

City of Lethbridge Growth Principles

In September 2014, the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (SSRP) was adopted by the Alberta Government in line with the vision of the Alberta Land Use Framework (2008; LUF). The LUF is a high level visioning document, intended to guide future land use and decision-making in Alberta. The City of Lethbridge is required to demonstrate compliance with the SSRP by September 1, 2019. Moreover, the City is required to consider the policies of the SSRP when planning and making decisions with respect to land use.

While the City undertakes an extensive review of the SSRP and its implications for future plans and policies, including with respect to the growth of our community and how efficiently we use our land base, the City will continue to operate under the direction of our existing Integrated Community Sustainability Plan / Municipal Development Plan (ICSP/MDP).

The policies of the ICSP/MDP are based on extensive community engagement and were adopted by City Council in 2010. Despite the broad community support for the document, the ICSP/MDP is limited in its ability to manage future growth because policies are not tied to targets. With the introduction of the SSRP, and our statutory obligation to demonstrate compliance with respect to Efficient Use of Land, the City has an opportunity to collect baseline data that can be used to set appropriate growth targets.

While the City works to create that baseline in support of future target setting, Administration will continue to rely on the following growth principles to inform and recommend “growth decisions:”

Community Growth Principles

Focus: Completion

1. *Implement adopted Plans*

- a. Area Structure Plans and Area Redevelopment Plans are statutory policy instruments of City Council. A Plan should be fully implemented to ensure its vision, and the stakeholder input that supports it, is respected and realized in a timely manner.
- b. To provide residents with a degree of certainty, Administration will only support development which directly aligns with a relevant Plan’s vision or policy rationale.
 - i. For example, down-zoning (zoning to a lower density) will not be recommended by Administration.

2. *Complete neighbourhoods*

- a. To support efficient municipal service delivery and resident quality of life, the City shall prioritize the completion of unfinished neighbourhoods above the commencement of new growth fronts.
 - i. From time to time this may mean prohibiting the commencement of new subdivision phases or Outline Plan areas until other growth fronts in a given growth sector of the City are considered “substantially complete,” or until other Interim Growth Principles are satisfied.
 - ii. “Substantially complete” shall be interpreted as greater than 75% of residential units indicated in a given Outline Plan are constructed.
- b. New neighbourhoods shall be contiguous to substantially complete neighbourhoods to limit premature land conversion and fragmentation.

3. *Support quality of life*

- a. Quality of life is achieved when a neighbourhood is fully serviced by infrastructure and municipal services, and **local** recreation and employment opportunities are present.
 - i. With respect to recreation, “local” refers to the neighbourhood or Outline Plan area
 - ii. With respect to employment, “local” refers to the City sector (West Side, North Side, South Side)

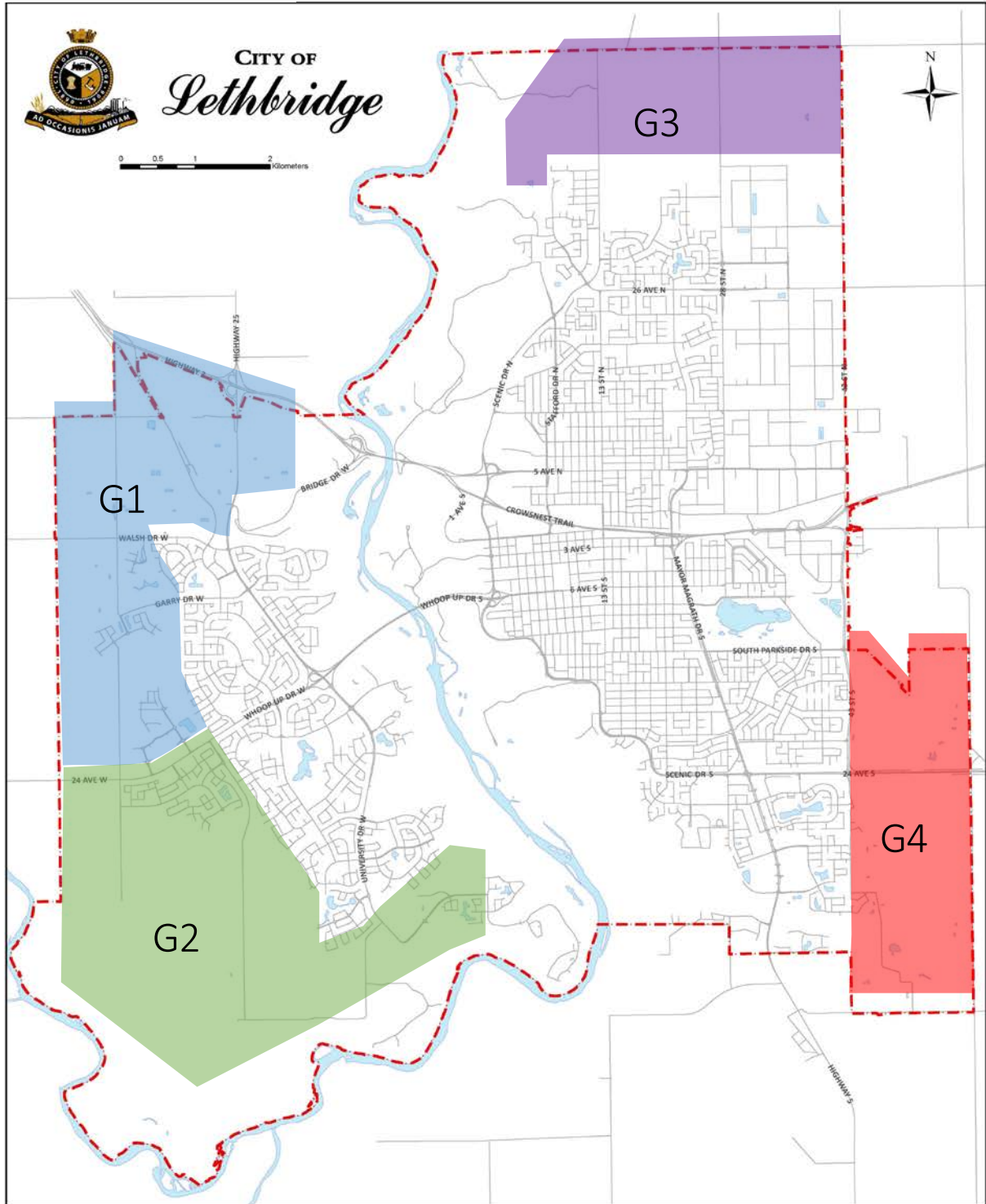
Focus: Resources

4. *Make smart infrastructure decisions*
 - a. Developers (ultimately through future property buyers) bear the initial cost of providing hard infrastructure to a neighbourhood, while all tax payers support the full long-term cost of maintaining hard infrastructure and providing services (e.g., transit, waste collection, libraries, and emergency services).
 - b. Respecting these long-term investments requires maximizing infrastructure, and using it as efficiently as possible. This is supported by planning neighbourhoods contiguously and sequentially.
5. *Support density in key locations*
 - a. Transit Oriented Development and density increases along or within proximity to transportation corridors is a tangible way to support the maximization of tax payers’ infrastructure and service investments.

Focus: Start Smart

6. *Identify resources before planning*
 - a. The true cost of providing municipal services to a neighbourhood lies in both the initial capital investment (reinvestment in an infill context) and on-going maintenance. To support strong financial stewardship of our community, Outline Plans shall only be commenced after sufficient resources are satisfactorily identified.
7. *Support a range of housing types*
 - a. All community members benefit when neighbourhoods have a range of housing types to support a diversity of resident needs.
 - b. Housing types are understood as both building types (e.g., single-detached home, multi-unit home), and occupancy types (own versus rent).

Figure 1: Growth Sectors



Legend

-  City Boundary
-  Streets
-  Hydrology

 Growth Areas*

*All growth area boundaries are approximations and subject to change