



WELCOME!

Big Lakes County is in the process of updating its Municipal Development Plan (MDP) and Land Use Bylaw (LUB). Phase 1 engagement was completed in the summer of 2023 and community input was used to inform the proposed MDP and LUB updates shared with the public today.

The County's current MDP was adopted in 2017. The MDP:

- Is a statutory planning document that is required for all municipalities in Alberta under the Municipal Government Act.
- Is a high-level policy document designed to guide the physical development of the County and provide clear direction on how the County should grow over time.

The County's current LUB was adopted in 2017. The LUB:

- Is required for all municipalities in Alberta under the Municipal Government Act.
- Directs day-to-day development decisions by regulating and controlling the use of land and buildings to achieve orderly development within the County.

MDPs and LUBs get updated on a regular basis to make sure they are in step with emerging trends and changes in provincial legislation or strategic municipal priorities.

Please review the information on the display boards, ask questions to staff, and provide your feedback. You can also provide your feedback through the on-line survey, available until July 25.

Your input will be used to help inform the final updates before Council approval. There will be another opportunity for providing input at a public hearing in Fall 2024.



The survey can be accessed by scanning the QR code or by visiting:
surveymonkey.ca/r/BigLakesMDPLUBUpdate

To stay up-to-date on the project, visit:

biglakescounty.ca/services/municipal-development-plan-mdp-land-use-bylaw-lub/

Questions?

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PROPOSED MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (MDP) UPDATES

Based on community feedback and best practices, the changes below are proposed to the MDP:

| Policy Topic | Proposed Changes |
|--|--|
| Subdivision of Agricultural Land | The policy has been revised to reduce the number of parcels that can be subdivided out of a quarter without rezoning from 3 parcels to 1 parcel. |
| Rezoning Criteria | The policy has been revised to clarify that rezoning for non-agricultural uses will not be allowed on better agricultural land. |
| Alternative Energy | A more robust policy is proposed for large scale wind farms and solar energy facilities that emphasizes agricultural land protection, site reclamation, and decommissioning. |
| Municipal Reserve (MR) as Land Preferred | This policy revision makes MR a mandatory subdivision requirement and expands the application of MR to include buffers between incompatible land uses. |
| Money in Lieu of Municipal Reserve (MR) | This revision makes money in lieu of MR a mandatory subdivision requirement if not dedicated in the form of land. |
| Panhandle Lots | Where previously discouraged, this policy revision is proposed to allow flexibility for parcel access. |
| Intermunicipal Development Plans (IDPs) | This policy has been updated to recognize that IDPs are now in place with neighbouring municipalities. |
| Definition of Better Agricultural Land | A change to the definition of Better Agricultural Land is proposed to protect more land from subdivision, by reducing the Rural Farmland Assessment rating from 45% to 28%. |



PROPOSED LAND USE BYLAW (LUB) UPDATES

Based on community feedback and best practices, the changes below are proposed to the LUB:

- The LUB content was reorganized and aligned with the policies of the MDP, ensuring policy and regulation are consistent.
- Variance authority, the amount of discretion available on a measurable standard, is proposed to be 25% for the Development Officer and 50% for the Municipal Planning Commission.
- The definitions were moved to their own part at the rear of the LUB, facilitating easy cross-referencing between uses listed in each district and their definitions.
- Development permit requirements for municipal improvements such as lagoons, landfills and waste transfer stations have been removed.
- The following alternative energy uses have been added:
 - Solar Freestanding <math><28\text{ m}^2</math> (Permitted in the AG, HI, RI, and UR Districts).
 - Solar Freestanding >math>>28\text{ m}^2</math> (Discretionary in the AG, CL, and RI Districts).
 - Wind Power (Discretionary in the AG, CL, and RI Districts).
- The regulations were updated/added for the following uses:
 - Alternative Energy, differentiating between large (>math>>28\text{ m}^2</math>) and small (<math><28\text{ m}^2</math>) solar development, and simplifying the regulation of roof/wall mounted solar panels (development permit no longer required).
 - New Communication Tower content, aligning with federal antenna system regulations.
 - New Tent & Air Supported Structure content, considered an Accessory Building like a Sea Can.
 - Removed “land farms” from the bylaw (effectively prohibiting new land farms from being developed – residents can still use industrial landfills).
 - Kennels.
 - Recreation Vehicle Parking (clarifying where they can be parked).
 - Cannabis Production.



PROPOSED LAND USE BYLAW (LUB) UPDATES

Based on community feedback and best practices, the changes below are proposed to the LUB:

- Reviewed and updated use definitions to remove outdated ones and add emerging uses, including:
 - Home Day Care has been folded into Home Occupation (Minor).
 - Added Gazebos less than 3 m² to Accessory Buildings.
 - Aquaculture has been folded into Agricultural Industry.
 - Convenience Retail Service has been folded into Retail (Small).
 - Removed non-land use Cannabis definitions.
 - Farm Buildings were folded into Farmsteads.
 - Hotel and Motel regulations were merged.
- Regulations were updated for emergent matters such as confined feeding operations, work camps, and highway development setbacks.
- Minimum Parcel Sizes and maximum densities were added to the AG District to support rural lifestyles and protect farmland from fragmentation.