

About the Project

The Town's Municipal Development Plan provides direction for and guides the growth and development of Westlock over the next 20 years. Every municipality in Alberta is required by the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA) to adopt an MDP. The Town's previous Municipal Development Plan (Bylaw 2015-03) was adopted in 2015 and since then had no major updates or amendments. Town staff has been working on refreshing the MDP since late 2022, a project which has resulted in the new refreshed Municipal Development Plan Bylaw 2024-16.

Key Changes in Proposed Plan

Community Vision

The MDP features a streamlined and focused Vision Statement – refined from the previous MDP through additional community consultation:

Westlock is a vibrant, interconnected community where people, businesses, and ideas find fertile ground. Those that call Westlock home have a high quality of life and are connected to the broader community. Supported by efficient infrastructure, a progressive growing economy, and quality cultural and recreational amenities, Westlock is recognized as being a safe, healthy, and vibrant place for every stage of life that honours its past while building its future.

Guiding Principles

The guiding principles support the vision by providing overall guidance to ensure the community's priorities are reflected throughout the plan. The new plan includes six (6) guiding principles that were refined from the principles in the previous MDP.



Support a Strong, Diverse Local Economy



Lead in Environmental Stewardship



Develop a Vibrant, Re-Energized Downtown



Provide Quality Culture & Recreational Opportunities



Build a Livable, Welcoming Community



Foster Collective Community Based Decision Making

New & Expanded Town-Wide Policy Topics

Town-wide policies have been organized by topic (some new and some carried forward and expanded from the previous MDP) in identified focus areas, including livability, housing, economic development, the environment, and emergency management.

Refreshed Community Concept

The community concept in the MDP which sets the general land use pattern for the lands within the Town's boundary has been refreshed. The concept establishes specific neighbourhoods within the Town and outlines specific objectives and policies that are intended to guide the unique development of each area. Two (2) new neighbourhood policy areas have been introduced in the concept:

- **Greater Downtown** – to support the desire for a re-energized Downtown through targeted intensification and residential growth, while ensuring potential impacts of new development are sufficiently mitigated.
- **Transitional Corridor** – to provide a transition area between Highway 18 and the established Southview neighbourhood to the south, while prioritizing pedestrian safety and the functionality of the highway corridor.

Implementation Framework

The MDP includes a new comprehensive framework to guide implementation and monitor progress through newly introduced indicators, updated implementation actions, and standard reporting and comprehensive review timelines.

Overall Policy & Structure Improvements

The MDP has been given a structural and visual overhaul to improve user-friendliness and readability of the document. New Westlock-specific imagery, descriptive diagrams and information boxes, and additional definitions have been added to better explain concepts in the MDP.

Policies from the previous MDP have either been retained, removed (where no longer relevant) or revised to remove overlap with the Town's other planning documents. The decision to revise or add new policies was based on feedback received during the community engagement process or on the findings and recommendations from various studies and plans completed since the current MDP was adopted.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What is a Municipal Development Plan (MDP)?

A MDP is a long-range plan which guides future development over the next 20 years and is the conceptual framework for all other plans and policies. The MDP will act as a guide for Town Council and Administration on future development and provides policy direction on key topics such as economic development, housing, emergency management and the environment.

Why do we need an MDP?

Every municipality in Alberta is required to adopt an MDP. This is a legislative requirement established by the Province through its *Municipal Government Act* (MGA). Besides this legislative requirement – imagine building a new house without any foundation, plans, or ideas for how it should look, function, or feel. Without a long-term plan, a community's development is likely to be disjointed, and important high-level decisions can have results that are not in line with what the community needs and wants.

Why did we refresh the MDP?

Westlock's previous MDP (Bylaw 2015-03) was adopted in 2015 and had no major review or amendments since. Due to changes which inevitably happen in communities over time, plans like an MDP need regular revisioning to ensure this major guiding document continues to reflect the Town's needs, wants, and aspirations. This was an independent project started by the Town in late 2022, and is not related to projects in other municipalities in the province.

Who was involved in the project?

The new MDP and the entire MDP Refresh project was completed by internal Town Staff, using significant input from multiple stages of community engagement opportunities. A full summary of the engagement process for the project is available to view. No external consultants were involved in the creation of the plan.

Who decides what is in the MDP?

Many voices contribute to the policies of an MDP, including: the general public, Town Council, community groups, businesses, and Town operational departments. All input must be weighed with financial feasibility, legislative requirements and other research.

What does the proposed MDP mean for my property?

No changes will be required to how your property is used or currently developed as a result of the adoption of the new MDP. Your current land use and buildings can remain in place until you or a future landowner wishes to change them.

The new Municipal Development Plan Bylaw 2024-16 and more details about the project, including a full engagement summary, can be found at:

www.westlock.ca/p/mdp-refresh.