Environmental Reserve (ER):
 - a) Lands abutting permanent watercourses and permanent wetlands,
 - b) Swamps and marshes in accordance with the recommendations of a wetland assessment, and
 - c) Steep slopes, flood-prone and erosion-prone areas in accordance with the recommendations of a geotechnical assessment.
4. Existing development and activities (e.g., grazing leases, resource extraction) on Crown Lands shall continue to be permitted. Further development on Crown Lands will be permitted in accordance with provincial regulations and protocols.



5. The development of recreational uses may be considered in Natural Areas. Any development or subdivision that is proposed to be located within or adjacent to a Natural Area will be reviewed in accordance with the development setback requirements of the LUB, and the Environmental Stewardship policies of the MDP. No development or subdivision will be approved if it is deemed by the County to be detrimental to the Natural Area.

■ 3.0 Transportation and Servicing

3.1 Roads

The primary transportation corridor in the ASP area is Highway 719, a two-lane highway that runs north-south through the centre of the ASP area, including through the community of Bonanza.

1. The regulation of development along Highway 719 is the responsibility of Alberta Transportation, and proposed highway access is subject to Alberta Transportation approval. In addition, all development proposals located within 800 m of a highway require Alberta Transportation review.
2. The County shall consider the need for road widening or upgrading when reviewing all subdivision and development proposals in the ASP area. In addition, all roads shall be developed in accordance with County policy and standards.
3. The County shall encourage that multiple parcel subdivisions be served by internal subdivision roads that are designed and constructed to County standards. Wherever possible and practical, multiple parcel developments shall be designed to minimize the number of direct approaches to the road serving the development.
4. Through the subdivision and development permit processes, the County will encourage new development to be located adjacent to roads that have existing capacity to accommodate increased traffic.
5. A Traffic Impact Assessment, prepared by a qualified professional, may be required for new development to determine if road upgrades are needed.

3.2 Servicing

1. Prior to the approval of any industrial, commercial, or multi-lot country residential development, the presence of an adequate, potable water supply shall be demonstrated.
2. All new development located in proximity to the water line shall be required to connect to the municipal water system.
3. The County, in consultation with the County Fire Chief, may require that industrial sites provide adequate on-site water supplies for firefighting purposes.
4. All new development will accommodate domestic sewage disposal through the installation of private on-site systems until such time as a municipal sewer system is installed. A communal sewage system that meets provincial requirements may be permitted by the County. Additional connections to or expansion of the low-pressure sewer system located in Bonanza may be considered subject to available capacity.
5. All commercial, industrial, and multi-lot country residential developments shall address stormwater management in accordance with County requirements.



■ 4.0 Implementation

4.1 Monitoring and Review

1. The policies and mapping information contained within this ASP may be amended from time to time, by Council, in order to respond to and remain current with planning and development issues and trends affecting development and reflect the priorities of residents.
2. The ASP shall be reviewed once every five years to ensure the goals, objectives and policies contained within this ASP are relevant.
3. It is not the intention of this ASP to guarantee that lands in the ASP area are suitable on a site-specific basis for the possible land uses identified. As applications for subdivision or development are received, the County will evaluate the proposals on a case-by-case basis to determine if the lands are suitable for the proposed use and if rezoning is required.

4.2 Amending the Plan

1. An amendment to this ASP shall be required if, in the opinion of the County, a zoning, subdivision plan or development is proposed that varies significantly from the land use concept or the policies of this ASP. The land use designations in this ASP are considered flexible; however, an amendment shall be required to the ASP if:
 - a) The intent of a policy is to be changed,
 - b) A change is proposed to the land use areas identified on Figures 2.1 or 2.2, or
 - c) Policies are to be introduced or excluded.
2. Interested parties and government agencies will have an opportunity to comment on a proposed amendment in accordance with the public hearing procedure established under the Municipal Government Act.
3. If amendments are required, they shall be carried out by the County in a manner that includes notification of the amendment and an appropriate public engagement process.