The Role of Recreation, Parks and Open Space in Regional Planning

WORKING GUIDELINES REPORT

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Government of Alberta

Tourism, Parks and Recreation
Foreword

The Government of Alberta, through its Land-use Framework (December, 2008) and the Alberta Land Stewardship Act (October, 2009), has launched a new era in land planning and management in the Province – specifically, in regional planning. However, since provincially-generated regional plans will be binding on local governments, provincial departments, and a wealth of governmental and non-governmental special-purpose agencies and organizations, the effects will be felt far beyond the regional planning process itself.

As a leading service, advocacy and research organization for recreation and parks within the Province, the Alberta Recreation and Parks Association (ARPA) has a vital and enduring interest in land planning and management. The majority of the Association’s members are departments and agencies responsible for recreation and parks services in municipalities of widely varying sizes – from the Village of Thorsby to the City of Calgary. It should not be surprising, therefore, that ARPA wished to examine implications for recreation, parks and open space arising from the new regional planning process.

In the summer of 2009, ARPA contracted O2 Planning + Design consultants to carry out a study regarding the “Role of Recreation, Parks and Open Space (RPOS) in Regional Planning”, with a particular emphasis on the identification of current best planning practices and the development of guiding principles, outcomes, policies and strategies to support the ARPA’s efforts to ensure that recreation, parks and open space are identified as significant elements of the new regional plans and are treated as such.

The study was made possible by an enhanced Special Projects grant from Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation. The Association would like to express its appreciation to the Ministry for this support.

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1. Introduction

Alberta has seen dramatic growth over the last 25 years, with population increasing by over a million people to approximately 3.5 million today. By 2026, this number is expected to reach five million. Population growth and expanding urban development has, and will have, major implications for the provision of recreation, parks, and open space (RPOS). As population and urban growth continue, it will become increasingly important to conserve open space and create recreation opportunities in order to maintain the region's unique character, a high quality of life, and environmental quality.

The health benefits of recreation and active living are well documented. Amongst other significant health benefits, recreation and active living have been shown to prevent and combat chronic illnesses including arthritis, osteoporosis, obesity and diabetes. Physical activity contributes to weight loss and management, a significantly reduced risk of coronary heart disease and stroke, the rehabilitation of back problems, and the prevention of specific cancers. In fact, recreation has been shown to help people live longer – adding up to two years to life expectancy. What’s more, the health benefits of recreation extend to mental wellbeing with therapeutic qualities that enhance emotional health and contribute to positive self-image (Alberta Recreation and Parks Association, 2009).

RPOS are known to enhance quality of life. Quality of life is an all encompassing term used to describe people’s happiness and well-being. Of course, health is one important component of quality of life, but other aspects are also enhanced by RPOS. Notably, are the benefits to human development, families, and communities. Recreation activities provide opportunities to build social skills and cultivate self-sufficiency and leadership abilities. Recreation and parks are also known to help build a sense of place and engender community pride (Alberta Recreation and Parks Association, 2009).

The ecological benefits of parks and open space are also well understood but often economically undervalued. By protecting habitat, biodiversity, and ecological integrity, parks and open space are essential to environmental health. Green space improves air quality, helps mitigate the impacts of environmental disasters, and is essential to water quality and quantity.

The benefits of recreation, parks, and open space have real economic value. Given the benefits described, it is easy to understand the savings to taxpayers in reduced social services, reduced healthcare costs, and reduced spending on disaster relief and infrastructure needed to provide services now performed naturally (e.g. water filtration and flood mitigation).

Alberta’s diverse landscapes help define its unique character. The Province’s rugged mountains, open plains, forests, badlands, foothills, and wetlands contribute to the region’s identity and have important cultural value. Conserving these valued landscapes and their biodiversity will ensure that future generations are able to enjoy Alberta's natural beauty.

Parks offer opportunities for relaxation.

What is open space?

There is no single agreed upon definition for open space. Broadly speaking, open space refers to undeveloped land and water, both public and private. More specific definitions grow out of local land-use plans adopted by planning authorities. This paper defines open space as land and water that has the capacity to conserve, protect, and enhance natural or scenic resources; protect biodiversity; and enhance recreation opportunities.
Given its many personal, social/community, environmental, and economic benefits, it is critical that land use and resource plans address RPOS in a meaningful way. This is especially true for places like Alberta that are experiencing high growth and where a failure to plan at all levels can quickly result in missed opportunities.

1.1 Purpose of the Discussion Paper

Today, Alberta is entering a new era in land-use and resource planning. Together, the Alberta Land Stewardship Act (ALSA) and the Land-use Framework (LUF) have positioned the Province to lead an extensive regional planning process. Seven regions, congruent with the Province’s major watersheds, have been identified as regional planning units. Over the next few years, this ambitious planning process will unfold across the province. Regional plans will be shaped by the input of local governments, aboriginal communities, stakeholders, and the general public. Thus, regional planning presents an unique opportunity for Alberta Recreation and Parks Association (ARPA) and its membership to ensure that RPOS is prominently considered and that the policies adopted reflect the need to plan for RPOS regionally.

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the connection between regional planning and RPOS. This paper will:

- Assess how ARPA’s current policies and positions link with regional planning.
- Summarize what is known about the Provincial regional planning process.
- Explore how regional plans developed elsewhere have considered RPOS.
- Suggest potential RPOS outcomes, objectives, and strategies that could be included in regional plans in Alberta.

In short, this discussion paper is a tool, applicable to all seven regional plans, that provides a framework for discussing RPOS within a regional planning context. ARPA, its members, and other advocates can use this tool to become valuable informants and effective participants in the Province’s regional planning process(es). This shared knowledge will increase the likelihood that RPOS will be adequately addressed and well integrated into all seven of Alberta’s future regional plans.

1.2 Alberta Recreation and Parks Association Priorities

ARPA is a provincial charitable, not-for-profit, public service organization with a membership comprised primarily of municipalities, but which also include educational institutions, individuals, businesses, and industry. As a key advocate for recreation and parks in Alberta, ARPA provides input on policy, campaigns for program support, and educates decision-makers on RPOS issues. Additionally, the Association delivers a variety of programs and educational/technical assistance to recreation and parks professionals and volunteers, and conducts RPOS-related research.
As a leading service, advocacy and research organization, ARPA has published many informative reports that identify trends, highlight challenges, make recommendations, and document the benefits of RPOS in today’s contemporary society. Reviewing the Association’s programs, reports, position papers, and other publications is critical to understanding RPOS issues in Alberta and how these issues relate to regional planning.

ARPA’s primary interests and concerns are listed below.

**Active community strategies.** Obesity, heart disease, diabetes, and other health problems are linked to sedentary lifestyles. Urban environments that create barriers to walking, bicycling, and other forms of activity are partially to blame. Active living is about reshaping the places we live, work, and play to encourage physical activity (i.e. residential areas mixed with shopping, jobs, and housing in close proximity, walkable and bikable routes to school, plentiful trails, and safe neighborhood parks).

**Community development.** Recreation and parks are key components of social development and community building. What’s more, research shows that municipalities that involve their residents in the planning, design, and management of RPOS develop knowledgeable and engaged citizens who feel connected through a sense of belonging to their communities.

**Focusing on special populations in need.** Recreation and parks play a role in serving special populations – low-income, special needs, and recent immigrants.

**Environmental preservation, conservation and stewardship.** Parks and open spaces have the potential to perform important ecological services (i.e., protecting biodiversity, managing floodwater and stormwater, improving water and air quality, and providing wildlife habitat). Natural areas build awareness and appreciation for the environment and connect urban populations to nature.

**Countryside protection and access.** As the region’s population continues to grow, opportunities to preserve open space at our urban-rural interface may be missed. Urban centers should grow in ways that preserve countryside landscapes, waterways, agricultural greenbelts and biodiversity.

**Diversifying RPOS facilities and areas.** Demographic trends as well as changes in recreation activity preferences can create new demand for recreation infrastructure. By responding to anticipated changes in demand, recreation facilities will remain accessible and well used.

**Aging infrastructure.** Many of Alberta’s community recreation facilities are nearing the end of their useful lifespan and are in need of repair or replacement. Additionally, infrastructure upgrades may not have kept pace with changing recreation preferences or with population growth.

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**DID YOU KNOW?**

- 92% of Albertans agree that recreation participation is a major contributor to improved quality of life.
- 93% of Albertans agree that recreation participation contributes to an individual’s health and wellbeing.
- 94% agree that recreation is an important way of ensuring children and youth live healthy lifestyles.
- 90% agree that parks make an important contribution to the quality of the environment.

- from “In Alberta... Recreation and Parks Matter!” (ARPA, 2009)
Lack of sustained funding. In Alberta, inadequate sustained funding poses a challenge to maintaining existing and creating new high-quality recreation areas and parks.

Accessibility. Increasing accessibility to recreation opportunities and public open space is critical to ensuring residents receive the many benefits of recreation and parks.

Risk management and liability. Recreation has inherent risks. Unfortunately, the onerous cost of legal liability prevents/impedes the creation of new recreation opportunities on both public and private land. With litigation on the rise and the cost of insurance increasing, public agencies and private landowners are rightfully concerned about the legal liability of allowing public recreation access. New solutions to manage risk and decrease liability need to be found.

Quality of life. RPOS is known to enhance quality of life by improving the physical, emotional and mental wellbeing of individuals and building a positive sense of place and community pride.

Supporting the recreation industry. The tourism industry is important to Alberta’s economic base, generating over $5 billion in annual expenditures. There is the potential to grow and diversify this industry by supporting the tourism, hospitality, and service-related businesses that cater to the needs of tourists. Recent studies have also shown that the recreation industry in Alberta, by itself, represents an annual economic significance of $2.3 billion and 34,000 in full-time equivalent positions.

1.3 Government of Alberta Land-use Framework

The LUF formalizes regional planning in Alberta by establishing a planning process and designating seven geographic (watershed based) areas that must plan regionally. The overriding aim of LUF’s regional planning is to achieve a better balance between economic growth, environmental protection, and social values. The LUF fundamentally changes the way planning is done in Alberta. Once created and approved by the Province, regional plans will be binding on municipalities, provincial departments, and other decision-makers. Local government and departmental plans and policies may require modifications so as to align and comply with the regional plan.

The LUF consists of seven basic approaches to improve land-use decision-making in Alberta. These seven approaches constitute a blueprint for the Province to follow, namely:

1. Develop seven regional land-use plans based on seven new land-use regions.
2. Create a Land-use Secretariat and establish a Regional Advisory Council for each region.
3. Cumulative effects management will be used at the regional level to manage the impacts of development on land, water, and air.
4. Develop a strategy for conservation and stewardship on private and public lands.
5. Promote efficient use of land to reduce the footprint of human activities on Alberta's landscape.
6. Establish an information, monitoring, and knowledge system to contribute to continuous improvement of land-use planning and decision-making.
7. Inclusion of aboriginal peoples in land-use planning.

The Province has identified five immediate priorities that will be addressed first. These are: legislation to support the LUF, metropolitan plans for the Capital (Edmonton) and Calgary regions, the Lower Athabasca Regional Plan, and the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan. Additionally, there are a number of policy gaps that the Province will work to fill.

The ALSA, the enabling legislation for the LUF, received Royal Assent on June 2009 and was proclaimed in October 2009. The ALSA creates the legal authority for implementing the LUF. The ALSA described the required and optional contents of the regional plan, more specifically:

- A regional plan must include a vision and one or more objectives.
- A regional plan may include policies, thresholds, indicators, monitoring/assessment procedures, and delegation of some authorities.

To support the implementation of regional plans, the ALSA states that a regional plan may include a wide range of Provincial actions: policy, regulation, law, and the management of any surface/subsurface land or natural resource. Of particular relevance for RPOS is that the ALSA establishes the right of landowner compensation, and significantly expands the conservation and stewardship tools available, for example:

- Conservation easements
- Conservation directives
- Conservation offsets
- Transfer of development credits

1.4 Regional Planning in Alberta

Generally, regional plans transcend individual municipal government boundaries to cover geographic areas that have common social, economic, political, and cultural characteristics or that share a natural-resource base and/or transportation systems (American Planning Association, 2006).

In Alberta, regional plans must be consistent with the ASLA and the LUF’s guiding principles and desired outcomes. While all three desired outcome themes (Healthy economy supported by our land and natural resources; Healthy ecosystems and environment; People-friendly communities...) in LUF
relate to RPOS planning, the third, *people-friendly communities with ample recreational and cultural opportunities*, relates most directly.

The LUF also identifies a number of areas where clear provincial policy does not exist. The management of recreation use on public lands is one gap that the Government of Alberta has committed to address. A 2010 deadline has been set for completing a provincial strategy to manage the recreational use of public lands. The provincial government will then turn its attention to developing a broader strategy that incorporates recreation on private lands.

An important and influential entity in the regional planning process is the Regional Advisory Councils (RAC) which are to be established in each planning region (LUF Strategy #2). RAC members will have social, economic, or environmental expertise that allows them to bring local and regional insight into the planning process. The purpose of the RAC is to provide advice to Cabinet regarding the regional plans.

For the South Saskatchewan and the Lower Athabasca regional plans, the Province has formed Regional Planning Teams (RPT). Comprised of staff members from various Provincial departments, RPTs are tasked with writing the regional plans. The Land-use Secretariat will oversee the development of each regional plan.

All seven regional plans are expected to have the same basic components. The first two plans completed will establish a template for all subsequent regional plans. The plan template is likely to include the following:

- **Profile of the Region** – A summary of the current state of the region and discusses the major challenges today and in the future.

- **Policy Context** – The framing policy directions as provided by Cabinet.

- **Regional Vision Statement** – A vision of the future region that supports the outcomes and principles of the LUF.

- **Regional Outcomes** – A qualitative statement(s) that describe the desired condition for a given issue; what should be accomplished.

- **Objectives** – A description of specific results that achieve or represent progress towards an outcome. Objectives may be quantified by targets and/or thresholds for measurable performance indicators.

- **Strategies** – A description of actions to achieve an objective. Strategies are adopted by government agencies, institutions, or groups to guide and usually determine present and future decisions.

- **Monitoring and Reporting** – A description of how the Alberta Government will monitor, track, and report on progress made towards reaching objectives established in the plan.
2. Integration of RPOS in Regional Planning: A Review of “Best Practices”

The recent rise of regional planning in Alberta is not unique. While more regional and centralized statutory planning has steadily shaped land use in European countries, its use in North America has been less common and land use authority has remained firmly in the hands of local governments. However, the escalating complexity of problems associated with land use—water quality, air quality, economic growth, climate change, natural resource preservation, and biodiversity—extend across political boundaries. The growing recognition that regions are inextricably connected economically, socially, and environmentally has led to a resurgence of regional planning. It is a process that can bring together multiple levels of government to solve problems and seize opportunities that cut across geographic, departmental, and sector boundaries.

The role of RPOS in regional planning can be informed by outside jurisdictions where regional plans have been completed. In total, 25 potential “best practice” plans were reviewed. The plans reviewed can be divided into three categories; regional plans, metropolitan area plans, and RPOS-focused plans (Table 1). Of the 25 plans, 13 were organized into an evaluation template that allows for easy interpretation and comparison (see Appendix B). These 13 plans were selected because they address RPOS in a significant way and are of high quality. They also represent a diversity of places (i.e. Canada, the US, the UK, and Australia) and planning units (i.e. planning region, province, metro area, state, and county).

The “best practice” research conducted for this paper also included a review of non-planning documents. Other materials reviewed include: government documents, “best-practice” guidance documents, and materials published by various RPOS advocacy groups.
Table 1. Plans Reviewed *(plans in bold are included in Appendix B)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regional plans</th>
<th>Metropolitan plans</th>
<th>Recreation, Parks, Open Space, and/or Green Plans</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Yorkshire and Humber Plan</td>
<td>Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe</td>
<td>Vermont Outdoor Recreation Plan</td>
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<td>Central Queensland Regional Growth Management Framework</td>
<td>The London Plan</td>
<td>Lancaster County, PA – Greenscapes</td>
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<tr>
<td>The South East Queensland Regional Plan</td>
<td>Sydney – City of Cities: A Plan for Sydney’s Future</td>
<td>Alberta – Plan for Parks</td>
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<td>Far North Queensland Regional Plan</td>
<td>Denver – Metro Vision 2030 Plan</td>
<td>Maryland Land Preservation, Parks &amp; Recreation Plan</td>
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<td>Goldfields-Esperance Regional Planning Strategy</td>
<td>Portland Metro – Regional Framework Plan</td>
<td>Capital Region River Valley Park</td>
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<td>New York City - plaNYC</td>
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<td>Halifax Regional Municipality Planning Strategy</td>
<td>Exmoor National Park Management Plan</td>
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<td>Creating Connections: The Pennsylvania Greenways and Trails How-To Manual</td>
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<td>The Auckland Regional Open Space Strategy</td>
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<td>Buckinghamshire Green Infrastructure Strategy</td>
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<td>The Yorkshire Dales Local Plan</td>
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<td>Chester County, PA - Linking Landscapes</td>
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2.1 Plan Structure and Language

Regional plans with robust RPOS components move beyond broad, generic statements to include clear policy outcomes and specific strategies for addressing challenges. A comparison of regional plans is complicated by the use of different working definitions for organizing terms such as goals, policies, strategies, and actions. For this reason, the *prima facie* differences in structure amongst the plans are not indicative of the level of detail in which RPOS is addressed.

At a minimum, regional plans with strong RPOS components must include a definitive course or method of action to achieve a desired RPOS condition (hereafter referred to as objectives) and the discrete measures and processes that make up the course of action (hereafter referred to as strategies). Strategies often address a need for data, monitoring, planning, coordination, education, technical assistance, regulations, or incentives.

Of the 13 regional and metro plans reviewed, approximately half have specific RPOS goals, outcomes, or aims and approximately half have a dedicated section or subsection within the plan. However, a plan can have a strong RPOS component without a designated RPOS chapter or goal. For example, the South East Queensland Regional Plan is organized within twelve regional policy categories, three of which address RPOS - The Regional Landscape, Strong Communities, and Compact Settlement. The report outlines principles and policies for a greenspace network, the protection of scenic amenities, the management of landscape heritage, the provision of outdoor recreation, the provision of adequate and appropriate community outdoor and indoor recreation facilities, and the provision of urban community greenspace. The plan maps the existing greenspace network of public lands and trails, as well as scenic amenity value of all land within the region.

2.2 “Best Practices” and Approaches

After reviewing 25 plans in total, a number of elements and ideas stood out for their progressiveness and appropriateness or because they provide strong guidance for implementation. These can be divided into higher level “best practice” goals and objectives, and more specific “best practice” actions and strategies.

“Best practice” goals and objectives include:

- Language that links compact development to RPOS (e.g. SE Queensland)
- Language that addresses access, quality, and diversity
- Language that links mental and physical wellbeing to RPOS (e.g. Maryland)
- Language that links economic benefits to RPOS (e.g. Maryland)
Denver’s Metro Vision 2030 Plan identifies and maps preservation focus areas. Focus areas are:
- Canyons and river corridors
- The mountain backdrop
- Prominent geographic features
- Plains preserve
- Open space community buffers surrounding communities in the region

Recognizing fiscal constraints and limited land availability, plaNYC: A Greener, Greater New York takes a pragmatic, yet innovative approach to expand recreation opportunities and the amount of open space. While these solutions are designed for a dense urban area, their modest cost and ease of implementation may be attractive to Alberta's municipalities. Strategies include:

More Sites: Open schoolyards across the city as public playgrounds, increasing options for competitive athletics, and completing underdeveloped destination parks.

More Hours: Expanding usable hours at existing sites by providing more multi-purpose fields and installing new lighting.

Greener Public Realm: Re-imagine the public realm by creating or enhancing a public plaza in every community and greening the streetscape.

“Best practice” actions and strategies:
- Actions or strategies related to a planning process:
  - Inventorying and identification
- Strategies to protect land in “focus” areas. For example, towards the creation of a permanent parks and open space system, Denver’s plan encourages preserving open space in key focus areas. These areas are mapped in the regional plan.
- Plans that clearly identify or define the elements of their open space network(s). For example, Denver’s open space elements include:
  - Focus areas
  - Agriculture
  - Natural resources
  - Hazard areas
  - Recreation
  - Urban shaping
  - Prominent features
  - Trails network
- Actions or strategies that address how private lands could be conserved (i.e. conservation easements, conservation offsets, conservation directives, transfer of development credits, etc.).

In some cases regional plans take specific approaches to RPOS planning. These approaches can be categorized as:

- Those focused on increasing access. In denser, built-out urban areas, increasing the amount of public open space is often impractical. For this reason, New York and Sydney have numerous strategies to increase access.
- Those focused on building and protecting an open/green space network.
- Those focused on improving human health by expanding RPOS opportunities.

Regional plans incorporate RPOS policies and objectives in different ways. Our research found RPOS addressed in chapters or sections that can be separated into five categories:

- Environment
- Social & Cultural Development
- Economy
- Development (General)
- Recreation, Parks, and Open Space

However, because regional plans must be consistent with the defined outcomes of the LUF, the recommendations within this discussion paper are built around the three broad LUF outcomes. The following diagram shows the organization of the guiding language in this paper.
3. Alberta’s Guiding Principles for Regional Planning

Guiding principles are statements expressing a philosophy or approach that would apply to all aspects of the regional planning process. They are not issue or subject specific. The guiding principles used to create the LUF provide a good starting point from which to build a more robust list.

Land-Use Framework Principles:

**Sustainable** - Development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Contemporary land-use decisions will balance current economic, environmental and social benefits with the consequences for future generations. This principle of inter-generational responsibility applies to all forms of human land use (residential and industrial, agriculture and forestry, energy and transportation).

**Accountable and responsible** - All levels of government, the private sector and the community at large will share accountability for responsible land use.

**Supported by a land stewardship ethic** - This means accepting the responsibility to ensure that our land-use decisions are mindful of consequences for future generations. This responsibility applies to urban planning, forestry and agriculture, habitat and wildlife, watersheds and riparian areas, and all other decisions affecting land use. Where appropriate, market mechanisms will be used to promote stewardship practices.

**Collaborative and transparent** - Albertans, landowners, land users and governments will work together.

Related Planning Initiative - The Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA) has launched an initiative to encourage local governments to develop Municipal Sustainability Plans (MSPs). The Association encourages communities to organize plans around five dimensions of sustainability: social, cultural, economic, environment and governance. RPOS issues and opportunities are very likely to be part of the MSP process. AUMA’s MSP Guide includes a sample MSP goal that directly speaks to RPOS, “Well-maintained, local, user-friendly public and green spaces with facilities for everyone including children and older people.”
Integrated - Policies, planning and decisions will integrate current and new land use on public and private lands and co-ordinate land, air, water, biodiversity, economic development and social objectives within the region.

Knowledge-based - Government decision-making and choices will be informed by science, evidence and experience, including traditional knowledge of aboriginal peoples.

Responsive - Land-use decision-making processes will be responsive to changing economic, environmental and social factors over time and will be improved through periodic review. If there are negative unintended consequences, will review policies for possible corrections or repeal.

Fair, equitable and timely - Decision-making criteria and processes will be clearly defined, consistently followed, and not subject to political expediency. Decision-making bodies will be provided with the capacity to perform their responsibilities in a timely manner.

Respectful of private property rights - Decisions will respect the laws of property ownership and the positive role of free markets in making societal (public) choices.

Respectful of the constitutionally protected rights of aboriginal communities - The Government of Alberta will continue to work with aboriginal communities’ governments, while respecting the special role and relationship of the federal government regarding the aboriginal peoples. The Government of Alberta recognizes that consultation should take place on matters that impact treaty or constitutionally protected rights of First nations and Métis peoples.

Background research uncovered additional principles that complement those of the LUF and would make for a more comprehensive set.

Public participation - Albertans have opportunities for meaningful input into planning decisions (adapted from Alberta’s Plan for Parks).

Monitoring performance – Milestones and deliverables are established and Albertans receive timely information about progress in achieving desired outcomes (Alberta’s Plan for Parks, p. 18).

4. RPOS Vision Statement

The process of developing possible RPOS objectives and strategies for regional planning begins with a vision. A vision is a broad, unifying statement that articulates public values and a common idea for the future of a place, a program, an organization, etc. The vision provides guidance and context for outcomes and objectives as well as for the development of qualitative
performance measures by which policies and actions can be judged. As written, the ARPA vision statement provides this guidance:

“A region, and communities within, that embrace and proactively use recreation and parks as essential means for enhancing individual well-being and community vitality, economic sustainability and natural resource protection and conservation.”

5. Guiding Principles for RPOS Planning

Subject specific guiding principles are useful in the regional planning process because they establish a common understanding from which decision-makers from diverse backgrounds can proceed. Unlike the guiding principles for regional planning, RPOS-specific principles do not address the planning process but instead are value-laden and fact-based statements. The following RPOS principles are organized into four categories: personal/social, economic, ecological, and organizational/administrative.

Personal and Social Guiding Principles for RPOS Planning:

**Physical connections increase the value of parks, trails, and open space.** "When open spaces are linked together, their quality improves. By linking animal habitats with wildlife corridors, the animals within them can migrate as they naturally do. Likewise trails that link parks to neighborhoods provide families with easier access to recreation opportunities” (Chester County Planning Commission, September 2002 p. 15). It is important to ensure that connectivity is evident in urban settings as well as in countryside.

**Reasonable access to a variety of recreation and parks opportunities is a universal need.** The physical, social, and psychological benefits of nature and recreation should be accessible to all residents. Ideally, residents and visitors should have access to a variety of settings that encompass the major landscape types of the region as well as to a spectrum of recreation opportunities that range from primitive to highly developed.

**Great parks, open space, and recreation opportunities improve quality of life in a community.** Recreation and parks are essential to quality of life. Recreational activities have been associated with positive self-esteem, happiness, independence, satisfaction with life, as well as with other psychological, social, and physical benefits (Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, 1997).

**Outdoor recreation bestow direct health benefits, and communities that emphasize outdoor recreation in their development will have healthier residents.** Parks and open space offer physical fitness as well as mental and spiritual benefits for everyone. To capture those potential benefits, communities need to
create welcoming places for both spontaneous and structured play (ARPA, 2009).

Recreation, parks and open space help communities celebrate diverse cultural traditions, reinforce local identity, and build civic pride. Municipalities that involve their residents in the planning, design, and management of recreation, parks and open space develop knowledgeable and engaged citizens who feel connected to their communities. Involvement can offer a place for positive social interaction and lead to broader discussions about other important community development issues (ARPA, 2009).

Parks are an important place to learn about, appreciate, and care for Alberta’s natural and cultural heritage. Parks preserve natural history as well as archaeological and historic sites. They also offer a forum for formal and informal education on a wide range of subjects and the opportunity to appreciate nature and engage in volunteerism.

Outdoor recreation is essential to balanced child and youth development. Epidemic obesity, elevated stress and rising rates of Attention Deficit Disorder suggest that lifestyle changes over the past several decades are having a harmful impact on children. Children today spend too much time indoors. Parks and open space can reconnect children with nature, and increase creativity, social skills, and problem-solving ability. Children that play out-of-doors are happier and healthier. (ARPA, 2009).

Recreation and parks play a key role in serving special populations – low-income, special needs, and recent immigrants. Children from low-income families are far less involved in sport and recreation pursuits (Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, 2009). Persons with disabilities are more likely to be constrained from participation in local parks and recreation services (Harper, et al., 1999). New immigrants and ethnic minorities have low rates of participation in sport and recreation (Lovelock, et al., 2008). Targeted efforts help special populations access recreation and parks.

Parks can strengthen urban and rural areas. Parks have the power to define the shape and feel of a municipality and its neighborhoods. High quality, well maintained parks and open space can attract people and businesses—revitalize commercial areas, stabilize faltering neighbourhoods, and provide a point of local pride for residents (ARPA, 2009). Rural areas can diversify and strengthen their economy with new tourism opportunities—ecotourism, agri-tourism, natural heritage recreation, and outdoor adventure.

Recreation and active living are essential to personal health. People who exercise live longer and have better health, increased physical mobility, improved psychological well being, and an overall improved quality of life (Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, 1997).
Economic Guiding Principles for RPOS Planning:

High quality parks and trails grow wealth by increasing property values. Passive parks and open space positively impact real property value. Buyers are willing to pay a premium for a house with view of or access to high quality green space. Trails too can boost the value of adjacent properties. A 2007 study conducted in Alberta, found that proximity to green spaces resulted in residential house value premiums of 10 to 15% (ARPA, 2007). The increased property values derived through residential lots adjacent to parks increases municipal tax revenues.

Parks and open space amenities contribute to an enhanced quality of life that attracts workers and business, especially the highly skilled “creative class”. The work of renowned economist Richard Florida and other urban researchers highlights the importance of recreation and parks, a key measure of economic diversification and quality of life (ARPA, 2009).

By attracting visitors and tourists, parks add to the local and regional economy. Parks often become a municipality’s or a region’s signature attraction and a tool for attracting tourists. What’s more, the organized events held in public parks bring substantial revenue to the hosting community (ARPA, 2009).

Recreation, parks and open space provide community residents with direct savings. Parks and open spaces provide economic benefits in the form of direct use value, health value, and community cohesion value. In this way, RPOS offers cost-effective opportunities to meet policy objectives – improved health, food and water security, better air quality, and reduced risk from natural hazards.

Recreation and parks are significant to Alberta's economy. Conservative snapshots of recreation and parks expenditures depict a recreation and parks sector that is significant and growing in both economic output and employment effects. Clearly recreation and parks are economic drivers with potential to further diversify the Alberta economy at a time of renewed concern about the need to do exactly that. Total GDP impact of recreation and parks on Alberta’s economy was conservatively estimated at $2.3 billion in 2001 (ARPA, 2006).

Ecological Guiding Principles for RPOS Planning:

Parks and open space provide a haven for wildlife. Habitat loss is the leading cause of biodiversity decline. Parks and protected areas are the critical anchors for biodiversity and ecological integrity. For this reason, protected open space should include an adequate representation of the natural regions, sub-regions, and landscape features found within the seven planning regions. However, connections are key. Integrity is enhanced when parks and
protected areas are part of a network of protected areas and the areas surrounding them are also in good ecological health.

**Parks and open space have the potential to perform important ecological services.** Community parks and open space have the potential to contribute to flood control, modify urban temperatures, protect water resources, improve air quality, increase biodiversity, and capture and store carbon.

**Parks and open space are essential prerequisites to, and elements within, sustainable development processes and practices.** Sustainable development is about built environments that embrace and are in harmony with nature and natural systems.

**Parks and open space, together with environmental and municipal reserves are primary vehicles for implementing and sustaining systems and protected areas and landscapes.** They are anchors within any conservation system. They contribute significantly to development of an appropriate balance between human activities and natural processes.

Organizational and Administrative Guiding Principles for RPOS Planning:

**High-quality RPOS throughout Alberta is the result of the work of skilled professionals and efficient organizations.** Alberta’s RPOS providers are well-informed and well-trained professionals and RPOS departments, agencies, and organizations are efficiently run. Planning, training and monitoring helps recreation and park agencies improve service delivery to citizens.

**RPOS will result through shared governance** involving timely and innovative investments by public, private/corporate and voluntary sectors.

### 6. RPOS Outcomes

Regional plans generally include outcome statements that provide the foundation for recommendations. An outcome is the desired condition for a given issue – or what should be accomplished. The desired outcomes included in the LUF are:

- Healthy economy supported by our land and natural resources,
- Healthy ecosystems and environment, and
- People-friendly communities with ample recreational and cultural opportunities.

The LUF also includes principles to support each outcome. Very germane to RPOS is the following LUF principle supporting the people-friendly community outcome:
Alberta’s parks inspire people to value, enjoy and discover the natural world and the benefits it provides for current and future generations.

It is important to note that regional plans may include additional outcomes, so there is potential to suggest RPOS-specific outcomes for regional plans. Yet, before understanding what should be accomplished (an outcome), the RPOS challenges currently facing Alberta must be identified.

Key RPOS challenges facing Alberta (ARPA, 2009):

**A growing disconnect with nature.** Alberta's population is rapidly urbanizing. Approximately 81% of Albertan’s live in an urban environment. This increasing disconnect with rural and natural environments has serious social, health, cultural and generational implications. Children and adults will be less likely to understand and appreciate the natural world.

**Missed opportunities to build regional green space networks.** Rapid growth and development in Alberta has made long range planning for regionally connected open space challenging. Too often the development process overlooks opportunities to protect valuable lands for future open space and trail networks. Economic planning has often superseded conservation planning.

**A need for partnership and collaboration.** The use of formal partnerships and other kinds of collaboration for RPOS is growing. Citizens, governments, businesses, and other not-for-profit organizations pursue partnerships to stretch scarce resources, enrich programs and expand the positive outcomes of their work. Forging collaborations and developing new models of joint stewardship has never been more important.

**Inadequate research, information sharing and good practice.** Documenting and communicating the value of RPOS to decision-makers depends on research and information sharing. Too little translational research occurs and investment resources in this area are scarce.

**Inadequate resources and funding.** Public funding for recreation, parks and open space competes with an array of public services. There will never be enough public funding to protect natural resources, acquire and maintain parkland, and provide recreation programs and services. RPOS, have been subject to funding inconsistencies and budget constraints.

**Declining public health.** Inactivity is a key contributor to obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and other illnesses. For this reason, providing safe and accessible green corridors and trailways and building communities that encourage active living are key to improving health.

**Consistently excellent service.** Maintaining standards of high-quality is essential to ensuring that Albertans use and support the continued funding of RPOS.
The following proposed RPOS outcomes are influenced by these challenges, ARPA’s interests and concerns, and “best practice” research and learnings. They were selected because, read together, they create an image of a future that is in line with the vision – A region, and communities within, that embrace and proactively use recreation and parks as essential means for enhancing individual well-being and community vitality, economic sustainability and natural resource protection and conservation.

Regional plans will be structured around the three LUF outcomes. For this reason, the proposed RPOS policy outcomes are nested beneath these guiding statements. If RPOS outcomes are too specific or detailed for the regional plan, they may be incorporated into subsequent sub-regional plans.

**RPOS Outcome Statements:**

**LUF Outcome: People-friendly communities with ample recreational and cultural opportunities**

**RPOS Outcome 1. Ribbons of Blue and Green** — A region-wide open space and trail system links communities throughout the region through a network of connected trails, parks, waterways and open space.

**RPOS Outcome 2. Live a Better Life** — Quality of life in the region is enhanced by accessible, diverse, and high quality RPOS that offers a range of recreation experiences that encourage active living.

**RPOS Outcome 3. Learning Landscapes** — Residents have a deeper appreciation for the region’s natural heritage and are aware of RPOS resources.

**LUF Outcome: Healthy economy supported by our land and natural resources**

**RPOS Outcome 4. Green Economic Engine** — The region is a magnet for residents, businesses, and tourists because of its outstanding recreation opportunities, parks, and open space.

**LUF Outcome: Healthy ecosystems and environment**

**RPOS Outcome 5. Ecological Keeper** — Parks and protected areas are critical anchors in an integrated conservation system through protecting natural capital, ecological integrity and biodiversity including genetic, species, and ecosystem diversity.

7. **Recommended Objectives**

The following outlines potential objectives and strategies that could be considered during the regional planning process. It is unlikely that a regional plan would include all of these objectives/strategies. Some might find a better fit in local government plans or subject-specific regional or sub-regional plans.
LUF Outcome: People-friendly communities with ample recreational and cultural opportunities

RPOS Outcome 1.

Ribbons of Blue and Green:
A region-wide open space and trail system links communities throughout the region through a network of connected trails, parks, waterways and open space.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective 1.1</th>
<th>Strategy A</th>
<th>Develop common data classifications and standards to allow for the consolidation and sharing of data and information for existing and potential RPOS.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strategy B</td>
<td>Initiate a regional geographic information system project to assemble and share RPOS data.</td>
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<td>- Data collection, standards, creation, and distribution</td>
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<td>- Spatial analysis</td>
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<td>- Mapping</td>
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<td>Strategy C</td>
<td>Use consolidated data to create maps and websites to increase public awareness of recreation and parks opportunities throughout the region.</td>
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<td>Strategy D</td>
<td>Initiate an expanded, enhanced and user friendly Facility Inventory Tracking System (FITS) for public recreation facilities.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Strategy E</td>
<td>Undertake appropriate regional (and local) recreation needs assessments.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Objective 1.2 Plan and build an integrated, high-quality, regional network of publically owned and managed open space.

Strategy A ATPR leads, in collaboration with stakeholders, a regional organization or task force to serve as a catalyst for regional parks and open space planning, management, and funding.

Strategy B Develop a common open space classification system such as:

- Agriculture
- Natural resource lands
- Riparian corridors
- Hazard areas
- Parks and recreation areas
- Prominent features
- Trail networks

Strategy C Inventory, audit, map and define the existing and potential open space resources, both public and private.
### Strategy D
Encourage the creation of a regional RPOS plan that includes critical analyses and information such as:

- Assesses the need for additional RPOS at the regional scale.
- Prioritizes land use for the purpose of recreation and/or conservation.
- Identifies opportunities to avoid duplication and increase diversity of facilities and programs.
- Identifies opportunities for integrating the planning and provision of trails with linear infrastructure—road, rail lines, utility corridors and other rights-of-way.
- Identifies critical linkages between urban and countryside destinations and provincial parks (i.e. wildlife corridors, riparian corridors, recreation trails).
- Identifies and incorporates heritage sites and scenic amenities.

### Strategy E
Support the integration of the Alberta Recreation Corridor and Trails Designation Program along with the Trans Canada Trail system into regional plans.

### Strategy F
Develop a greenways network of non-motorized, and off-road recreational trails that interconnect open spaces, urban areas, communities and recreational areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective 1.3</th>
<th>Enhance and expand the regional open space network to include conservation and recreation opportunities on private lands.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategy A</strong></td>
<td>Develop a program to include working landscapes as part of a regional open space network.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Strategy B</strong></td>
<td>Work with willing land-owners to identify and establish where key linkages through private lands are possible.</td>
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<td><strong>Strategy C</strong></td>
<td>Identify barriers to allowing public access on private lands.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Strategy D</strong></td>
<td>Use conservation tools and other incentives to address barriers to public access for recreation purposes.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective 2.1</th>
<th>Offer a diversity of parks, indoor and outdoor recreation opportunities, trails, and open space (e.g. leisure,</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategy A</strong></td>
<td>Provide all citizens with a wide range of recreational and cultural opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategy B</strong></td>
<td>Plan and manage recreation and parks to</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Objective 2.2** Enhance and expand the provision of great parks and recreation facilities through cooperative and collaborative relationships (amongst and between government jurisdictions, not-for-profit organizations, volunteers, and the private sector).

| Strategy A | Support and expand existing collaborations with key partners. Seek to replicate successful models in other regions where applicable. |
| Strategy B | Collect and share information about “best practices and models” for partnership from Alberta and elsewhere. |
| Strategy C | Ensure that any entity dedicated to regional RPOS includes a committee or task force dedicated to collaboration. |
| Strategy D | Public/private partnerships should be explored/examined with a view that “public benefit” should be a priority outcome consideration |

**Objective 2.3** Improve community wellness by providing easily accessible indoor and outdoor recreation facilities and programs and by designing and re-designing communities to encourage active lifestyles.

<p>| Strategy A | Increase access and eliminate barriers for underserved and disadvantaged populations (i.e. economically disadvantaged, disabled, and immigrants) to high quality recreation and parks opportunities. |
| Strategy B | Work with the Province and stakeholders to support and strengthen afterschool child and youth recreation programs; children and nature initiatives; and leisure/environmental education. |
| Strategy C | Ensure recreation and parks opportunities are located proximate to population and can be easily accessed by walking and bicycle pathways and trails. Develop overall regional system of bicycle/touring routes. |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Strategy D</th>
<th>Collaborate with municipal, regional, and provincial authorities to integrate active living design into the planning and development process so that municipalities, neighbourhoods, active transportation routes, public transport, open space, and mixed use areas support active travel and outdoor recreation.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Strategy E</td>
<td>To the greatest degree possible, make indoor and outdoor recreation facilities accessible minimizing the use of an automobile.</td>
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<td>- Accessible by bike and walking pathways and trails</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Accessible by transit</td>
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<td>- RPOS co-located with schools</td>
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<td>Strategy F</td>
<td>Provide RPOS to meet level of service standards and regional recreation needs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strategy G</td>
<td>Consider, where appropriate, an intergovernmental regional approach to funding and managing major recreation facilities, parks and open space that have regional, provincial, national and international significance.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strategy H</td>
<td>Develop and manage RPOS for multiple uses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy I</td>
<td>Integrate nature/environmental education, as appropriate, into recreational program offerings and in parks and open space sites throughout the region.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective 2.4</strong></td>
<td>The region, and communities within, have the resources they need to acquire, plan for, develop, and maintain high-quality parks, open space and recreation facilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy A</td>
<td>Create, maintain, and share robust data sets on recreation and parks so that communities can make evidence-based decisions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strategy B</td>
<td>Work with the Province to amend the MGA with particular attention to community parks, natural areas designation, environmental reserves, and municipal reserves.</td>
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<td>Strategy C</td>
<td>Develop acquisition and access strategies that utilize the ALSA conservation tools (conservation easements, conservation directives, transfer of development credits), and other voluntary and regulatory mechanisms.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strategy D</td>
<td>Consider new funding mechanisms for local and regional RPOS:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Multi-agency public sector funding for urban and countryside parks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Objective 3.1</td>
<td>Build local ownership and knowledge of recreation opportunities and the region’s natural heritage.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strategy A</td>
<td>Improve citizen engagement by strengthening the dialogue between planning authorities and the public.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Improve the system(s) for gathering meaningful public input through community development approaches.</td>
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<td>• Improve the process for reporting back to residents after public input is sought.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective 3.2</th>
<th>Conserve and enhance the unique beauty and identity of our regions and communities</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategy A</td>
<td>Preserve important scenic vistas and historic sites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy B</td>
<td>Preserve open space and unique landforms for their overall contribution to an attractive regional form and character.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Objective 3.3</th>
<th>Improve and increase opportunities that cultivate an ethic of conservation.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategy A</td>
<td>Increase and diversify opportunities for:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Volunteerism</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Stewardship</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Education</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Donations</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Mentoring youth and new users</td>
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<td>• Improving safety</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Participating in sports and recreation</td>
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<td>• Outdoor leadership</td>
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</table>

**Strategy E** Address the needs of smaller municipalities for technical assistance with parks- and recreation-related inventorying, planning, regulations, and education.

**Strategy F** Facilitate and encourage more opportunities for cross-jurisdictional (inter-municipal) recreation facility and program development and resource/leadership sharing.

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**RPOS Outcome 3.**

**Learning Landscapes:** Residents have a deeper appreciation for the region’s natural heritage and are aware of RPOS resources.
**LUF Outcome: Healthy economy supported by our land and natural resources**

**RPOS Outcome 4.**

**Green Economic Engine:** The region is a magnet for people, jobs, and tourists because of its outstanding recreation opportunities, parks, and open space.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective 4.1</th>
<th>Support and build the recreation and tourism industry.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategy A</strong></td>
<td>Identify those places and spaces that attract, or have the potential to attract, tourism and ensure that public information (including signage) about these opportunities are easily accessible and that sites are visitor-ready.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategy B</strong></td>
<td>Make RPOS a component of economic development planning for the region.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Eco-tourism</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Agri-tourism</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Event hosting</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Cultural tourism</td>
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<td>- Cottage industries</td>
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<td>- Sport tourism</td>
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</table>

**Strategy C** Plan, develop and invest in effective visitor services including rest stops and wayside picnic areas, visitor centres and other infrastructure that enhances and promotes regional travel and visitations.

**Strategy D** Create new mechanisms for parks to capture their fair share of the economic benefits they generate within the region.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective 4.2</th>
<th>Recognize and strategically use recreation, parks, arts, culture and heritage to make communities and the region more desirable places to live and work.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategy A</strong></td>
<td>Coordinate with and provide information to economic development agencies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategy B</strong></td>
<td>Use recreation, parks, arts, culture and heritage as anchors for community revitalization.</td>
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See Objective 2.1 Strategy D

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**LUF Outcome: Healthy ecosystems and environment**

**RPOS Outcome 5.**

**Ecological Keeper:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective 5.1</th>
<th>Ensure that ecological integrity of the region is maintained and/or</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategy A</strong></td>
<td>Identify and prioritize the conservation of areas needed to represent the Province’s biodiversity for natural regions, sub-regions, landscape types, including special...</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Objectives and Strategies

**Objective 5.1** Parks and protected areas are critical anchors in regional ecological sustainability and protect natural capital, ecological integrity, and biodiversity including genetic, species, and ecosystem diversity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy A</th>
<th>Use parks and open space as “core areas” of ecological networks.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Strategy B</td>
<td>Promote robust linkages or “corridors” between ecological networks to connect local urban networks to wider regional networks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy C</td>
<td>Encourage the use of environmental reserve and municipal reserve dedications to function as “small patches” or “stepping-stones” within ecological networks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy D</td>
<td>Acknowledge and support the contribution of areas outside the core areas and corridors make to the sustainability of ecosystems and ecological goods and services, including the value of agricultural biodiversity.</td>
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</table>

**Objective 5.2** Establish and link ecological networks that operate at a variety of spatial scales.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</table>

**Objective 5.3** Use a “protected landscapes” approach to conserve lived-in and working landscapes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy A</th>
<th>Promote the recreation and sustainable tourism potential that exists within lived-in and working landscapes.</th>
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</table>
| Strategy B | Promote collaboration between the public and private sectors to protect biodiversity and cultural
NOTE: For more detailed information pertaining to “bioregional management” and the “total landscape approach” please refer to Appendix A.

Objective 5.4 Conserve, enhance and invest in ecosystem services and ecological infrastructure.

Strategy C Promote regional heritage programs and education programs that emphasize the role of parks in the natural and cultural heritage.

Strategy A Acknowledge the cost-savings that ecological infrastructure can provide by increasing resilience to climate change, reducing risk from natural hazards, and ensuring food and water security.

Strategy B Assemble key information for ecosystem services and ecological infrastructure:

- Studies that demonstrate how the maintenance and conservation of ecological infrastructure are almost always cheaper than trying to restore damaged ecosystems.
- An economic framework for valuing the ecological goods and services that are derived from parks and open space including carbon sequestration, flood mitigation, and green house gas reduction.

Strategy C Encourage the use of environmental and municipal reserve dedications, the ALSA’s conservation tools, and other fiscal, regulatory, and advocacy tools to conserve ecological infrastructure.

Strategy D Assist communities to map and prioritize potential environmental reserve lands (e.g. riparian corridors, wetlands, and important habitat) and potential connections between those areas.
8. Integration of Local RPOS Plans and Regional Plans

Regional plans, once approved by Cabinet, will provide structure and guidance for local government plans by providing a common set of assumptions, forecasts, and strategies. As stated in the ALSA, municipalities affected by the regional plan must “make any necessary changes or implement new initiatives to comply with the regional plan.” Local governments will be required to submit a statutory declaration that they have reviewed the regional plan and the local government is in compliance.

Ultimately, the Province will develop a system for determining and monitoring local plan consistency. The ALSA states that the Land-use Secretariat may facilitate and co-ordinate the implementation of the regional plans and encourage co-operation between government agencies and local government bodies.

The implementation component of the regional plans may also include direction for achieving consistency. Yet, it can be assumed that strategies adopted by the Province will be similar among all regional plans.

The American Planning Association suggests the following components be included in a regional plan’s implementation program to ensure local-regional alignment (American Planning Association, 2006 p. 15).

- **An implementation schedule** for the development of regionally significant infrastructure.
- **Development criteria** for use in local government plans. Performance benchmarks (targets and thresholds) may also be defined.
- **Monitoring and evaluation** of the plan’s implementation by local governments.
- **A coordination statement** which describes the ways in which local programs may best be coordinated with the goals of the regional plan.
- **Proposed legislative changes** to achieve regional objectives. The new regional planning structure created by the LUF may well affect many local bylaws and policies.

The Portland Metro Regional Framework Plan lists actions the State government will take to achieve local-regional consistency (Portland Metro’s Regional Framework Plan, Chapter 8).

- Create a compliance timeline for local governments to make land-use decisions and regulations consistent with the regional plan.
- Develop a system for determining consistency.
• Establish a procedure for each municipality to make land-use decisions which apply to the regional plan.

• Establish a process to adjudicate and determine the consistency of local plans and implementing ordinances.

• Establish a process for the State to determine whether changes in local land-use standards and procedures are necessary to remedy patterns and practices of decision-making that are inconsistent with the regional plan.

The plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe includes a performance review strategy whereby municipalities are assigned with monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the regional plan's policies based on established performance indicators.

8.1 Some Observations

The requirement for local municipal plans to be made consistent with regional plans as well as perceived weaknesses in the ALSA legislation raise some concerns for RPOS providers, namely:

Local government loss of autonomy in land use and resource planning. The Province will prepare regional plans that take precedence over municipal plans. For better or worse, the planning powers of local governments will be affected.

The large amount of discretion given to Cabinet. The Land-use Secretariat oversees the development of each regional plan and has the final say on content. Cabinet will approve the final regional plans, which local governments, provincial departments, and other decision-makers will need to follow.

The public involvement process is not defined. The degree to which the public is involved in the planning processes has not been defined and will be determined by the provincial government.

Perceived lack of substantive planning criteria. One of the seven stated purposes of the LUF is to reduce the footprint of human activity, yet the ALSA does not identify substantive planning criteria for achieving this goal.

The handling of complaints. Those with complaints about regional planning decisions will not have access to appeals boards and judicial review will be limited. Instead complaints will be handled by the Land-use Secretariat.

The potential hardship of meeting targets and thresholds with existing resources. The binding nature of plans may place hardships on local governments with limited resources. It is unclear if additional provincial resources will be available to help local governments implement plan recommendations.
Making Municipal Sustainability Plans (MSPs) consistent. Municipal governments may face a challenge in making MSPs consistent with Regional Plans because of the different organizing frameworks. The LUF outlines three pillars (healthy economy, healthy environment, and people-friendly communities) while MSPs are organized around five dimensions (social, cultural, economic, environment, and governance).

Citizen engagement. One challenge to meaningful citizen engagement is changing a commonly held perception that regional planning is simply another level of government bureaucracy that will limit freedoms.

Many highly controversial issues will not be addressed in the regional plans. Regional plans will not consider the reorganization or restructuring of municipalities, population limits, government expenditures, existing laws and regulations, or water allocation.

8.2 Opportunities

With due regard to the aforementioned observations, the regional planning framework presents new opportunities and improvements to the current system of planning and regional approaches to RPOS, most notably:

Integrated planning and enhanced data. There are potential benefits and opportunities of an integrated regional planning system and governance structure. Regional planning is the best opportunity for aligning RPOS goals and harmonizing planning. Regional research and data will be enriched and expanded.

Cumulative effects management (CEM). The LUF states that the Government of Alberta will use CEM at the regional level. CEM is about considering the environmental implications of development for an entire region. While the mechanism behind CEM planning is unclear, the potential for better RPOS decision making exists (e.g. balancing the provision of RPOS with population growth). As regions are based on watersheds, CEM presents an opportunity for a watershed-based perspective in regional planning.

Increased planning and regulatory review of activities on public lands. As outlined in the LUF, the management of public lands will be supported by a regulatory framework. What’s more, the government will evaluate market-based incentives that might improve cumulative effects management.

Improved coordination. Regional planning presents an opportunity to improve the coordination of people, plans, and resources. This could result in regional open space and trail systems, regional parks, cohesive and comprehensive methods for RPOS research and information sharing, and other improvements.

“Best practice” idea from Chester County, PA – Regional plans can provide consistent terminology. Linking Landscapes provides a set of terms that can be used throughout the County to define open space.
Unification. The binding nature of regional plans presents an opportunity to incorporate strong RPOS policies that are binding for decision-makers. In this way all levels of government would have a unified vision of what RPOS will be in the region.

New conservation tools. The conservation of private lands is critical to establishing an integrated open space network. Regional plans present an opportunity for identifying how the new and expanded conservation tools outlined in the ALSA can be used to meet RPOS goals.

Education. The regional planning process provides an opportunity to educate the public about the importance of RPOS and why regional plans should address them.

8.3 Changes to the Municipal Government Act

Regional plans can also affect provincial policies. One area that ARPA and other RPOS advocates would like the Province to reconsider is policies for acquiring reserves. The current provisions in the Municipal Government Act (MGA) are no longer sufficient for supplying parkland and open space. As written, the MGA has two primary limitations. First, parkland dedication has less value in intensifying urban centres than it does for expanding communities. Secondly, the MGA is limited as a means of addressing parkland deficits in existing neighbourhoods (Evergreen, 2004). Even in new communities, municipal reserve land may not be sufficient to provide enough land for both parks and schools. Anecdotally, it appears that more municipal reserve land is being allocated to increasingly larger schools sites, leaving less municipal reserve for parklands.

The LUF states that, along with the development of new legislation to support the LUF, amending other pieces of legislation including the MGA, will be required. Thus, there is an opportunity to re-examine the MGA with the aim of:

- Increasing the aggregate amount of municipal/school reserve a municipality may claim (currently 10%).
- Redefining environmental reserve in a broader context to include natural areas, and/or simply introduce a natural areas requirement in addition to MR, SR, MSR, and ER.

Plans for new communities should ensure that, wherever possible, environmental reserves are effective components of an ecological network.

There are proposed amendments to the MGA that would help facilitate regional plans. These include:

- Compliance amendments require that municipal plans and bylaws and the decisions that flow from these (by subdivision authorities, development authorities, municipal planning commissions and development appeal boards) are in conformance with regional plans.
• Intermunicipal development plan amendments allow the Minister of Municipal Affairs to require two or more municipal authorities to establish an intermunicipal development plan and to define the matters to be included in, and the timeline for completion of, the plan.

• Minister’s power amendments allow the Minister of Municipal Affairs to exercise additional actions to ensure compliance if a municipality does not comply with regional plans.

• Process amendments require municipalities to determine whether public consultation is necessary in amending plans and bylaws to conform to a regional plan. If the Municipal council determines that further consultation is not necessary, it may proceed without giving notice and holding a hearing (Gov. of Alberta, April 27, 2009 pp. 3-4).

8.4 Expanded Conservation Tools

Many of the proposed RPOS objectives and strategies will require new tools to expand the ways open space systems can be established and private lands can be conserved and protected. The ALSA highlights the following conservation tools that the Province will make available to support implementation of the regional plans.

**Conservation easements** are legally binding agreements that limit certain types of uses and development from taking place in order to protect the environment, natural scenic or esthetic values, and agricultural land. Conservation easement legislation was introduced in Alberta in 1996. The purpose of a conservation easement was for the protection, conservation or enhancement of the environment, including biological diversity, natural scenic or aesthetic values. In 2009, the ALSA broadened the purpose of easements to include *agricultural land*. The ALSA specifies the acceptable uses for properties with conservation easements (i.e. recreation, open space, environment education, and research and scientific studies of natural ecosystems). Easements are voluntarily donated or sold by the landowner to a non-government organization or a government agency. Easements are typically in place for perpetuity and run with the land (i.e. apply to future land owners). When sold, the value of an easement is the difference between a property’s estimated current fair market value and the estimated value of the property subject to the restrictions of the easement. If donated, property owners may receive tax benefits.

**Conservation offsets** are a new tool in Alberta designed to counterbalance the impacts of an activity on public and private lands. For example, a company could offset impacts from heavy industrial activity in one area by restoring an environmentally significant area elsewhere. In effect, the offsets work as an exchange. The ALSA specifies that offsets can be used for restoration, mitigation, or conservation.

**Conservation directives** are a new tool in Alberta that can be used to permanently protect, conserve, manage, and enhance environmental, natural
scenic, esthetic, or agricultural values expressly declared in a regional plan. The Alberta Government will compensate property owners for any decrease in market value brought about by the directive.

**Transfer of development credits** (TDC) programs are typically set up to compensate landowners for the protection of ecologically sensitive areas, agricultural land, scenic, and historical areas. These programs are commonly administered by creating zoning overlay districts where specific districts are designated as ‘sending’ or ‘receiving’ areas. Sending areas are those where development credits will be transferred away from because they are slated for protection. Receiving areas are those areas identified for accommodating growth. Regional, sub-regional, and/or municipal land-use plans may allow the use of TDCs and may designate the areas to be conserved and the areas to be developed.

Notably, the ALSA states that conservation easements and transfer of development credits programs must provide for any or all of the following uses; recreation, open space, environmental education, research, and scientific study as long as land use is consistent with environmental, scenic, aesthetic, and agricultural protection.

In addition to these tools, the Province may adopt additional programs and tools. The ALSA includes provisions for research and development of:

- Market-based instruments
- Programs and measures to support regional plans
- Funding to support conservation, environmental, and agricultural values

### 8.5 Providing Input

The regional planning process will include formal consultation sessions organized by the provincial government. A consultation plan will be developed for each regional plan, thus the number of sessions and approaches may vary. Currently it is expected that consultation will be sought at three designated stages during the regional planning process. Each phase of consultation may include separate sessions for the general public, stakeholders, municipalities, and aboriginal communities.

- Phase One – Awareness Building Information Sessions
- Phase Two – Input on the Vision for the Region
- Phase Three – Feedback on the Draft Regional Plan

There are several channels through which ARPA and/or its members can participate in regional plan development. First, ARPA can educate and inform its members about regional plans through updates and conferences. Secondly, through its close working relationship with the Department of Tourism, Parks and Recreation (ATPR), ARPA has an opportunity to share ideas and suggestions. The most formalized channel for delivering input are
the organized consultation sessions, both for the general public and those for stakeholders and municipalities. Additionally, individual ARPA members can participate in consultation sessions for the general public. Beyond participating in public consultation sessions, ARPA may also supply written comments directly to the Land-use Secretariat. ARPA and ARPA members will not have opportunities to engage one-on-one with Regional Advisory Council or Regional Planning Team members.

8.6 Potential Role of ARPA in Regional Planning

The regional planning process offers an opportunity for ARPA to strengthen its roles as a coordinator, educator, and advocate. Regional planning requires comprehensive and consistent baseline information on Alberta’s recreation, parks, and open space, but currently this information is limited. Regionally planning requires making tradeoffs, thus advocates need to effectively communicate the value of RPOS to the decision-makers. Similarly, many involved in the regional planning process may be unaware of the challenges, concepts, best practices, and other operational/management advances specifically related to RPOS.

To help address these deficiencies, the LUF states that the Government of Alberta will facilitate the development of “a network connecting researchers, practitioners, institutions and programs to address strategic needs and priorities for the Land-use Framework” (Government of Alberta, December 2008 p. 39). This will include improving the capacity for practitioners to be aware of best management practices, improving knowledge transfer, and identifying research needs (Government of Alberta, December 2008).

To implement regional plans, the Government of Alberta will need to fund the ongoing development and execution of monitoring, evaluation, and reporting programs. While the provincial government will create an improved Integrated Information Management System and develop a monitoring and reporting system, the LUF makes it clear that joint undertakings between government, industry, and/or non-government interest groups will be necessary (e.g. the Alberta Biodiversity Monitoring Program).

With additional resources and support, ARPA could play a more active role in helping to implement regional RPOS objectives and strategies. In summary, ARPA’s role could include:

- Acting as a key provider of RPOS-related technical assistance to municipalities and other providers.
- Educating decision-makers at all levels of government.
- Educating municipalities and other RPOS providers (e.g. trails groups) about best practices.
- Developing and monitoring operational standards and parks and open space guidelines for service excellence.
- Providing opportunities for sharing knowledge (e.g. ARPA’s biennial Parks Forum).
• Advocating for government and corporate sector investment in “urban parks and countryside parks/recreation areas”.

• Advocating for the provincial government to reinstate the “Major Communities Facilities Grant” program.

9. Conclusion

As Alberta’s population grows and urban development expands, it will become increasingly important to conserve open space, create recreation opportunities, and maintain and expand the existing RPOS system in order to preserve each region’s unique character, a high quality of life, and environmental quality. Regional planning in Alberta presents exciting opportunities to improve the planning and provision of RPOS. As one of Alberta’s leading RPOS service, advocate and research organization, ARPA has the opportunity to be a significant stakeholder and engage its members in the consultation process.

The background information, and suggested objectives and strategies in this report could serve as:

• A starting point from which Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation can develop regional policies and RPOS plans.

• A source of potential recommendations that could be submitted to the Land-use Secretariat.

• A briefing guide to assist ARPA members to participate in public consultation and evaluate policies in the draft regional plans.

By being proactive in the regional planning process, ARPA will become a stronger and more effective advocate and educator. Regional planning can bring ARPA and its members closer to realizing their collective vision, namely:

“A region, and communities within, that embrace and proactively use recreation and parks as essential means for enhancing individual well-being and community vitality, economic sustainability and natural resource protection and conservation.”
Bibliography


Glossary

Active living – “A way of life in which physical activity is valued and integrated into daily life.” (Quinney, et al., 1994)

Agritourism – “Describes the act of visiting a working farm or any agricultural, horticultural or agribusiness operation to enjoy, be educated or be involved in activities.” (Agricultural Marketing Resource Center, undated)

Anthropogenic landscapes - Anthropogenic landscapes or human landscapes are areas of earth’s terrestrial surface where direct human alteration of ecological patterns and processes is profound, on-going, and directed toward servicing the needs of human populations for food, fuel, fiber, timber, shelter, trade and recreation (http://ecoyope.org/about/anthropogenic_landscapes).

Benchmark areas, Ecological benchmark - Reference areas within national parks used for comparing the natural evolution of a park’s ecosystem to the evolution of similar ecosystems in “working” landscapes outside of national parks (Parks Canada Agency, 2000).

Biodiversity or Biological diversity - The variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystem and the ecological complexes of which they are part, this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems (Canadian Biodiversity Strategy, 1995).

Conservation - The maintenance or sustainable use of the Earth’s resources in a manner that maintain ecosystems, species and generic diversity and the evolutionary and other processes that shaped tem. Conservation may or may not involve the use of resources; that is, certain areas, species or populations may be excluded from human use as part of an overall landscape/waterscape conservation approach (National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, 2003).

Cultural Landscapes - Cultural landscapes have been defined by UNESCO’s World Heritage Committee as distinct geographical areas or properties uniquely representing the combined work of nature and man. Cultural landscapes are the interface between nature and culture, tangible and intangible heritage, biological and cultural diversity; they represent a tightly woven net of relationships that are the essence of culture and people’s identity. Cultural landscapes are a centerpiece of protected areas in a larger ecosystem context, and they are a symbol of the growing recognition of the intrinsic links between communities and their past heritage, and between humankind and its natural environment (Rossler, 2005).

Ecological integrity - An ecosystem has integrity when it is deemed characteristic for its natural region, including the composition and abundance of native species and biological communities, rates of change and supporting processes. In plain language, ecosystems have integrity when they have their
native components (plants, animals and other organisms) and processes (such as growth and reproduction) are intact (Parks Canada Agency, 2000).

**Ecological network** - An ecological network is a coherent system of natural and/or semi-natural landscape elements that are configured and managed with the objective of maintaining or restoring ecological functions as a means to conserve biodiversity, while also providing appropriate opportunities for the sustainable use of natural resources (Bennett, 2004).

**Ecotourism tourism** - Based principally upon natural and archaeological/historical resources such as birds and other wildlife, scenic areas, reefs, caves, fossil sites, archaeological sites, wetlands and areas of rare or endangered species. Ecotourism involves travelling to relatively undisturbed and uncontaminated natural areas with the specific object of admiring, studying and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants and animals as well as any existing cultural features found in these areas. (Kusler, 1991) (Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, 1997)

**Greenways** – “Lands set aside for preserving natural resources, remnant landscapes, and open space, and providing visual aesthetics/buffering. Also provides passive-use opportunities. Ecological resource stewardship and wildlife protection are high priorities. Suitable for ecologically sensitive trail corridors” (American Planning Association, 2006 p. 366).

**Natural capital** - Natural capital generally refers to natural assets in their role of providing natural resource inputs and environmental services for economic production. There are three main categories of natural capital: renewable and non-renewable natural resource stocks (e.g. sub-soil resources, timber, wildlife and water), land and ecosystems (National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, 2003).

**Needs assessment** – “Parks, recreation, and open-space needs assessments are used to determine community needs or gaps between existing and ideal conditions, including parks, recreation facilities, programs, operations, and maintenance. Such needs assessments should be conducted to form the basis for decisions such as the location and size of needed parks and open spaces; the types of recreation facilities and programs that should be provided; phasing priorities; and funding/implementation strategies” (American Planning Association, 2006 p. 512).

**Neighbourhood parks** – The basic units of the park system. Neighbourhood parks serve a recreation and social purpose. Their focus is on informal recreation. Typically they are 5 acres or more; 8 to 10 acres preferred, with 3 acres the desired minimum size. Their service area is one-fourth to one-half mile uninterrupted by major roads and other physical barriers (American Planning Association, 2006).

**Recreation** – All those things that a person chooses to do in order to make their leisure time more interesting, more enjoyable and more personally satisfying.

**Regional parks** – Larger-scale parks and open spaces that focus on natural resource preservation and stewardship. They are typically a minimum of 500 acres and up to several thousand acres. Regional parks serve the region,
which generally encompasses several cities (American Planning Association, 2006).

**Voluntourism** - “Combines volunteering with tourism, and is a way to travel and give ones’ time, energy, and skills to benefit the communities in which they’re traveling.” (Society for Human Resource Management, 2009)

**Wellness** – “A holistic concept, describing a state of positive health in the individual, and comprising physical, social, emotional, spiritual and psychological well-being. (Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, 1997)
Appendix A

Bioregional management and the total landscape approach: *A framework for advocating the role of parks and open space in regional planning*

By Guy Swinnerton

Introduction

There is an obvious need for the Alberta Recreation and Parks Association (ARPA) to identify the means by which the role of recreation, parks and open space can be addressed in a proactive and substantive way during the regional planning process that will result in the seven regional plans required by the Alberta Land Stewardship Act. Considerable evidence exists to demonstrate that a bioregional perspective involving a total landscape approach provides an appropriate framework through which to pursue this objective. The purpose of this paper is to provide a brief summary of bioregional management and the total landscape approach. As part of this discussion reference will be made to a number of interrelated concepts that are associated with the “total landscape approach”. These include: ecological networks, the modern paradigm for protected areas, and the importance of the “protected landscape” designation and approach to accommodating and guiding change within lived-in and working landscapes.

Bioregional Management

The disruption and fragmentation of natural landscapes and ecosystems as a result of an unprecedented increase in the human use of natural resources is evident across Alberta. This transformation to landscapes with increasingly dominating anthropogenic characteristics raises important issues regarding the long-term sustainability of natural capital, biodiversity, and cultural heritage values embodied in landscape character. There is convincing international evidence that biodiversity conservation is a prerequisite to sustainable development. In this context, bioregional management provides a means of addressing the tension between development and the conservation of biodiversity at the regional level.

A bioregion has been defined by Miller (1996) as a “geographical space that contains one whole or several nested ecosystems characterized by landforms, vegetative cover, human culture and history as identified by local communities, governments and scientists.” The IUCN (World Conservation Union) has elaborated on this perspective by noting that the limits of a bioregion are not defined politically but rather by the geographical boundaries of human communities and ecological systems. Consequently, a bioregion refers to both the geographical terrain and a terrain of consciousness and as such reflects both environmental and cultural attributes.

According to Miller and Hamilton (1996) “the bioregional approach seeks to maintain biological diversity across entire landscape regions while meeting people’s needs.” They further suggest this approach involves “combining scientific, informational, social, and economic considerations to define management opportunities and to implement programmes of action and investment” Fourteen defining characteristics are associated with effective bioregional management. They are: (1) large, biotically viable regions, (2) a structure of interrelated cores, corridors and matrices, (3) leadership and management, (4) full involvement of stakeholders, (5) social acceptance, (6) economic sustainability, (7) cooperative skills development, (8) reliable and comprehensive information, (9) use of scientific, local and traditional knowledge, (10) research and monitoring, (11) adaptive management, (12) restoration, (13) institutional integration, and (14) international cooperation.

One of the intended outcomes of bioregional management is to establish and sustain a protected area system that will collectively sample a region’s biodiversity and ensure that ecosystem functions and processes remain
ecologically viable over the long-term. The ecological network model that has been developed over the past 30 years has proven to be an appropriate approach to achieve this outcome.

Ecological Networks

Although the application of the ecological network model reflects local and regional circumstances, Bennett & Mulongoy (2006) have observed that two generic goals apply:

1. maintaining the functioning of ecosystems as a means of facilitating the conservation of species and habitats, and
2. promoting the sustainable use of natural resources in order to reduce the impacts of human activities on biodiversity and/or increase the biodiversity value of managed landscapes.

A number of elements characterize all ecological networks (Bennett & Mulongoy, 2006).

- A focus on conserving biodiversity at the landscapes, ecosystem or regional scale
- An emphasis on maintaining or strengthening ecological coherence, primarily through providing for connectivity
- Ensuring that critical areas are buffered from the effects of potentially damaging external activities
- Restoring degraded ecosystems where appropriate
- Promoting the sustainable use of natural resources in areas of importance to biodiversity conservation.

Application of the ecological network concept on the ground involves a coherent system of areal components (Bennett & Mulongoy, 2006):

- **Core areas**, where the conservation of biodiversity takes primary importance, even if the area is not legally protected
- **Corridors**, which serve to maintain vital ecological or environmental connections by maintaining physical (though not necessarily linear) linkages between the core areas
- **Buffer zones**, which protect the network from potentially damaging external influences and which are essentially transitional area characterized by compatible land uses
- **Sustainable-use areas**, where opportunities are exploited within the landscape mosaic for the sustainable use of natural resources together with maintenance of most ecosystem services.

Examples of the effective use of the ecological network concept are found worldwide and illustrate its applicability at a variety of spatial scales including trans-national, national, regional and even at the individual city level (see Bennett & Mulongoy, 2006; City of Edmonton 2007).

Successful application of bioregional management and the ecological network concept has required important changes in how parks and protected areas are perceived and managed within the total landscape. In large part this is because protected areas invariably comprise the “core areas” within ecological networks. The changes that have taken place are succinctly summarized in the evolution from the “traditional paradigm” for protected areas to the “modern paradigm” for protected areas and the need for a total landscape approach.

The “Modern Paradigm” for Protected Areas

The concept of a “protected area” varies considerably across the globe, and well over 1,000 terms are used worldwide. In an attempt to bring consistency and a “common language” when referring to protected areas, the IUCN (World Conservation Union) has recently refined its definition of a “protected area” as well as the guidelines for applying protected area management categories. (Dudley, 2008).
The new definition of a protected area is:

“A clearly defined geographical space, recognized, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values.”

In addition, the IUCN acknowledges that although the overriding purpose of a system of protected areas is to increase the effectiveness of in-situ biodiversity conservation, individual protected areas can serve a number of management objectives (scientific research; wilderness protection; preservation of species and genetic diversity; maintenance of environmental services; protection of specific natural and cultural features; tourism and recreation; education; sustainable use of resources from natural ecosystems; and maintenance of cultural and traditional attributes). This recognition has led to the adoption of a classification involving six protected area management categories (Dudley, 2008)

- Category Ia: Strict nature reserve
- Category Ib: Wilderness area
- Category II: National park
- Category III: Natural monument or feature
- Category IV: Habitat/species management area
- Category V: Protected landscape/seascape
- Category VI: Protected area with sustainable use of natural resources

An important explanatory note is that the numbering system assigned to the various categories of protected areas does not denote a ranking as to their relative significance within a system of protected areas, but rather recognizes that protected areas have different management objectives.

Whereas protected areas were traditionally seen as predominantly “closed systems” and isolated and independent of the surrounding landscape this perspective has changed significantly over the past twenty-five years. Initially this changing viewpoint recognized the need for predominantly ecological and environmental linkages through protected areas being representative of the biogeographically regions within which they were located, as well as being cornerstones within ecological networks. More recently, a more integrated and comprehensive linkage between protected areas and their surrounding areas has become evident with an appreciation for not only consideration of ecological systems and processes but also the social, economic, and political circumstances prevailing in the adjacent areas (see Crofts, 2004). Symptomatic of this more integrated approach has been the adoption of conservation and sustainable land management practices associated with bioregional planning, the protected landscape/seascape management category (IUCN Category V), Biosphere Reserves, and the ecosystem approach addressed in the Convention on Biodiversity.

The essential elements that have accompanied these changes have been summarized by Phillips (2003) to distinguish the “traditional paradigm” for protected areas from the emerging “modern paradigm.” A detailed review of these changes is beyond the scope of this paper and it must be acknowledged that the relevance and significance of the “new paradigm” has not found automatic and enthusiastic acceptance amongst all protected area professionals. However, there is increasing evidence that the global protected areas’ agenda is becoming increasingly reflective of the “modern paradigm” The distinguishing elements of the contrasting protected area paradigms are illustrated in Figure 1.

In Canada, the National Round Table on Environment and Economy (2003, p. 45) in its report on nature conservation into the 21st century made the following comment:

“Protected areas are important anchors in any conservation system. At the same time, the long-term health of these areas depends in large measure on the health of the land around them. Conservation planning
therefore needs to take the whole landscape into account to ensure that our natural capital is secured over the long term."

This observation explicitly acknowledges that many protected areas are not sufficiently large to encompass viable ecosystems and associated processes. The ecological network concept is, in part, an attempt to address this deficiency. However, a corollary to the growing emphasis on pursuing conservation practices at the landscape scale requires a shift in conservation thought and practice. An essential requirement is to acknowledge the different environmental, social, economic and political realities existing within lived-in and working landscapes (the matrix in the ecological network model). In particular, there is the necessity for collaboration with a much wider range of stakeholders, including private landowners, and the development of new sets of tools for conservation stewardship. It is in this context that the “protected landscape” designation and approach has much to offer.

The Protected Landscape approach

The protected landscape/seascape management category (IUCN Category V) has been formally recognized by the IUCN since 1978. For many years the protected landscape concept was seen as a predominantly Eurocentric approach to conservation. However, it has now been shown to have global relevance and applicability not least because it embraces many of the characteristics of the modern paradigm for protected areas (see Brown, Mitchell, & Beresford, 2005; Phillips, 2002). Kakabadse in the preface to Phillips (2002, p. xv) noted the following:

“The need to make sure that some places remain in broadly their natural condition is as great as ever – but it is not enough. Protected areas should also include those lived-in, humanized landscapes where people and nature live in some kind of balance. These places, and the communities that live in them, are important in themselves and for the lessons they can teach all of us about sustainable living. This is the idea behind Protected Landscapes and Seascapes, or Category V in the IUCN system of protected area categorization.”

Category V: Protected landscape/seascapes is defined by the IUCN as follows (Dudley, 2008, p.20):

“A protected area where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced an area of distinct character with significant ecological, biological, cultural and scenic value; and where safeguarding the integrity of this interaction is vital to protecting and sustaining the area and its associated nature conservation and other values.”

One of the most distinguishing characteristics of protected landscapes is that they invariably comprise a mosaic of land in public and private ownership and operating under a variety of management regimes. As a result, collaboration, partnership and community engagement, together with an integrated approach to conservation stewardship are central themes to the protected landscape approach. In addition, such areas provide opportunities for enjoyment, well-being and socio-economic activity through recreation and tourism. The key characteristics of protected landscapes has been summarized by Phillips (2002, p.12-13) as follows

- Is concerned with both people and their environment.
- Is concerned with a range of natural and cultural values.
- Focuses on areas where people/nature relationships have produced a landscape with high aesthetic, ecological, biodiversity and/or cultural values, and which retains integrity.
- Is both a type of protected area with combinations of special qualities, and a management process to guide change.
- Reflects a visionary and pro-active approach, aiming to enhance values rather than simply to maintain or protect existing assets.
- Views communities, and traditions, as fundamental to the success of the approach: therefore stakeholder and partnership approaches are required, e.g. co-management.
- Recognizes the value of, and the need to support, the stewardship role of the private landowner or manager (including that of land trusts or similar bodies).
• Usually involves management arrangements that are determined by local circumstances and needs, and resolved through decision-making at local government or community levels.

• Places a special emphasis on effective land-use planning.

• Depends therefore on the presence of transparent and democratic structures which support peoples’ active involvement in the shaping of their own environment.

• Brings social, economic and cultural benefits to the local communities.

• Brings environmental, cultural, educational and other benefits to a wider public.

• Requires that all management activities be integrated, and promote sustainability.

• Can be used to help resolve conflicts over resource management.

• Can offer models of sustainability for wider application elsewhere in rural areas.

• Like all protected areas, requires effective management systems, including setting of objectives, planning, resource allocation, implementation, monitoring, review, and feedback.

Specifically designated protected landscapes are found throughout the world and are inventoried on the United Nations List of Protected Areas. The application of the protected landscape concept as a planning and management approach to accommodate and guide change in areas exhibiting landscapes of biological and cultural heritage significance is even more ubiquitous.

National parks in England and Wales, within which private land ownership predominates, has traditionally been seen as a “model” of the Category V designation and approach. In these areas, as well as the countryside at large, a variety of programs are used to encourage and reward landowners who are involved in the conservation of biodiversity and cultural landscape values (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, 2005; Phillips & Partington, 2005; Swinnerton, 1995). Complementing strong planning regulations and information and advisory services are a range of financial instruments and market based programs that are aimed at rewarding farmers and other land managers for contributing to the conservation and environmental enhancement of the countryside. Most of these programs are not restricted to land within the national parks but apply across the total rural landscape. The primary objectives of these programs include: conserving biodiversity, maintaining and enhancing landscape quality and character, protecting the historic environment and natural resources, and promoting public access and understanding of the countryside (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, 2005). Comparable programs exist in other parts of Britain.

There is increasing evidence of the benefits to be derived from collaborative management of protected landscapes in Canada and the United States (Mitchell, Tuxill, Swinnerton, Buggey, & Brown, 2005). In the United States, the National Heritage Areas program that has been in place since 1984 has been effective in working on the conservation of large-scale landscapes involving both natural and cultural heritage values (Mitchell, Tuxill, Swinnerton, Buggey, & Brown, 2005). A review of protected landscapes in Canada indicated that although there are many examples, there is considerable potential for the wider application of the protected landscape approach (Swinnerton & Buggey, 2004). The Beaver Hills Initiative that is taking a bioregional and protected landscape approach to the Beaver Hills Cooking Lake Moraine, east of Edmonton, affords an informative illustration of work in progress (Mitchell, Tuxill, Swinnerton, Buggey, & Brown, 2005).

At a global level, Biosphere Reserves illustrate many of the features of bioregional management and the protected landscapes approach. Initiated under UNESCO’s Man and Biosphere Program in the 1970s there are now 553 Reserves in 107 countries, including 15 in Canada. Biosphere Reserves are working examples of innovative ways of living and working in harmony with nature. They are working examples of sustainable development that involve a multi-stakeholder approach and a collaborative commitment to reconciling land-use planning and resource management issues at a regional scale (Parks Canada, 2005).

All Biosphere Reserves fulfill three complementary functions: (1) a conservation function that involves the protection of the area’s biodiversity and ecosystems; (2) a development function that is to encourage and enable sustainable economic development and human development; and (3) a logistic function (capacity building) that facilitates demonstration projects, environmental education and training, research and monitoring that support the first two functions. These three complementary functions are achieved through a conceptual zoning framework that has no prescriptive or statutory powers. This zonation includes a protected core area (s) that is surrounded by a buffer zone.
where conservation is emphasized within a lived-in and working landscape, such as an IUCN Category V protected landscape, and the whole is surrounded by a transition zone, or area of cooperation, which promotes sustainable development. Waterton is currently the only Biosphere Reserve in Alberta.

Some of the common elements that are found in many of the examples of protected landscapes and the protected landscape approach including those cited above are:

- Recognition that “landscape” and specifically landscape character arises from the interaction of people with their environment over time and provides a sense of place for both residents and visitors to the area.
- Implementing the protected landscape approach requires comprehensive and reliable information on the natural, social, economic, and cultural capital of the area.
- In each case there is a management framework and an entity that serves as the forum for collaboration and a venue for creating a collective vision of the future.
- Collaboration is based on openness, equity, and respect for all the stakeholders.
- Landscape strategies involve a variety of approaches including conservation, restoration, reinforcement, and (re)creation.
- Adaptive management requires on-going and effective monitoring and feedback.
- The ability to manage environments at the landscape scale requires a realistic assessment of the following capacity elements – governance, resources, and community awareness.
- Numerous tools and programs are appropriate for landscape protection and environmental stewardship. They may be summarized as following into one or more of the following categories: voluntary approaches, regulatory instruments, economic incentives, and economic penalties. No single approach is a panacea.

**Conclusion**

This review of bioregional management and the total landscape approach has illustrated the complexities and multifaceted dimensions of the evolving approaches to addressing the tension between conservation and development at the landscape scale. Numerous examples exist world wide that provide insights into workable approaches to conservation at this broader scale. There is much to be learned from these examples in terms of both the strengths but also the weaknesses of approaches and methods being pursued.

**References**


Figure 1. Contrasting paradigms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>As it was: protected areas were ...</th>
<th>As it is becoming: protected areas are ...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>• Set aside for conservation</td>
<td>• Run also with social and economic objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Established mainly for spectacular wildlife and scenic protection</td>
<td>• Often set up for scientific, economic and cultural reasons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Managed mainly for visitors and tourists</td>
<td>• Managed with local people more in mind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Valued as wilderness</td>
<td>• Valued for the cultural importance of so-called “wilderness”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• About protection</td>
<td>• Also about restoration and rehabilitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>Run by central government</td>
<td>Run by many partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local people</td>
<td>• Planned and managed against people</td>
<td>• Run with, for, and in some cases by local people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Managed without regard to local opinions</td>
<td>• Managed to meet the needs of local people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wider context</td>
<td>• Developed separately</td>
<td>• Planned as part of national, regional and international systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Managed as ‘islands’</td>
<td>• Developed as ‘networks’ (strictly protected areas, buffered and linked by green corridors)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceptions</td>
<td>• Viewed primarily as a national asset</td>
<td>• Viewed also as a community asset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Viewed only as a national concern</td>
<td>• Viewed also as an international concern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management techniques</td>
<td>• Managed reactively within short timescale</td>
<td>• Managed adaptively in long term perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Managed in a technocratic way</td>
<td>• Managed with political considerations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>Paid for by taxpayer</td>
<td>Paid for from many sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management skills</td>
<td>• Managed by scientists and natural resource experts</td>
<td>• Managed by multi-skilled individuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Expert led</td>
<td>• Drawing on local knowledge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix B

Summaries of Regional Plans Reviewed

Alberta Plan for Parks 2009-2019
Alberta, Capital Region River Valley Park
Central Queensland Regional Growth Management Framework
Denver – Metro Vision 2030 Plan
Places to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe
Greenscapes: The Green Infrastructure Element, Lancaster County Pennsylvania
Maryland Land Preservation, Parks & Recreation Plan 2009
The South East Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031
Sydney – City of Cities: A Plan for Sydney’s Future
Vermont Outdoor Recreation Plan, 2005-2009
The Yorkshire and Humber Plan: Regional Spatial Strategy to 2026
# Alberta Plan for Parks 2009-2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan citation</th>
<th>Tourism, Parks and Recreation. Plan for Parks 2009-2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Website address</td>
<td><a href="http://www.tpr.alberta.ca/parks/P4P/">http://www.tpr.alberta.ca/parks/P4P/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Page total</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan sponsor</td>
<td>None listed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale (area covered, population, metropolitan center(s), etc.)</td>
<td>Entire Province 661,848 km², 3.3 million people, including Edmonton and Calgary and the metro centers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of the purpose of the plan</td>
<td>The plan is meant to ensure Alberta’s parks are protected yet accessible to the region’s growing population. The plan is aligned with the Land-use Framework and ensures that management of Alberta’s parks system supports the Government’s overall strategic direction.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Hierarchy of plan language | Vision  
Desired outcomes  
Strategies |
| Guiding principles for the plan | Accountability – Milestones and deliverables are established and Albertans receive timely information about progress in achieving desired outcomes.  
Citizen engagement – Albertans have opportunities for meaningful input into decisions about parks; the decision-making process is inclusive and transparent.  
Collaboration – Through greater collaboration with local communities, communities of interest, the private sector and other government departments, we create increased value for visitors and achieve common goals.  
Continuous improvement and innovation – We seek to improve our parks system by proactively monitoring, evaluating and implementing innovative parks management strategies.  
Education – Through our programs, we strive to inform, inspire and involve Albertans to increase their understanding of, respect for and connection to the natural world.  
Environmental leadership – Alberta’s park management and operations demonstrate environmental leadership and showcase best practices in energy and water efficiency, environmental design, construction practices and products.  
Inclusion – We work to ensure park facilities and programs are designed so that everyone’s needs are considered.  
Integrated management – Park management decisions consider the combined impacts of environmental, economic and social factors.  
Knowledge-based decision-making – Decision-making is informed by natural and social science, evidence and experience, which include traditional knowledge of Aboriginal peoples.  
Respectful and responsive – We respect and respond to the diverse needs of parks visitors, stakeholders and communities throughout the Province.  
Stewardship – We work with citizens, industry, communities and governments to |
Working Guidelines Report  55

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Desired Outcomes:</th>
<th>Outcomes related to RPOS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>People-friendly communities and recreational opportunities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Strategy 1. Involve Albertans</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| • Parks provide diverse, enjoyable outdoor recreation opportunities that contribute to healthy lifestyles. | • Implement a regional planning model  
• Create a Parks Advisory Council  
• Engage Aboriginal communities  
• Develop a process for nominating new provincial parks  
• Ensure accountability through milestones and deliverables  
• Diversify existing volunteer programs and partnerships |
| **Healthy ecosystems and environment** | **Strategy 2. Offer modern facilities, policies and programs** |
| • Parks conserve Alberta’s natural heritage and associated cultural heritage for current and future generations. | • Develop a central reservation system  
• Upgrade, restore and expand park facilities  
• Refine the parks classification system |
| • Parks contribute to the long-term sustainability of Alberta’s ecosystems and biodiversity, as well as the overall health and wellness of our population. | **Strategy 3. Provide recreation opportunities** |
| **Sustainable prosperity supported by our land and natural resources** | • Identify and develop opportunities for recreation  
• Encourage interest and opportunity in parks  
• Implement an inclusion strategy to enhance visitor experiences |
| • Parks foster sustainable, nature-based experiences for Albertans and visitors that contribute to the economic and social fabric of Alberta. | **Strategy 4. Conserve landscapes** |
| • Canadians and international visitors recognize Alberta as a desirable nature-based tourism destination. This contributes to diversifying local and regional economies and provides economic benefits to the Province, as well as the private sector, local communities and partners. | • Facilitate contributions to parks  
• Balance in the parks system  
• Foster evidence-based decision-making |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Map legend categories in the overall plan map and other relevant maps</th>
<th>Appendix 1: Land-use Framework Regions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Métis Settlements** | • Métis Settlements  
**Indian reserves** | • Indian reserves |
| Description of other key information | What Albertans Want - A list generated through meetings with aboriginal groups, stakeholders, municipalities, and through the use of a public opinion survey.  
- More involvement in decisions about parks and in the delivery of parks programs.  
- Modern amenities, more inclusive facilities and well-maintained trails.  
- More access to recreation opportunities.  
- Protection of the environment and culturally significant areas. |
## Alberta, Capital Region River Valley Park

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Website address</td>
<td><a href="http://www.rivervalley.ab.ca/park-plan/">http://www.rivervalley.ab.ca/park-plan/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page total</td>
<td>Only the executive summary is accessible</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plan sponsor</td>
<td>None listed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scale (area covered, population, metropolitan center(s), etc.)</td>
<td>88 km long park covering 18,000 acres and encompassing several counties and towns and the cities of Edmonton and Fort Saskatchewan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of the purpose of the plan</td>
<td>Plan created to market and gain support from government, stakeholders and partners, and the public for the River Valley Park vision. The plan is a “call to action”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hierarchy of plan language</td>
<td>Vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guiding principles for the plan</td>
<td>Objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes related to RPOS</td>
<td>None listed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan goals, objectives, policies, etc. related to RPOS</td>
<td>Environment objectives:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Preserve natural land in the Capital Region River Valley Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Respect important wildlife habitat and movement corridors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Enhance the public’s understanding of the environmental health and importance of the Capital Region River Valley Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Protect the diversity and productivity of the valley’s ecological communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Maintain or enhance the hydrology, fish habitat and watershed of the North Saskatchewan River within the Capital Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social objectives:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Use trailways and waterways to connect communities and attractions along the valley and from the park to surrounding communities and attractions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Create new destinations that enhance the quality of life in the region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Improve access to the river front for shore and water based activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Reflect the cultural and natural heritage of the river valley and expand education opportunities based on the park’s natural and cultural history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Support an active and healthy lifestyle for people in the Capital Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Enhance the urban experience in the Capital Region by creating connections to the park and providing venues for cultural, arts, athletic and entertainment-related activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Economic objectives:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Establish and enhance attractions and destinations to attract new visitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Take advantage of opportunities for heritage and landscape touring, adventure-based tourism activities, and river-based attractions to increase tourism to the region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Enhance the quality of life for all people living and working in the Capital Region and help attract and retain skilled labour, new businesses and investment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Key Concepts:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Nature conservation and management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Access and linear trail systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Capital waterway (river trail to connect the park)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Heritage preservation and interpretation</td>
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| Map legend categories in the overall plan map and other relevant maps | Legend:  
- Facility development  
- Natural conservation / Naturalized parkland  
- Group of opportunities |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description of other key information</td>
<td>Seven planning areas are identified; each with its own distinct theme and ideas for uses and opportunities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Central Queensland Regional Growth Management Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>184</td>
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<td>Plan sponsor</td>
<td>State Government</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scale (area covered, population, metropolitan center(s), etc.)</td>
<td>141,617 km², includes 13 local governments, 184,249 people, no metro centers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of the purpose of the plan</td>
<td>The plan is a vision of Central Queensland in 2020. It provides a framework for future growth and development.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Hierarchy of plan language | Vision  
Guiding principles  
Outcome statements  
Strategies  
Actions |
| Guiding principles for the plan | Resource Use, Conservation and Management - The allocation, use and management of the natural resources of Central Queensland shall be in accordance with the principles of ecologically sustainable development and shall be undertaken through the processes of integrated catchment management.  
Infrastructure - The region’s infrastructure shall be developed to anticipate the long term needs of communities and industries, regional prosperity and wellbeing, community vitality and ecological sustainability.  
Social and Cultural Development - Social and cultural fabric and vitality of the community that is underpinned by sound, ethically based planning, institutional support and investment that recognizes the past, embraces the present and prepares for the future.  
Economic Development – Viable, environmentally sustainable economic growth and development takes place through the recognition, protection and promotion of the region’s competitive advantage, support of existing industries, diversification and the identification and encouragement of new economic opportunities.  
Education, Training, and Research - The promotion of a climate and culture of learning in which Central Queensland strives for equity access to emerging technologies, knowledge, information and associated infrastructure which underpin the region’s capacity for effective decision making, innovation and competitiveness.  
Planning and Governance - Planning and governance systems in the region recognize the uniqueness and diversity of the individual communities of Central Queensland, and are underpinned by the principles of participation, collaboration, intergovernmental cooperation, equity, accountability, integrity, ethics and transparency. |
| Outcomes related to RPOS | 3.1.1 Land Use Planning and Management Outcome: The promotion of, and adherence to, best practice land management for sustainable and profitable land-use.  
3.4.9 Healthy Lifestyles Outcome: The citizens of the region live a healthy lifestyle in an environment that promotes and encourages increased community participation in physical activity, good nutrition and positive healthy lifestyle choices. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan goals, objectives, policies, etc. related to RPOS</th>
<th>3.1.1 Strategy H: Identified land of strategic importance for regional open space be protected and managed for future generations.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.4.9 Strategy A: Increase awareness of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and of making healthy lifestyle choices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.4.9 Strategy B: Plan and provide for a diverse and sustainable range of leisure, recreation and sport options within the landscape to increase health and fitness as well as provide opportunities for casual, non-structured, recreation participation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.4.9 Strategy C: Integrate leisure, sport and recreation facilities and activities into ‘the life of the community’.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Map legend categories in the overall plan map and other relevant maps</th>
<th>Map 10. Indicative growth pattern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Map 10. Indicative growth pattern</td>
<td>• Major urban center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Key regional center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Towns/Villages/Localities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Dams, lakes and rivers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Shoalwater Bay Military Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Major agriculture areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Major industrial growth area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• High growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Medium growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Low growth negative growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• State forests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• National Parks, conservation areas and reserves</td>
</tr>
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</table>

| Description of other key information | Plan includes action steps for the above strategies. |
Denver Metro Vision 2030 Plan

Website address: http://www.drcog.org/documents/WebMetro%20Vision%202030%20plan%20final%201-05.pdf
Page total: 102
Plan sponsor: Voluntary partnership of local governments
Scale (area covered, population, metropolitan center(s), etc.): 1,943 km², includes 9 counties, 2.6 million people, Denver is the metro center

Summary of the purpose of the plan: Metro Vision 2030 is a long-range plan to manage growth within the Denver area. It addresses development, transportation needs, and environmental quality.

Hierarchy of plan language: Vision, Goals, Policies


Outcomes related to RPOS: Parks and Open Space Vision: By 2030, the region will have protected its major natural resource areas, including the mountain backdrop, riparian corridors, and other key open space and wildlife habitat. Several key working farms and ranches adjacent to the urban area will be preserved. Recreational areas in both developed parks and passive open space will be readily available and accessible to the region’s residents. The region’s open space will help define the urban area and separate communities.

Plan goals, objectives, policies, etc. related to RPOS: Parks and Open Space Goal: Establish an integrated, linked, permanent parks and open space system. This system will include a variety of open space and make appropriate open space accessible to all of the region’s population

- Policy 1. Focus Areas. Metro Vision encourages preserving open space in key focus area.
- Policy 2. Agriculture. Agricultural resources of state or national significance and ranches and grazing lands of local or regional importance should be preserved. They’re integral to the region’s heritage, and economic and cultural diversity.
- Policy 3. Natural Resources. Natural resource areas will be conserved and protected for future generations. Important natural resources include surface waters, riparian areas, wetlands, forests and woodlands, prairie grasslands, wildlife and wildlife habitat, other environmentally sensitive lands and commercial mineral deposits.
- Policy 4. Hazard Areas. Where practical, natural (geophysical) and human-made environmental hazard areas will be used and managed to contribute to a regional open space system in the region. Public rights-of-way, such as utility corridors and other places where land development is constrained, should also be used to augment open space.
- Policy 5. Recreation. The physical and aesthetic enjoyment of the out-of-doors will be provided for in an integrated regional parks and open space system.
- Policy 6. Urban Shaping. Protected open space lands will help shape future urban growth and land development, and encourage communities to be compact.
- Policy 7. Prominent Features. The region will preserve prominent geologic and geographic features and important cultural resources for their visual, historic and...
- Policy 8. Trails Network. Metro Vision calls for an areawide trails network to be developed to link open space and provide access. This network should take full advantage of all potential connections, including road and railroad rights-of-way, floodplains, ditch service roads and utility corridors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Map legend categories in the overall plan map and other relevant maps</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Figure 5. Metro Vision 2030 Plan Summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Urban centers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Rural town centers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Major wastewater treatment facility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Airports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Freestanding communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Regional roadway system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Rapid transit system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 2004 parks and open space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 2030 urban growth boundary</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of other key information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Figure 22. Existing Parks and Open Space and Preservation Focus Areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 2004 existing parks and open space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Reservoirs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Canyons and river corridors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Freestanding community buffer area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Mountain backdrop and prominent geographic features</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- East metro areas plains</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan citation</th>
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<td>Website address</td>
<td><a href="http://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/index/nmp_2007-2012_final.htm">http://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/index/nmp_2007-2012_final.htm</a></td>
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<td>114</td>
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<td>Plan sponsor</td>
<td>None listed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scale (area covered,</td>
<td>692.8 km², 10,645 people, no metro center, largest settlements are Porlock, population, metropolitan Culverton, Lynton, and Lynmouth center(s), etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of the purpose of</td>
<td>The plan is the key mechanism for meeting the statutory purposes of the National the plan area: Park:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the plan</td>
<td>• To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of its special qualities by the public.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hierarchy of plan language</td>
<td>Vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Targets</td>
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<td>Guiding principles for the</td>
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<tr>
<td>plan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes related to RPOS</td>
<td>Outcome 1. By 2020 Exmoor’s distinct and diverse landscape is in good condition and there is an increased awareness of its importance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outcome 2. By 2020 there is an increased extent of wildlife habitats in good condition and thriving populations of native plants and animals that are most valued nationally and locally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outcome 3. By 2020 there is an enhanced knowledge of the historic environment of Exmoor; increased awareness of the value of its cultural heritage, and the most important historical sites, settlements, buildings and features are conserved and their historical character retained.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outcome 4. By 2020, Exmoor’s air, water and soil are of high quality and we will be closer to achieving a carbon-neutral National Park to help tackle climate change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outcomes 5. By 2020 profitable and competitive farming, forestry, and land management enterprises in Exmoor National Park are playing a lead role in conserving and enhancing Exmoor’s landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage, and are making a major contribution to achieving a carbon-neutral National Park.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outcome 6. By 2020 there is increased public awareness and enjoyment of Exmoor National Park, particularly by young people and non-traditional users, leading to greater understanding of Exmoor and its way of life and a wider appreciation of the contribution that National Parks make to quality of life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outcome 7. By 2020 there is a warm welcome and high quality experience for everyone who visits Exmoor seeking inspiration, tranquility and active outdoor recreation, provided by a sustainable tourism and recreation economy in harmony with local communities and the environment, and contributing to the achievement of a carbon-neutral national park.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outcome 8. By 2020 Exmoor’s communities retain a continuity of connection with the</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
land; people have access to affordable services and facilities, and there is a strong, diverse and sustainable economy that benefits from and contributes to the care and appreciation of Exmoor National Park.

### Vision: Our vision is ‘Enhancing the qualities that make Exmoor special’ so that:

- Exmoor’s distinct and diverse landscape is in good condition and there is an increased awareness of its importance.
- There is an increased extent of wildlife habitats in good condition and thriving populations of native plants and animals that are most valued nationally and locally.
- There is an enhanced knowledge of the historic environment of Exmoor; increased awareness of the value of its cultural heritage, and the most important historical sites, settlements, buildings and features are conserve and their historical character retained.
- Air, water and soil are of high quality and we are closer to achieving a carbon-neutral National Park to help tackle climate change.
- Profitable and competitive farming, forestry and land management enterprises in Exmoor National Park are playing a lead role in conserving and enhancing Exmoor’s landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage, and are making a major contribution to achieving a carbon-neutral National park.
- There is increased public awareness and enjoyment of the National Park, particularly by young people and non-traditional users, leading to greater understanding of Exmoor and its way of life and a wider appreciation of the contribution that National Parks make to quality of life.
- There is a warm welcome and high quality experience for everyone who visits Exmoor seeking inspiration, tranquility and active outdoor recreation, provided by a sustainable tourism and recreation economy in harmony with local communities and the environment, and contributing to the achievement of a carbon-neutral National Park.
- Exmoor’s communities retain a continuity of connection with the land; people have access to affordable services and facilities, and there is a strong, diverse and sustainable economy that benefits from and contributes to the care and appreciation of Exmoor National Park.

### Topic: The Exmoor Landscape

**Outcome.** By 2020 Exmoor’s distinct and diverse landscape is in good condition and there is an increased awareness of its importance.

- **Objective A1.** To conserve and enhance the distinctive characteristics, qualities, and condition of Exmoor’s landscapes.
- **Objective A2.** To ensure that Exmoor’s moorlands are open, remote and relatively wild in character and that strategically important areas of former moor and heath are managed in a way that restores their wilder landscape character.
- **Objective A3.** To ensure that Exmoor remains a landscape relatively free from intrusive developments and activities, and take opportunities to redesign or enhance landscapes that have been affected by intrusive development or are in declining condition.
- **Objective A4.** To increase public involvement in the monitoring, evaluating, protecting and celebrating of Exmoor’s landscape.

### Topic: Exmoor’s Wildlife

**Outcome.** By 2020 there is an increased extent of wildlife habitats in good condition and thriving populations of native plants and animals that are most valued nationally and locally.
Objective B1. To improve the diversity, extent and condition of Exmoor's most important and valued habitats and adopt a long-term, landscape-scale approach to habitat conservation.

Objective B2. To maintain or increase the populations of native wildlife species on Exmoor that are most valued for their conservation status and local distinctiveness.

Objective B3. To control and eradicate non-native species that have an adverse impact on the condition of important habitats and species in the National Park.

Objective B4. To undertake a programme of research and monitoring to improve understanding of wildlife on Exmoor particularly in relation to UK Biodiversity Action Plan species.

Objective B5. To monitor the impacts of climate change on Exmoor's most valued habitats and wildlife, and develop appropriate management responses.

Objective B6. To provide opportunities for people to develop a deeper understanding and enjoyment of Exmoor's wildlife and habitat conservation.

Topic: Exmoor's Historic Environment and Cultural Heritage

Outcome. By 2020 there is an enhanced knowledge of the historic environment of Exmoor; increased awareness of the value of its cultural heritage, and the most important historical sites, settlements, buildings and features are conserved and their historical character retained.

Objective C1. To undertake a programme of research to improve knowledge of the cultural heritage and historic environment of Exmoor.

Objective C2. To conserve and retain the historic features and character of Exmoor’s landscapes.

Objective C3. To conserve and retain the historic character of Exmoor’s settlements and buildings.

Objective C4. To identify, record and understand aspects of culture and traditions that are special to Exmoor.

Objective C5. To provide opportunities for people to develop a deeper understanding and enjoyment of Exmoor's historic environment and cultural heritage.

Topic: Exmoor's Natural Resources, Waste and Pollution

Outcome. By 2020, Exmoor’s air, water and soil are of high quality and we will be closer to achieving a carbon-neutral National Park to help tackle climate change.

Objective D1. To maintain and improve the quality of air, water, and soils on Exmoor.

Objective D2. To improve the sustainability of Exmoor's communities and minimize waste and emissions.

Objective D3. To minimize the net emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere in order to achieve a carbon-neutral National Park and minimize Exmoor’s contribution to global climate change.

Topic: Farming and land management on Exmoor

Outcomes. By 2020 profitable and competitive farming, forestry, and land management enterprises in Exmoor National Park are playing a lead role in conserving and enhancing Exmoor’s landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage, and are making a major contribution to achieving a carbon-neutral National Park.
- Objective E1. To ensure that all farming, forestry and land management enterprises on Exmoor are contributing to the conservation and enhancement of the landscape, wildlife, cultural heritage and natural resources of the National Park.
- Objective E2. To support measures that assist in the achievement of profitable and competitive farming, forestry and land management in ways that are sustainable and enhance environmental quality.
- Objective E3. To ensure that land-based businesses and other land managers are working to mitigate the effects of climate change and are making appositive contribution to efforts to reduce carbon emissions and levels of atmospheric carbon.
- Objective E4. To ensure the continued existence and viability of the Exmoor Pony and Exmoor's three locally-distinctive breeds of livestock so that all can be seen in the National Park and free-living Exmoor Ponies remain easily visible in moorland areas.

**Topic: Understanding and enjoyment of Exmoor’s special qualities**

**Outcome.** By 2020 there is increased public awareness and enjoyment of Exmoor National Park, particularly by young people and non-traditional users, leading to greater understanding of Exmoor and its way of life and a wider appreciation of the contribution that National Parks make to quality of life.

- Objective F1. To raise awareness of Exmoor and its special qualities and ways in which they can best be experienced and enjoyed.
- Objective F2. To provide opportunities for young people from all backgrounds and abilities to learn about and enjoy Exmoor National Park leading to greater understanding of Exmoor and its way of life.
- Objective F3. To provide opportunities for people from under-represented groups to learn about and enjoy Exmoor National Park leading to greater understanding of Exmoor and its way of life.
- Objective F4. To provide information about the National Park’s special qualities and how they can be understood and enjoyed to people during their visit to the National Park.
- Objective F5. To provide opportunities for people to develop a deeper understanding and enjoyment of Exmoor and its special qualities to engender a sense of responsibility resulting in behaviour that sustains such qualities.

**Topic: Recreation and tourism**

**Outcome.** By 2020 there is a warm welcome and high quality experience for everyone who visits Exmoor seeking inspiration, tranquility and active outdoor recreation, provided by a sustainable tourism and recreation economy in harmony with local communities and the environment, and contributing to the achievement of a carbon-neutral national park.

- Objective G1. To develop and maintain the recreation infrastructure of the National Park (particularly the rights of way and open country access) to a high standard.
- Objective G2. To promote active recreation, particularly activities utilizing the rights of way infrastructure and access to open country, avoiding adverse impact on the special qualities of the National Park.
- Objective G3. To ensure that opportunities for recreation on Exmoor
can be enjoyed by people from all backgrounds and of all abilities.

- Objective G4. To ensure that Exmoor provides a high quality experience for visitors from all backgrounds and of all abilities and that tourism is environmentally sustainable, deriving value from the special qualities of the National Park and not detracting from them.
- Objective G5. To maximize the economic and social benefits to the economy of Exmoor that recreation and tourism bring and to spread these benefits across as wide a range of people and businesses as possible.

Topic: Exmoor’s economy and communities

Outcome: By 2020 Exmoor’s communities retain a continuity of connection with the land; people have access to affordable services and facilities, and there is a strong, diverse and sustainable economy that benefits from and contributes to the care and appreciation of Exmoor National Park.

- Objective H1. To ensure housing needs are adequately met to sustain local communities and the landscape and facilities of the National Park.
- Objective H2. To support the provision and retention of community facilities and services that are reasonably accessible and affordable to Exmoor’s residents.
- Objective H3. To develop the greater Exmoor economy in ways that will increase the range and scope of employment and training opportunities for local people, particularly those that benefit people with relatively low household incomes and that relate to or further conservation and enhancement of Exmoor’s special qualities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Map legend categories in the overall plan map and other relevant maps</th>
<th>No overall plan map.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description of other key information</td>
<td>Plan has eight sections. All objectives have a list of “targets” which are the action steps that will be taken to meet the objective. Many include deadlines or quantitative targets and all stipulate the lead organization that will be in charge of meeting the target.</td>
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### Places to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe

**Plan citation**

**Website address**
http://www.placestogrow.ca/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=9&Itemid=14

**Page total**
57

**Plan sponsor**
Provincial government

**Scale (area covered, population, metropolitan center(s), etc.)**
31,562 km², 8.1 million people, Toronto and Hamilton are the Metro Centers

**Summary of the purpose of the plan**
This Plan will guide decisions on a wide range of issues – transportation, infrastructure planning, land-use planning, urban form, housing, natural heritage and resource protection – in the interest of promoting economic prosperity. The plan is meant to guide growth in the region to 2031.

**Hierarchy of plan language**
Vision
Guiding Principles
Policies

**Guiding principles for the plan**
- Build compact, vibrant and complete communities.
- Plan and manage growth to support a strong and competitive economy.
- Protect, conserve, enhance and wisely use the valuable natural resources of land, air, and water for current and future generations.
- Optimize the use of existing and new infrastructure to support growth in a compact, efficient form.
- Provide for different approaches to managing growth that recognize the diversity of communities in the GGH.
- Promote collaboration among all sectors – government, private and non-profit – an residents to achieve the vision.

**Outcomes related to RPOS**
Vision for 2031 - "... The Greenbelt, including significant natural features, such as the Oak Ridges Moraine and the Niagara Escarpment, has been enhanced and protected in perpetuity. These will form the key building blocks of the GGHs natural system. The GGHs rivers and streams, forests and natural areas will be protected and accessible for residents to enjoy their beauty. Open spaces in our cities, towns and countryside will provide people with a sense of place . . . "

**Plan goals, objectives, policies, etc. related to RPOS**
**Policies for Natural Systems**

Strategy 4 – Municipalities, conservation authorities, non-governmental organizations, and other interested parties are encouraged to develop a system of publicly accessible parkland, open space and trails, including shoreline areas, within the GGH that:
- clearly demarcates where public access is and is not permitted,
- is based on a coordinated approach to trail planning and development, and
- is based on good land stewardship practices for public and private lands.

Strategy 5 – Municipalities are encouraged to establish an urban open space system within built-up areas, which may include rooftop gardens, communal courtyards, and public parks.

**Map legend**
Schedule 2. Places to Grow Concept
| categories in the overall plan map and other relevant maps | - Urban growth centers  
- Future transportation corridors  
- Gateway economic zone  
- Gateway economic center  
- Built-up area (conceptual)  
- Designated greenfield area (conceptual)  
- Greenbelt area  
- Horseshoe growth plan area  
- Major transportation systems also mapped (airport, highways, and ports) |
| Description of other key information | The meat of the plan is divided into four sections:  
- Where and How to Grow  
- Infrastructure to Support Growth  
- Protecting What Is Valuable (addresses RPOS)  
- Implementing and Interpretation |
# Greenscapes: The Green Infrastructure Element
## Lancaster County Pennsylvania

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<td>Website address</td>
<td><a href="http://www.co.lancaster.pa.us/planning/cwp/view.asp?a=2&amp;q=624655">http://www.co.lancaster.pa.us/planning/cwp/view.asp?a=2&amp;q=624655</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Page total</td>
<td>171</td>
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<td>Plan sponsor</td>
<td>County government</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scale (area covered, population, metropolitan center(s), etc.)</td>
<td>2,461 km², 494,486 people, no metro centers within county but Philadelphia is 64 km away.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summary of the purpose of the plan</td>
<td>This report is the green infrastructure element of the county’s comprehensive plan. It defines a vision, goals and objectives, strategies, and tools to preserve, conserve, restore, and enhance natural resources.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Hierarchy of plan language | Strategic Vision  
Goals  
Objectives  
Strategies |
| Guiding principles for the plan | Preservation of exceptional natural resources  
Conservation or stewardship of important natural resources and the essential life support services they provide  
Restoration of natural resource systems and ecological connections  
Recreation and improved community health |
| Outcomes related to RPOS | |
| Plan goals, objectives, policies, etc. related to RPOS | Goal 4: Enhance the quality-of-life of residents through the provision of a diversity of easily accessible outdoor recreation opportunities and experiences  
- Objective 4A. Protect large open spaces for passive outdoor recreational opportunities such as hiking, biking, paddling, wildlife viewing, outdoor learning, and the traditional pastimes of hunting and fishing.  
- Objective 4B. Provide a diversity of close-to-home, active recreation opportunities within Designated Growth Areas.  
- Objective 4C. Create a countywide network of open/green spaces and connections between them.  
- Objective 4D. Improve community health by providing convenient, accessible opportunities for outdoor recreation and exercise. |
| Map legend categories in the overall plan map and other relevant maps | Figure 3 – Existing Land Use  
- No Data  
- Single Family Residential  
- Multi-Family Residential  
- Other Residential  
- Mixed Use  
- Commercial  
- Transportation/Utility/Communication  
- Industrial  
- Community Facilities  
- Cultural Activities/Entertainment/Recreation |
- Agriculture
- Forestry and Related Activities

Figure 24 – Existing Parks, Open Space, and Trails
- Designated growth areas
- Trails
- Water trails
- Bicycle routes
- Public access points (water)
- State parks and open space
- State Fish, Game and Forestry land
- County parks and open space
- Municipal and school district land
- Utility owned
- Conservancy land

Figure 30 – Lancaster County Green Infrastructure Concept Map
- Restoration area
- Preservation area
- Conservation area
- Existing recreation areas
- Existing recreation trails
- Proposed trails

| Description of other key information | Document contains goals and objectives for the conservation, preservation, and restoration of important natural resources. |

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<tr>
<td>Website address</td>
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<td>None listed</td>
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<td>Scale (area covered, population, metropolitan center(s), etc.)</td>
<td>1,579 km², 32 London boroughs and the City of London, 7.5 million people</td>
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<td>Summary of the purpose of the plan</td>
<td>The London Plan is the strategic plan setting out an integrated social, economic, and environmental framework for the future development of London, looking forward 15-20 years.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
| Hierarchy of plan language | Vision  
| | Objectives  
| | Policies |
| Guiding principles for the plan | Growth, equity, and sustainable development  
| | A city for people, a prosperous city, a fair city, an accessible city, and a green city |
| Outcomes related to RPOS | Of the Mayor’s six objectives, the second one most directly relates to RPOS:  
| | Objective 2 - To make London a healthier and better city for people to live in. |
| Plan goals, objectives, policies, etc. related to RPOS | Policy 3D.8 Realizing the value of open space and green infrastructure  
| | The Mayor will work with strategic partners to protect, promote and improve access to London’s network of open spaces, to realize the current and potential value of open space to communities, and to protect the many benefits of open space, including those associated with health, sport and recreation, children’s play, regeneration, the economy, culture, biodiversity and the environment.  
| | Policies in DPDs [sic. development plan documents] should treat the open space network as an integrated system that provides a “green infrastructure” containing many uses and performing a wide range of functions, such as the East London Green Grid.  
| | All developments will be expected to incorporate appropriate elements of open space that make a positive contribution to and are integrated with the wider network.  
| | Policy 3D.11 Open space provision in development plan documents  
| | In addition to the policy in 3D.8, development plan document policies should:  
| | • identify and support Regional and Metropolitan Park opportunities  
| | • identify broad areas of public open space deficiency and priorities for addressing them on the basis of audits carried out as part of an open space strategy, and using the open space hierarchy set out in Table 3D.1 as a starting point  
| | • ensure that future open space needs are considered in planning policies for Opportunity Areas and other areas of growth and change in their area encourage functional and physical linkages within the network of open spaces and to the wider public realm, improve accessibility for all throughout the network and create new links based on local and strategic need  
| | • Identify, promote, and protect Green Corridors and Green Chains and include appropriate designations and policies for the protection of local open spaces that are of value, or have the potential to be of value, to local communities. |
The Mayor will assist in coordinating this process across borough boundaries.

Policy 3D.12 Open space strategies
Boroughs should, in consultation with local communities, the Mayor and other partners, produce open space strategies to protect, create and enhance all types of open space in their area. Such strategies should include approaches for the positive management of open space where appropriate to prevent or remedy degradation or enhance the beneficial use of it for the community. To assist with such strategies the Mayor has produced a Guide to Preparing Open Space Strategies17.

Boroughs should undertake audits of existing open space and assessments of need in their area, considering both the qualitative and the quantitative elements of open space, wildlife sites, sports and recreational facilities, as part of an open space strategy and in accordance with the guidance given in PPG1718. In doing so, they should have regard to the cross-borough nature and use of many open spaces in London.

Policy 3D.13 Children and young people’s play and informal recreation strategies
The Mayor will and boroughs and other partners should ensure that all children have safe access to good quality, well-designed, secure and stimulating play and informal recreation provision. Boroughs should produce strategies on play and informal recreation to improve access and opportunity for all children and young people in their area.

Boroughs should undertake audits of existing play and informal recreation provision and assessments of need in their areas, considering the qualitative, quantitative and accessibility elements of play and informal recreation facilities.

The Mayor will and boroughs should ensure developments that include housing make provision for play and informal recreation, based on the expected child population generated by the scheme and an assessment of future needs.

Policy 3D.17 London’s countryside and the urban fringe
The Mayor will work with strategic partners to improve access to the countryside and the quality of landscape in the urban fringe. The Mayor will and boroughs should support sub-regional and cross-borough boundary urban fringe management through the Green Arc28 partnership initiatives and explore the potential for taking forward the concept of the Community Forests within London.

DPD policies should:
- support the Green Arc vision of creating and protecting an extensive, attractive and valued recreational landscape of well-connected and accessible countryside around London for people and wildlife
- include proposals to improve access to open land and to conserve and enhance biodiversity value
- encourage appropriate attractive destinations for visitors and the local population

Map legend categories in the overall plan map and other relevant maps

Key Diagram – Spatial Strategy (p. 59)
- Central activities zone
- Metropolitan centers
- Opportunity areas
- Areas of intensification
- Sustainable communities growth areas
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of other key information</th>
<th>Plan’s organization:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Positioning London</td>
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<td>2. The broad development strategy</td>
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<td>3. Thematic policies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Living in London</td>
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<td>- Working in London</td>
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<td>- Connecting London – improving travel in London</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Enjoying London (addresses RPOS)</td>
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<td>4. The crosscutting policies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5. The sub-regions, Central Activities Zone and government growth areas</td>
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<td></td>
<td>6. Implementing the London Plan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Regional coordination corridors
- Regeneration areas
- Metropolitan open land
- Green belt
- Channel tunnel rail
- Major transportation routes mapped

Map 3D.3 London’s strategic open space network
- Metropolitan open land
- Green belt
- Lee Valley Regional Park
## Maryland Land Preservation, Parks & Recreation Plan 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan citation</th>
<th>Maryland Department of Planning, June 2009. Maryland Land Preservation, Parks &amp; Recreation Plan 2009, Volume I, Recreation and Parks</th>
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<td>Website address</td>
<td><a href="http://www.mdp.state.md.us/pdf/land/Web__LPPRP_Vol_1.pdf">http://www.mdp.state.md.us/pdf/land/Web__LPPRP_Vol_1.pdf</a></td>
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<td>Plan sponsor</td>
<td>State government</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scale (area covered, population, metropolitan center(s), etc.)</td>
<td>5.6 million people, 32,134 km², Baltimore is the metro center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of the purpose of the plan</td>
<td>The plan’s purpose is to ensure good long-term return on public investment in parks, outdoor recreation, agricultural land preservation, and the conservation of natural resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hierarchy of plan language</td>
<td>Goals Implementation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Guiding principles for the plan | The “Twelve Visions” (below) were developed as part of Maryland’s Smart, Green and Growing initiative.  
1. Quality of life and sustainability: a high quality of life is achieved through universal stewardship of the land, water, and air resulting in sustainable communities and protection of the environment;  
2. Public participation: citizens are active partners in the planning and implementation of community initiatives and are sensitive to their responsibilities in achieving community goals;  
3. Growth areas: growth is concentrated in existing population and business centers, growth areas adjacent to these centers, or strategically selected new centers;  
4. Community design: compact, mixed-use, walkable design consistent with existing community character and located near available or planned transit options is encouraged to ensure efficient use of land and transportation resources and preservation and enhancement of natural systems, open spaces, recreational areas, and historical, cultural, and archeological resources;  
5. Infrastructure: growth areas have the water resources and infrastructure to accommodate population and business expansion in an orderly, efficient, and environmentally sustainable manner;  
6. Transportation: a well-maintained, multimodal transportation system facilitates the safe, convenient, affordable, and efficient movement of people, goods, and services within and between population and business centers;  
7. Housing: a range of housing densities, types, and sizes provides residential options for citizens of all ages and incomes;  
8. Economic development: economic development and natural resource–based businesses that promote employment opportunities for all income levels within the capacity of the state’s natural resources, public services, and public facilities are encouraged;  
9. Environmental protection: land and water resources, including the Chesapeake and coastal bays, are carefully managed to restore and maintain healthy air and water, natural systems, and living resources;  
10. Resource conservation: waterways, forests, agricultural areas, open space, natural systems, and scenic areas are conserved;  
11. Stewardship: government, business entities, and residents are responsible for the creation of sustainable communities by collaborating to balance efficient growth with resource protection; and  
12. Implementation: strategies, policies, programs, and funding for growth and development. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes related to RPOS</th>
<th>Plan goals, objectives, policies, etc. related to RPOS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| development, resource conservation, infrastructure, and transportation are integrated across the local, regional, state, and interstate levels to achieve these visions. | **State RPOS Goals:**  
- Make a variety of quality recreational environments and opportunities readily accessible to all of its citizens, and thereby contribute to their physical and mental well-being.  
- Recognize and strategically use parks and recreation facilities as amenities to make communities, counties, and the State more desirable places to live, work and visit.  
- Use State investment in parks, recreation, and open space to complement and mutually support the broader goals and objectives of local comprehensive / master plans.  
- To the greatest degree feasible, ensure that recreational land and facilities for local populations are conveniently located relative to population centers, are accessible without reliance on the automobile, and help to protect natural open spaces and resources.  
- Complement infrastructure and other public investments and priorities in existing communities and areas planned for growth through investment in neighborhood and community parks and facilities.  
- Continue to protect recreational open space and resource land at a rate that equals or exceeds the rate at which land is developed at a statewide level. |

| Map legend categories in the overall plan map and other relevant maps | Maryland Protected, Recreation & Forest land Map (p. 109)  
- U.S. Park Service owned  
- County owned park  
- State Park, State Forest, Chesapeake Forest Land  
- Military  
- Other protected lands |

| Description of other key information | Maryland is placing a renewed emphasis on a needs-based approach to outdoor recreation planning and investment.  
**Maryland Electronic (Online) Inventory of Recreation Sites (MEIRS) -** Maryland has an interactive database that provides an up-to-date picture of the supply of recreational land and facilities.  
Maryland uses population-based acreage acquisition goals (state default = 30 acres per 1,000 people) |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>South East Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Plan citation</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Page total</strong></td>
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| **Plan sponsor** | In partnership with the Council of Mayors (South East Queensland)  
In consultation with the South East Queensland Regional Coordination Committee |
| **Scale (area covered, population, metropolitan center(s), etc.)** | 22,420 km², 11 regional and city councils, 2.77 million people, Brisbane and Gold Coast are the Metro Centers |
| **Summary of the purpose of the plan** | To manage regional growth and change in the most sustainable way to protect and enhance quality of life in the region.  
The plan takes precedence over all other planning instruments.  
Provides the framework on which to manage growth, change, land use and development in the region to 2031. |
| **Hierarchy of plan language** | Vision Statement  
Desired Regional Outcomes  
Principles  
Policies  
Programs |
| **Guiding principles for the plan** | None listed |
| **Outcomes related to RPOS** | Desired Regional Outcome 3 – Key environmental, economic, social and cultural values of the regional landscape are identified and secured to meet community needs and achieve ecological sustainability.  
Desired Regional outcome 6 – Cohesive, inclusive and healthy communities have a strong sense of identity and place, and access to a full range of services and facilities that meet diverse community needs. |
| **Plan goals, objectives, policies, etc. related to RPOS** | 3.4 - Community greenspace network  
**Principle:** Provide an integrated, high-quality, regional community greenspace network to cater for a range of community and environmental needs.  
- Policy 3.4.1 - Expand and develop the capacity of the existing regional community greenspace network to meet current and future community needs.  
- Policy 3.4.2 - Retain state and local government managed lands, including unformed roads, stock routes, waterways, cemeteries, caravan parks, camping sites, utility corridors and community purpose reserves for potential inclusion in the regional community greenspace network.  

3.7 - Outdoor recreation  
**Principle:** Provide a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities to meet priority community needs, while protecting other regional landscape values.  
- Policy 3.7.1 - Incorporate outdoor recreation activities, infrastructure and opportunities in planning and management for land use, priority infrastructure and natural resources.  
- Policy 3.7.2 - Develop and implement the South East Queensland outdoor Recreation Strategy to coordinate outdoor recreation services – including |
policy, planning, development, management and regulation – across the region.

6.3 - Healthy and Safe Communities
Principle: Develop healthy and safe environments that encourage community activity, participation and healthy lifestyles, and prevent crime.
- Policy 6.3.3 - Provide adequate and appropriate community greenspace for outdoor recreation, built spaces and facilities for recreation and sport, and community facilities and spaces to enable community activity and healthier lifestyles.

8.4 - Urban Greenspace
Principle: Provide an integrated, high-quality, urban community greenspace network to cater to community and environmental needs in development areas and existing communities.
- Policy 8.4.1 – Identify and respond to community needs for urban community greenspace, generated as a result of urban development, especially in activity centers and areas of higher density residential development.
- Policy 8.4.2 – Ensure urban community greenspace is integrated into the urban structure of development areas to provide for land-use efficiencies and long-term sustainability.
- Policy 8.4.3 – Integrate planning and delivery of urban community greenspace networks with regional landscape areas and the regional community greenspace network.
- Policy 8.4.4 – Facilitate adequate and timely provision of urban community greenspace through appropriate infrastructure charging and other mechanisms.

### Map legend categories in the overall plan map and other relevant maps

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Map 2. Regional Land-use Categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local government area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterbody and waterway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional landscape and rural production area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban footprint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural living area</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Map 6. Existing regional community greenspace network</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SEQ regional trail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicentennial national trail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Park, forest reserve, and state forest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local government lands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State land and reserve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 km zone surrounding major cities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Description of other key information

Principles and policies for scenic amenities and landscape heritage (p. 64)
# City of Cities: A Plan For Sydney’s Future

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Page total</td>
<td>316</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plan sponsor</td>
<td>State government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale (area covered, population, metropolitan center(s), etc.)</td>
<td>10,000 km², 4.2 million people, includes 43 local government areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of the purpose of the plan</td>
<td>This plan is a vision for Sydney over the next 25 years. It is a broad framework to secure the city’s place in the global economy by promoting and managing growth.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Hierarchy of plan language | Principles  
Aims  
Area/Strategy Vision  
Objectives  
Initiatives |
| Guiding principles for the plan | Economic, social, and environmental sustainability with the five aims of:  
1. Enhanced livability  
2. Strengthened economic competitiveness  
3. Ensuring fairness  
4. Protecting the environment  
5. Improving governance |
| Outcomes related to RPOS | Vision for parks and public places:  
- Sydney will have fair access to quality parks and public places for leisure, sport and recreation for the local community and visitors. The city will have a range of open spaces that meet the diverse and changing needs of the community.  
- A network of recreation trails will provide walking and cycling opportunities linking centers and parks. |
| Plan goals, objectives, policies, etc. related to RPOS | Objective F1 - Increase access to quality parks and public places  
- Initiative F1.1 - Provide access to regional open space in Western Sydney  
- Initiative F1.2 - Improve the quality of regional open space  
- Initiative F1.3 - Improve access to waterways and links between bushland, parks and centers.  
Objective F2 - Provide a diverse mix of parks and public places  
- Initiative F2.1 - Improve the quality of local open space  
- Initiative F2.2 - Investigate future options for open space provision and management. |
| Map legend categories in the overall plan map and other relevant maps | Figure 2 – The Metropolitan Strategy Map  
- Growth Center  
- Employment lands  
- Open space  
- Regional/state parks  
- National park  
- Rural and resource land  
- Existing urban area  
- Global Sydney  
- Global economic corridor  
- Regional city  
- Specialized center |
- Major center
- Planned major center
- Potential major center
- Major transportation routes also mapped

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of other key information</th>
<th>The Plan is divided into seven subject areas, or strategies. They are:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Economy and employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Centers and corridors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Environment and resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Parks and public places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. Implementation and governance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vermont Outdoor Recreation Plan, 2005-2009</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Website address</strong></td>
<td><a href="http://www.vtfpr.org/recreation/scorp/home.cfm">http://www.vtfpr.org/recreation/scorp/home.cfm</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Page total</strong></td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Plan sponsor</strong></td>
<td>State agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scale (area covered, population, metropolitan center(s), etc.)</strong></td>
<td>23,956 km², 621,270 people, no metro centers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Summary of the purpose of the plan** | The plan serves a number of purposes:  
1. Guidance for communities, agencies, and organizations in providing for recreational and natural resource based activities throughout the state;  
2. Guidance for legislative financial support, including capital budgets and community matching funds;  
3. Reinforcement of decisions regarding land acquisition for public lands;  
4. Input to recreation policy development;  
5. Better understanding by agencies and organizations of the public’s needs and concerns regarding outdoor recreation;  
6. Opportunities to build constituencies for agency and organizational recreation programs;  
7. Better understanding and coordination among agencies and interest groups regarding outdoor recreation concerns;  
8. Encouragement of recreational partnerships; and  
9. Ensures Vermont’s eligibility to receive funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). See section E of this introduction for more information. |

| **Hierarchy of plan language** | Vision  
Desired conditions  
Strategies  
Actions |

| **Guiding principles for the plan** |  |

| **Outcomes related to RPOS** | Desired Conditions (p. 33)  
A. Everyone who wishes to participate in appropriate outdoor recreation activities in Vermont has an opportunity to do so.  
B. Vermont’s natural resources base, which provides the foundation for outdoor recreational pursuits, is conserved and enhanced.  
C. The quality of Vermont’s existing outdoor recreation facilities, programming, and operations is high.  
D. Vermont meets increasing needs for outdoor recreation by making more resources and diverse programming available.  
E. Vermont outdoor recreation providers and users develop creative solutions for resolving outdoor recreation conflicts.  
F. The majority of private landowners in Vermont continue to allow access to their land for public recreation.  
G. Outdoor recreationists in Vermont appreciate nature and the natural resource base and treat private and public resources and other users with respect.  
H. Outdoor recreationists in Vermont experience health benefits while recreating, and Vermont communities that emphasize outdoor recreation in their development become healthier.  
I. Information about Vermont’s outdoor recreation opportunities is provided in user-friendly ways and directs people to appropriate places. |
J. There is strong administrative support for Vermont’s outdoor recreation industry.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan goals, objectives, policies, etc. related to RPOS</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Organizations and agencies at all levels provide outdoor recreational experiences at various degrees of difficulty for people at different developmental levels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Outdoor recreational experiences are made available to special populations in an efficient and cost effective manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Costs to special populations for outdoor recreation are minimized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Information regarding sites and programs for outdoor recreation that are available for special populations is disseminated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The outdoor recreation experiences of people with special needs are integrated with those of the community at large.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Outdoor recreation providers and user groups apply a variety of methods: a) to support their operations and programming needs, b) to support the maintenance of existing outdoor recreation facilities, and c) to maintain safe facilities, operations, and programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Access to existing water and land resources for outdoor recreation is improved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Suitable lands and properties are acquired for the public, new facilities are built, and new programs are created to meet public recreation needs, especially in areas of high demand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The benefits to the environment and future generations are considered in the development of outdoor areas, facilities, and programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Funding and staff are available for expanding recreational facilities and programming.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Traditional recreational offerings are expanded to other venues and to coincide with special events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Whenever recreation issues are to be discussed or services changed, all stakeholders should be involved in those discussions so that potential conflicts can be resolved as early in the process as possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Vermont should build on the successful resolutions of conflicts that have occurred here and should look for other models to follow when needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Protocols should be developed for examining the ecological, economic, and social impacts of recreation proposals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Participants who engage in recreational activities that use the same resources or locations are encouraged to find ways of sharing, including usage on alternating days or adjustments for time-of-day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Barriers to allowing public access on private lands are minimized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Incentives or benefits are offered to landowners who allow public use of their lands for recreation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Landowners understand various options available to them for allowing use of their lands for recreation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Youths experience the natural environment and Vermont traditions and engage in fair play.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Outdoor recreationists participate legally, ethically, and respectfully in their activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Users engage in safe and proper uses of their equipment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Better health through recreation is promoted via partnerships between involved agencies and organizations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Communities expand their knowledge about the roles of community design and the built environment in facilitating more healthy residents and economic benefits.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Agencies and organizations continue to develop and disseminate accurate and comprehensive information about outdoor recreational opportunities.
- Recreation providers have accurate and up-to-date information about experience types and user trends at Vermont recreation sites.
- Statewide coordination is provided for centrally-required functions in support of the recreation industry.
- Town and regional planning commissions coordinate efforts to plan for and manage outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities.
- Recreation services and systems are coordinated among levels of government and private providers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Map legend categories in the overall plan map and other relevant maps</th>
<th>Vermont 2005 Outdoor Recreation Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fish and Wildlife Access Area</td>
<td>Fish and Wildlife Access Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildlife management areas</td>
<td>Wildlife management areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Park/Forest</td>
<td>State Park/Forest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easements and other non-fee holdings</td>
<td>Easements and other non-fee holdings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal lands</td>
<td>Federal lands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appalachian Trail</td>
<td>Appalachian Trail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Trail</td>
<td>Long Trail</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Description of other key information
### The Yorkshire and Humber Plan: Regional Spatial Strategy to 2026

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Page total</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plan sponsor</td>
<td>None listed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scale (area covered, population, metropolitan center(s), etc.)</td>
<td>15,420 km², 5.2 million people, 24 planning authorities, metro centers include Leeds, Bradford, and Sheffield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of the purpose of the plan</td>
<td>The plan is a regional spatial strategy. The purpose of the plan is to promote the sustainable development of the region.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Hierarchy of plan language | Vision  
Policy  
Outcome |
| Guiding principles for the plan | The core principle is sustainable development |
| Outcomes related to RPOS | Green Infrastructure Outcome: Green infrastructure has improved and a more accessible and healthy environment is available. The social and economic benefits of green infrastructure are recognized and promoted in local and sub regional strategies and plans.  
Green Belt Outcome: The general extent of the Region’s Green Belt has not changed. Green Belt boundaries allow sustainable development to be delivered in accordance with the Core Approach. Green Belt around York has been defined and the setting of the historic city protected.  
Health, Recreation and Sport Outcome: 1) Regional health will have been improved and health inequalities will have reduced in line with the Regional Health Strategy. 2) The distribution of health infrastructure will be adequate for the Region’s needs (p. 122 Section 10 – Environment). |
| Plan goals, objectives, policies, etc. related to RPOS | Policy YH8: Green Infrastructure p. 28  
- Areas and networks of green infrastructure will be identified, protected, created, extended, enhanced, managed and maintained throughout the region to ensure that an improved, accessible and healthy environment is available for the benefit of present and future communities whilst protecting the integrity of internationally important biodiversity sites  
- Local development frameworks (LDFs) should: 1) Define a hierarchy of green infrastructure, in terms of location, function, size and levels of use, at every spatial scale and across all areas of the region based on analysis of existing natural, historic, cultural, sport and playing field, and river and landscape assets, including the identification of new assets required to deliver green infrastructure; 2) Identify and require the retention and provision of substantial connected networks of green infrastructure, particularly in urban, urban fringe and adjacent countryside areas; 3) Ensure that policies have regard to the economic and social as well as environmental benefits of green infrastructure assets; and 4) Identify the functional role of green infrastructure in supporting the provision of renewable energy, urban microclimate control, and flood risk management.  
- Assets of particular significance for the protection and enhancement of green infrastructure include national and inter-regional trails (policy T5E), floodplains (policy ENV1), woodlands (policy ENV6), biodiversity (policy... |
ENV8) and heritage (policy ENV9) and distinctive landscapes (policy ENV10).

Policy YH9 Green Belts p. 30
- The Green Belts in North, South and West Yorkshire have a valuable role in supporting urban renaissance, transformation and concentration, as well as conserving countryside, and their general extent as shown on the Key Diagram should not be changed.
- Localized reviews of Green Belt boundaries may be necessary in some places to deliver the Core Approach and Sub Area policies.
- The detailed inner boundaries of the Green Belt around York should be defined in order to establish long term development limits that safeguard the special character and setting of the historic city. The boundaries must take account of the levels of growth set out in this RSS and must also endure beyond the Plan period.
- A strategic review of the West Yorkshire Green Belt may be required to deliver longer term housing growth as set out in Table 12.1 in locations that deliver the Core Approach and the strategic patterns of development set out in policy LCR1E.
- Green Belt reviews should also consider whether exceptional circumstances exist to include additional land as Green Belt.

Policy ENV11: Health, recreation, and sport
- Plans, strategies, investment decisions and programs should: A Help improve the health of residents by: 1) Focusing, concentrating and supporting economic development in and around Regional and Sub Regional Cities and Towns, especially Hull and in South and West Yorkshire, 2) Providing, safeguarding and enhancing high quality facilities for sports and recreation, and 3) Maximizing opportunities to develop walking and cycling routes and other green infrastructure, especially through Hull and Regional and Sub Regional Cities and Towns in South & West Yorkshire. B Ensure adequate and accessible health care facilities by: 1) Working with commissioners of health and social care to ensure health and social care provision is targeted as close to people’s homes as possible, promoting independence and prevention, and, where not possible, to be easily accessible by public transport, and 2) Retaining and developing major health care facilities within Regional Cities, Sub Regional Cities and Towns, and Principal Towns, and supporting provision of outreach facilities in rural areas.

Map legend categories in the overall plan map and other relevant maps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environment designations</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AONB (area of outstanding natural beauty)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RAMSAR and proposed RAMSAR Sites (wetlands of international importance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special area of conservation and proposed SAC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special protection area and potential SPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community forest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National nature reserves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site of special scientific interest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 10.4 – Environment designations