



**LETHBRIDGE COUNTY**

**Hamlet of Iron Springs**

**GROWTH STUDY**

**May 2019**



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**Prepared for Lethbridge County**

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# LETHBRIDGE COUNTY HAMLET OF IRON SPRINGS GROWTH STUDY

## Part 1

### STUDY OVERVIEW

This study is part of a series of hamlet growth studies that Lethbridge County is undertaking for each of its hamlets. The purpose of the studies is to encourage and support the residential and economic viability of the hamlets within Lethbridge County. The studies are to analyze present and future servicing needs along with identifying logical areas to support growth. The municipality has engaged the Oldman River Regional Services Commission, as municipal planners for the municipality, to review and prepare the studies/reports on behalf of the County.

The Lethbridge County Municipal Development Plan (MDP) identified that planning for future hamlet growth areas is desirable as part of its overall land use management strategy. The MDP is a long-range statutory document providing a framework of policies for decision makers regarding future growth and development opportunities. As part of the growth policies in the MDP, one of the County's objectives is to sustain the hamlets within the County and continue to protect agricultural land uses by encouraging residential development in and around the hamlets. In particular, the MDP outlines the following policies:

- The County shall support hamlet growth provided appropriate servicing provisions exist to facilitate expansions.
- The County shall, where required, undertake servicing master plans and the development of infrastructure required to facilitate growth.

The hamlet growth studies are to guide and facilitate the comprehensive planning and development of servicing that will be needed to support healthy, probable growth projections.

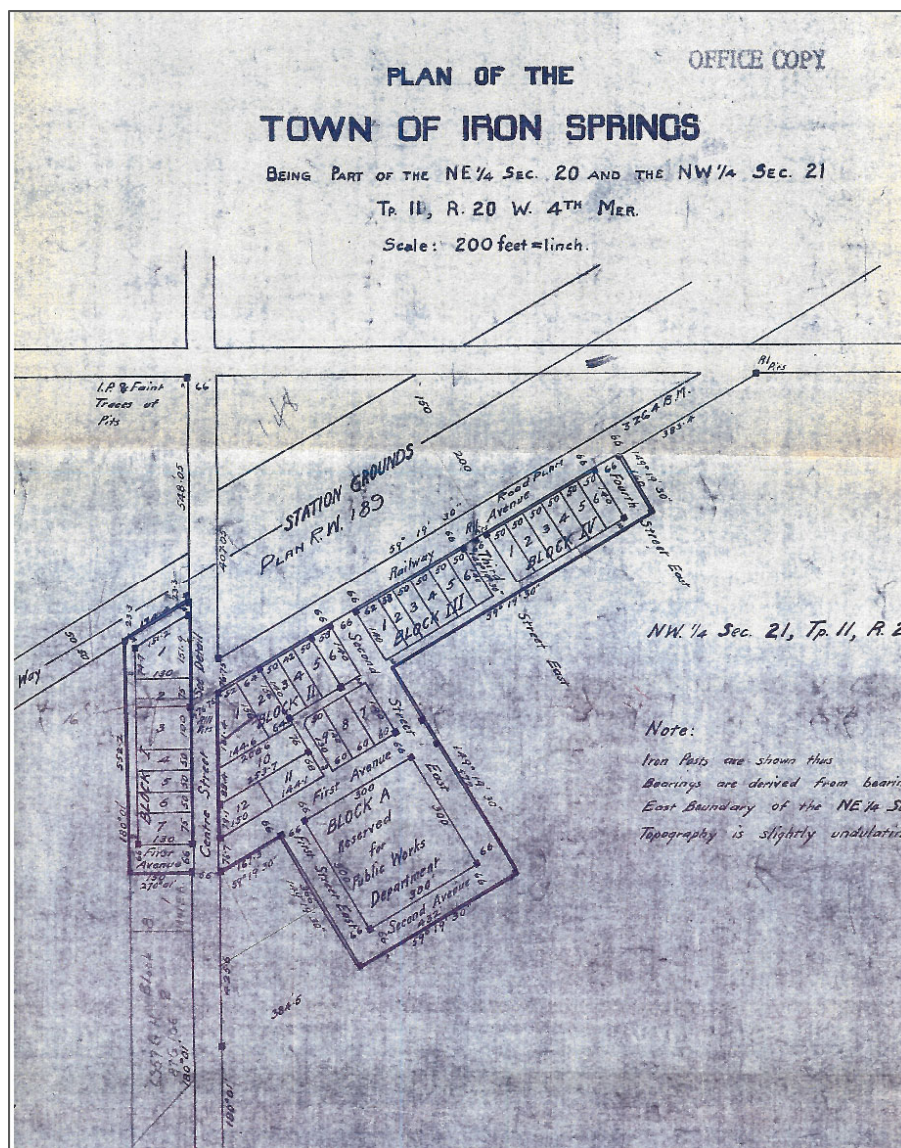
### 1.1 Intent

This report presents a summary of existing conditions and future considerations to support the growth and long-term viability of the Hamlet of Iron Springs.

### 1.2 Objectives

- To put together a plan to direct and encourage the hamlet to sustainably grow and prosper into the future in a logical/rational manner.
- To provide an overview of the general hamlet conditions and assess the overall vitality (well-being) of the community.

- To identify lands available within the present hamlet boundary to accommodate growth in a contiguous manner by developing available vacant or larger parcels of land in Iron Springs.
- To identify logical growth lands for the hamlet to assist in making future development more efficient, cohesive, and cost effective.
- To provide a planning framework to facilitate future development that could be readily serviced by municipal infrastructure. The reports' findings may be used to address and facilitate long-term infrastructure planning and management for the County.
- To provide an assessment/opportunity summary with recommendations to Lethbridge County decision makers to help guide future planning, servicing, and management.



Original Surveyed Iron Springs Plan of 1926 (Plan 6841DI)

# Part 2

## LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

Hamlets are small unincorporated communities within a larger rural municipality in Alberta. They are governed, taxed, and managed by the rural municipality within the boundaries of which they are located.

The *Municipal Government Act (MGA)*, section 59(1) states,

*“59(1) The council of a municipal district or specialized municipality may designate an unincorporated community described in subsection (2) that is within its boundaries to be a hamlet.”*

Subsections (2) and (3) state,

*“(2) An unincorporated community may be designated a hamlet if the community:*

- (a) consists of 5 or more buildings used as dwellings, a majority of which are on parcels of land smaller than 1850 square metres,*
- (b) has a generally accepted boundary and name, and*
- (c) contains parcels of land that are used for non-residential purposes.*

*(3) The designation of a hamlet must specify the hamlet’s name and boundaries.”*

The Hamlet of Iron Springs conforms to the stipulated *MGA* criteria.

This Growth Study is not a statutory plan as defined by the *MGA*, but is a tool to help guide and shape direction and policy for Lethbridge County regarding planning for the hamlet. The vision and recommendations may be incorporated into the County’s Municipal Development Plan.





# Part 3

## HAMLET OVERVIEW

The Hamlet of Iron Springs is located on Highway 25, approximately 28 km (or 17 miles) northeast of the City of Lethbridge, 13 km northeast of the Town of Picture Butte, and 30 km north of the Town of Coaldale via Highway 845. Iron Springs is one of the smaller hamlets in the County and has a land area consisting of approximately 64 acres (25.9 ha) within its designated boundary (which correlates to 0.26 km<sup>2</sup>). The hamlet is situated primarily within the NW 21-11-20-W4M, with a small strip west of Centre Street within the NE 20-11-20-W4M, and a small portion of former railway land to the north within the SW 28-11-20-W4M. The Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) rail line was situated along the north perimeter of the hamlet (parallel to Highway 25). The CPR decommissioned the rail line and transferred it to Lethbridge County in 2011 and the tracks were subsequently removed. Highway 25 is situated along the north boundary of Iron Springs, and is a provincial highway connection that heads east and north and eventually intersects with Highway 521.

### 3.1 Population

According to the 2016 Census of Population conducted by Statistics Canada, Iron Springs as a designated place recorded a population of 97 living in 25 of its 26 total private dwellings, a change of 4.3% from its 2011 population of 93.<sup>1</sup> In 2011, Iron Springs had a population of 93 living in 24 of its 24 total dwellings, which was a 29.2% change from its 2006 recorded population of 72. Table 1 illustrates the census population and historical growth.

**Table 1**  
**Census Population and Growth**

	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
<b>POPULATION</b>	57	71	72	93	97
<b>5 YEAR TOTAL GROWTH (OR DECLINE) %</b>		24.6%	1.4%	29.2%	4.3%
<b>NO. OF PRIVATE DWELLINGS</b>			23	24	26

Overall, the Hamlet of Iron Springs is the second smallest hamlet (population wise) in Lethbridge County, with Chin being the smallest.

<sup>1</sup> Population and dwelling counts, for Canada, provinces and territories, and designated places, 2016 and 2011, 2011 and 2006 censuses (Alberta). Statistics Canada.

## 3.2 Hamlet History

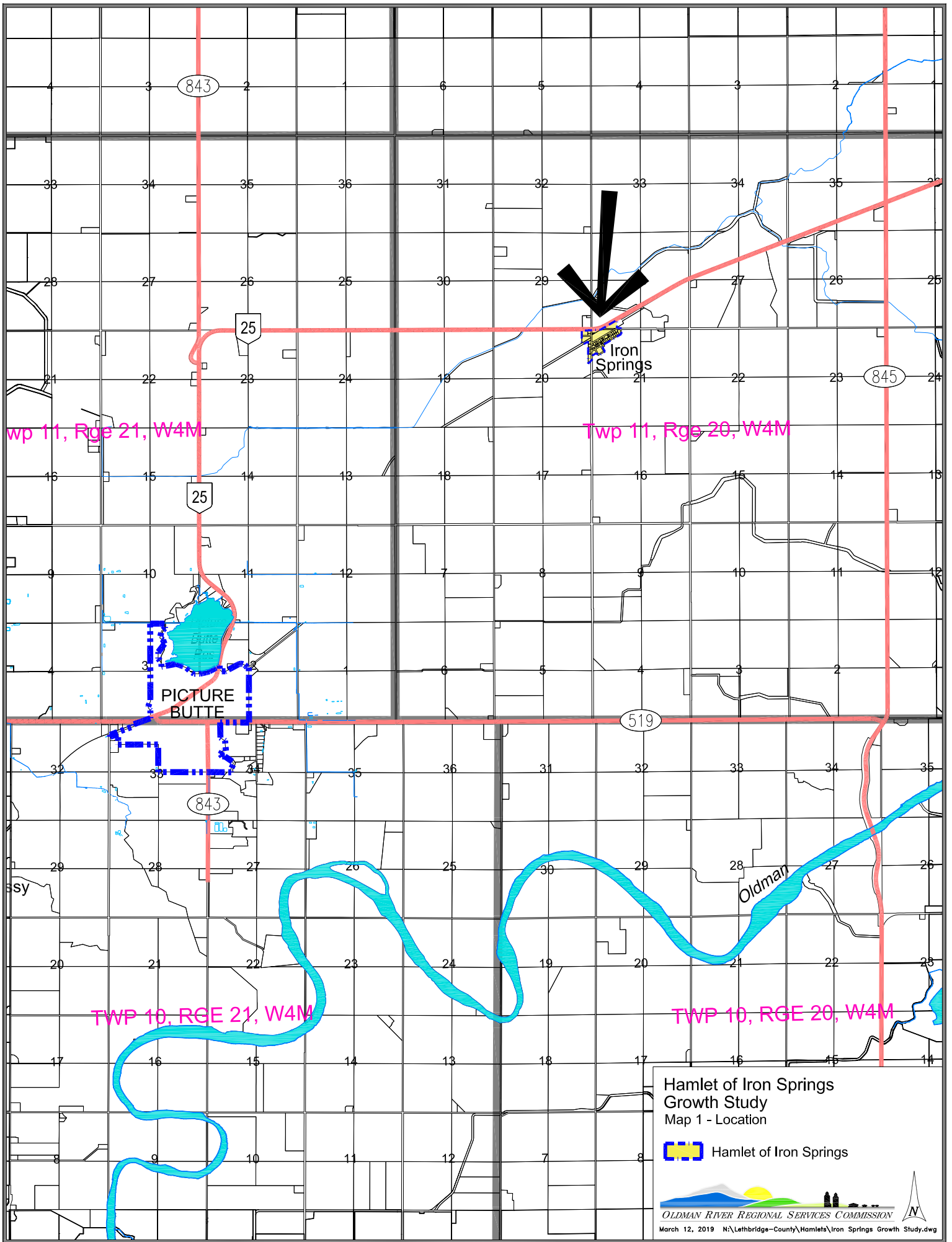
Iron Springs derived its name from a local natural spring (Bulmer Spring) near the community which contained significant deposits of iron. The first post office was established in the community in 1908. Like many prairie communities, the evolution of Iron Springs is related to the railroad being established by the CPR in 1925 and the growth of the agricultural sector in the area. The CPR registered the Iron Springs Station Grounds plan for the Kipp-Northeasterly Branch Mile 19 in May 1925.

The Huntsville School district was established in 1906 and the school opened in 1907. One year later, that school was moved to the site where it currently stands—directly adjacent to the hamlet boundary across Highway 25.<sup>2</sup> Although the school is not within the actual hamlet boundary, it very much has influenced and been a part of the Hamlet. The school building, named after the original owner of the land, Mr. Will Hunt, has been through a number of major reconstructions (1925, 1958) and in 1959 began to accommodate grades 1-9. In 1967, grades 7-9 were no longer made available at Huntsville and students of these grades had to attend school in the nearby Town of Picture Butte. Many years later this changed once again, as Huntsville started to offer classes for grades 7-9 as a combined classroom for all three grades. The school building has been renovated many times over the years, and it was officially announced in 2017 that the province would provide funding to construct a new school to replace the old building. Construction of the school building commenced in the spring of 2019.

Irrigation in the area also helped contribute to the growth of the community. The Lethbridge North Irrigation District was created in 1923, and included the Picture Butte-Granite Falls, Turin-Gold Ridge, Barrhill-Bulmer-Circle, Iron Springs-Battersea and Shaughnessy districts. Irrigated agricultural lands and water available for livestock is also closely linked to growth and the settlement of European and especially Dutch immigrants in the area after World War II. As Dutch immigration increased, the countryside and area surrounding Iron Springs began to change as dairy, chicken and poultry farms became the norm of the surrounding farmsteads. Over the middle part of the last century (approximately 1940s to 1970s), commercial entities in Iron Springs included a grocery store, coffee shop, post office, two gas service stations, a machine shop and grain elevators. After the local population decreased over a couple decades (mid-70s to mid-90s), the population experienced significant spikes of 20% or more during two different census periods (2001 and 2011), increasing from just over 50 people in the mid-90s to just under 100 in the most recent 2016 census.

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<sup>2</sup> Coyote Flats Historical Society (1967), *Coyote Flats: historical review, 1905-1965*. Volume 1. Lethbridge: Southern Printing.





# Part 4

## EXISTING CONDITIONS AND OVERALL ASSESSMENT

A review of the existing hamlet conditions was undertaken that involved a study of both land use and a general analysis of the character of the community. This review included assessing the following:

- Analysis of Population & Growth
- Determination of Land Use Patterns
- Community Services - churches, schools, community halls, commercial (e.g. groceries)
- Parks and Recreation (i.e. playgrounds, ball diamonds, green space, etc.)
- General State Synopsis - personal property conditions, weeds, unsightly premises
- Confined Feeding Operations (CFOs) - proximity / effects
- Identification of Vacant Land Parcels
- Servicing - municipal and private utilities

Based on a review of the existing conditions, a general assessment statement is provided on the current state of the community (i.e. hamlet). Some conclusions are provided on the identified constraints present or potential need for the provision of various municipal or community services.

As part of the project, a questionnaire survey was also sent to every property owner in the Hamlet of Iron Springs. The survey consisted of 11 questions with some opportunity for written comment. The purpose was to obtain citizen feedback and help Lethbridge County better understand existing conditions and issues to more comprehensively plan for future growth. A total of 30 questionnaires were sent out on March 1, 2019, with 10 surveys filled-out and returned, resulting in a 33% overall survey response rate. For a community survey this is considered as a fairly good response, as typically 20% or less is the usual experience in this type of exercise. However, it is noted the overall survey number and number of returns are a statistically small sample size. Nine of the surveys were completed by residents who were property owners, while only one of the returned surveys was from a non-resident property owner. The majority are long-term residents, as over 60% of the respondents have lived in Iron Springs for 10 years or more, and 50% indicate 20 years or more. Overall, residents seem to be satisfied with the quality of life in Iron Springs.

For the complete results and comments as supplied by the residents who filled-out the survey, please refer to Appendix B.

### 4.1 Population Projections and Growth

The following Table 2 illustrates population projections for the hamlet using the annual percentage compound growth method of population forecasting. A range of four different growth rates are provided below, from slow (2.5%) to strong (5.0%), displayed for five-year (census period) intervals.

**Table 2**  
**Projected Population Growth (2016-2041) Per Census Period**

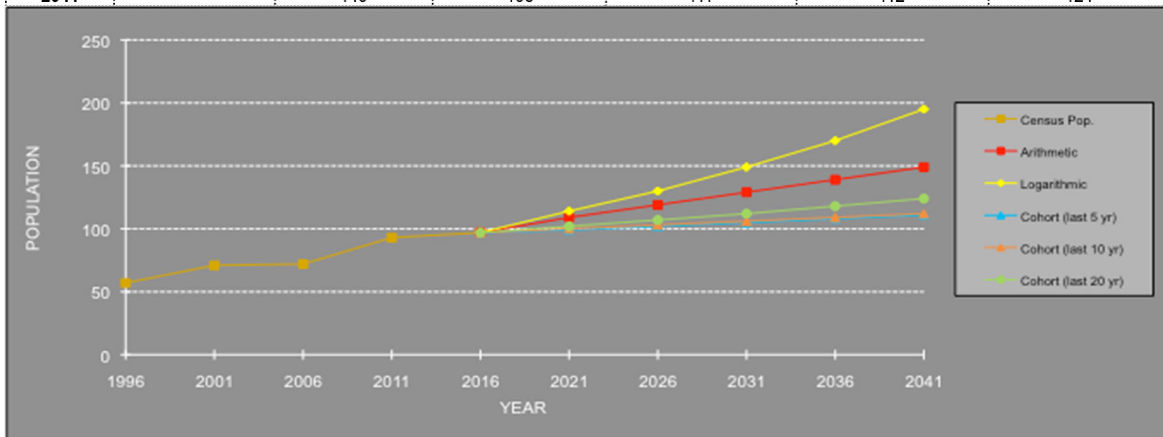
Year	2.5% Growth	3.0% Growth	3.5% Growth	5% Growth
2016	97	97	97	97
2021	99	100	100	102
2026	102	103	104	107
2031	105	106	108	112
2036	108	109	112	118
2041	111	112	115	124

Based on the fixed growth rate method for population projections, the 2041 population of the Hamlet of Iron Springs could reach between 111 and 124 people, dependent on the rate of growth and other factors. It is presumed the 2.5% to 3.0% may be the most probable future population growth rates unless growth is actively promoted, and land is available to build upon. The Arithmetic and Logarithmic straight-line projections in Diagram 1 depict a slightly higher growth trend.

**Diagram 1**  
**Population Projections Line Graph**

**IRON SPRINGS**

Year	Census Pop.	Arithmetic	Logarithmic	2.50%	3%	5.00%
1996	57					
2001	71					
2006	72					
2011	93					
2016	97	97	97	97	97	97
2021		109	114	99	100	102
2026		119	130	102	103	107
2031		129	149	105	106	112
2036		139	170	108	109	118
2041		149	195	111	112	124



Historically over the past two decades, the hamlet has experienced significant growth spikes, including two census periods of over 20% growth. This is likely due to an increase in immigration to the area (but may also represent some past under reporting in census surveys). (The computed growth projections are used to calculate future land consumption needs in the “Growth and Land Use Projections” in section 5.2 of the report.)

## **4.2 Residential Assessment – Existing Conditions**

Similar to nearby Turin and other County hamlets, much of the current residential housing stock is of mixed vintage and the majority 30-50 years old, and a few are newer construction over the last few years. There are a number of pre-1960s dwellings existing, but most of the housing stock appears to be from the 1970s to 1980s vintage.

- Overall, the housing within the hamlet is in fairly good condition with just a couple number of older residences being in poor condition.
- Many residents have neat and nicely landscaped yards. There are relatively few properties that are not well maintained, and overall there appears to be limited issues with unsightly premises in comparison to what some of the other County hamlets experience.
- Overall, the community can be considered as generally tidy and well maintained.
- With little commercial and industrial uses operating in the hamlet, and those that do are located at the north adjacent to the former CPR railway lands, there are no real land use conflicts with residences apparent in the hamlet.
- Generally, most of the residential lots are deemed deficient in size for being dependent on private sewage systems, as there is no municipal sewer system in the hamlet. (However, they generally meet the Land Use Bylaw minimum stipulated size of 15,000 sq. ft.)

## **4.3 Business Commercial/Industrial Assessment – Existing Conditions**

There is no real commercial activity as the hamlet basically serves as a rural bedroom community. For a few decades around the 1950s to 1970s, the hamlet did contain grocery stores, a post office, two gas service stations, a bulk fuel station, a machine shop and some grain elevators. Presently, there is only an agricultural related business on the former CPR lands, a newly established trucking business, and a super-box Canada Post outlet stand at a central location for residents of the hamlet.

- There are 1.28 acres of land designated as ‘Hamlet Commercial – HC’ adjacent to the entrance at Highway 25, but currently, there is no active commercial activity.
- There are no lands either designated or available for other types of commercial uses. Realistically, the population of Iron Springs is not large enough to support retail commercial type ventures such as convenience stores or gas stations.

- There is a sizeable amount of land (12.914 acres) designated as ‘Hamlet Industrial – HI’ due to the decommissioning of the rail line. The majority of the ‘Hamlet Industrial – HI’ designated land (12.69 acres) is located in the north, central portion of the hamlet for this reason as well. The County subdivided the railway lands in 2018 and created three large industrial titles. On the east portion at the end of Railway Ave, Block 1, Lot 3, Plan 1810343, on 4.35 acres of land is an agricultural fertilizer storage/sales operation. The west 2.64 acre parcel (Block 1, Lot 2, Plan 1810343) is currently vacant but has been purchased by a trucking business.
- A smaller designated ‘Hamlet Industrial – HI’ lot comprised of 0.224 acres of land is located on Centre Street and is owned by Lethbridge County and contains a municipal grader shed.
- Overall, there is some land available to potentially accommodate hamlet industrial businesses.

#### **4.4 Community Services Assessment – Existing Conditions**

Within Iron Springs there are no community or institutional service type organizations that are active in the hamlet, other than the Christian Reformed Church. At one time there was a Lutheran and Catholic Church also providing religious services in Irons Springs but they are no longer active places of worship.

- Within Iron Springs, 1.69 acres of ‘Hamlet Public Institutional – HPI’ land on Centre Street is utilized by the Christian Reformed Church.
- Another 0.339 acres of designated ‘Hamlet Public Institutional Land – HPI’ currently has an abandoned business shop type building located on it (former auto repair/service station).
- No formal government, personal health or care services (e.g. medical, seniors care, etc.) are available. The hamlet is both too small in population and too close to the Town of Picture Butte to be beneficiaries of such services being provided locally.
- It is noted that the Huntsville School (part of the Palliser School division), serves the Iron Springs community as an institutional educational use, but it is technically located outside the hamlet official boundary.

#### **4.5 Parks and Recreation Assessment – Existing Conditions**

There are just a couple minor outdoor recreational amenities available to hamlet residents. Currently, there is a children’s playground that contains a swing set, teeter-totter, and large amount of green space. The condition of the playground equipment appears to be newer, in good working condition. Outside the hamlet, the Huntsville School contains a large grass field and more up-to-date playground equipment (it is noted that this infrastructure is Palliser School Division’s and not Lethbridge County’s).

- There is approximately 4.0 acres of total land designated as ‘Hamlet Public/Institutional – HPI’ (which includes the 1.69 acres of land used for the church).



- There is a playground and park space designated as ‘Hamlet Public/Institutional – HPI’ that consists of approximately 2.0 acres of land. (There is more park space available at the Huntsville School, but this is located outside the hamlet boundary.)
- The hamlet may be considered somewhat underserved in regards to up-to-date parks and recreational structures or opportunities, especially considering the lack of park features that are available.
- The assessment and scheduling of repair/replacement and maintenance for recreational facilities or structures is managed through the County’s maintenance schedule for all County-owned parks.
- There are many constraints on available municipal capital funding sources to improve park and recreation facilities, which is applicable to all hamlets within the County.

#### **4.6 Confined Feeding Operations (CFOs) – Proximity / Effects**

Confined feeding operations (CFOs) represent a major component of the agricultural industry within the County and hamlet vicinity. While the contributions these operations make to the area economy is acknowledged, the large concentration of CFOs and their associated negative externalities (dust, noise, traffic, odour, etc.) are sometimes a source of contention amongst the public. The most contentious issue has historically been with respect to the practice of spreading of manure (a practice not limited to CFOs specifically) and the odour that this practice generates. Difficulty managing these conflicts between land uses is further compounded by the relative lack of control the municipality has on the management of these operations, as they fall under the oversight and regulation of the Natural Resources Conservation Board (NRCB).

Map 8 outlines the location and type of CFOs within the hamlet area (at time of this report). Within a 2-mile radius this includes 17 operations consisting of:

- 6 beef operations with a total animal units of approximately 54,500 (including a single large operation of 25,000 animal units, one 11,000 animal units, and another 10,000 animal units)
- 2 dairy operations with a total of 300 animal units
- 1 swine (farrow to finish) operation with a total animal units of 160, and 1 swine operation of 150 (farrow to finish) animal units
- 1 feeder hog operation with 400 animal units
- 1 broiler/chicken operation with 44,000 animal units
- 1 poultry unit of 35,000 chicken pullets/broilers animal units
- 4 mixed operations of unknown animal units (older, long established operations)

When the radius is examined at a 1-mile radius, the number of total operations is reduced to 7 operations consisting of:

- 2 beef operations (1 beef feeder operation of 6,200 animal units, and 1 beef finisher of 3,200 animal units)
- 2 dairy operations totaling 300 animal units
- 2 swine (farrow to finish) operation totaling 310 animal units
- 1 poultry operation of an unknown animal unit size

The one dairy operation is within the hamlet's Rural Urban Fringe land use district containing approximately 160 animal units, and is located approximately 185 meters from the closest point of the hamlet boundary (immediately west of Huntsville School). The Lethbridge County Rural Urban Fringe land use district boundary is the equivalent to the MDP CFO exclusion zone around Iron Springs.

- Compared to other urban communities and County hamlets, there is a fairly large concentration of confined feeding operations sited and operating within 2 miles of the hamlet.
- The CFO exclusion zone is currently established at approximately ½-mile north, just less than ½-mile west, and 1/3-mile to the south and east.
- The original hamlet Rural Urban Fringe zoning established in the Lethbridge County Land Use Bylaw was designated at a slightly less distance (i.e. smaller area) than what was applied around some of the other County hamlets, in order to account for the area confined feeding operations in existence and not negatively affect their ability to operate or expand.

# Part 5

## GROWTH AND LAND USE STUDY

An analysis of the existing and projected land use is needed to establish potential future growth in the hamlet community. This will help provide an assessment of current potential land available for infill development, and what (how much) contiguous hamlet boundary lands may be available for future hamlet expansion when warranted. The following matters have been reviewed as part of the planning analysis and are described in more detail this section:

(a) Infill Opportunity (inward growth)

- Inventory of vacant lots and potential to further develop
- Identifying the potential to further subdivide large parcels
- Potential to service and provide access to parcels

(b) Future Hamlet Boundary Expansion (outward growth)

- Identifying constraints (highways, railways, coulees, sewer lagoons, abandoned gas wells, etc.) (as depicted on Map 9)
- Examining adjacent land uses / conflicting uses
- Studying physical features – elevations, topography, wetlands, known flood areas, etc.
- Identifying future land growth and expansion directions

(c) Municipal Services

- Water and sewer
- Storm water management
- Roads/lanes

(d) Area Structure Plan (ASP) Needs / Considerations

### 5.1 Infill Opportunity (inward growth)

As part of the hamlet review, an analysis was completed to identify existing vacant lots that may be available to be developed. Also, the potential to subdivide existing larger parcels into additional lots was evaluated. Planning for infill development where feasible and where some services are readily available, such as roads and water lines, can assist the municipality in enabling growth but limiting the installation of costly new infrastructure. In light of the limited infrastructure in Iron Springs, specifically no sewer, the minimum lot size for subdivision is just under 1/3 acre in size. Due to the historical land and block/lot size establishment on the original surveyed hamlet plan of 1926 (Plan 6841DI), the minimum lot size value for lots without sewer capacity is 15,000 sq. ft. (Land Use Bylaw No. 1404). It is

further noted that, at one time, the provincial private sewage standards' minimum lot size was also established at 15,000 sq. ft.

To determine the availability of land for both the development of existing vacant<sup>3</sup> lots and infill potential, an air-photo review of the identified parcels was carried out and followed up with field reconnaissance work. This analysis confirmed that there are presently (Fall 2018) 10 vacant titles of residential land (approximately 15,000 sq. ft. each in size) within the hamlet that could readily accommodate new housing. The lands identified as existing vacant titles with potential to be resubdivided are displayed on Map 4. The following is a breakdown of potential land available for development:

- The **10 identified vacant lots** are Lots 1-4 and Lots 6-9 on Block 6, Plan 8310792 and Lots 7 and 8 of Block 4, Plan 8310792. These lots were created in a 1983 subdivision based on the land use bylaw and provincial sewer standards of 15,000 sq. ft. area. Six of these lots on the south side would require 1 Ave to be extended to the east and developed to provide access.
- Lot 6, Block 7, Plan 1212226 in the northwest corner of the hamlet (north of Lucy Ave) is a good-size lot with a total area of 83,480 sq. ft. However, the location of the dwelling on the current lot would likely make it unfeasible to create any additional lots.
- Block 6, Plan 1041EA could potentially be subdivided as it is 142,541 sq. ft. (3.3 acres) in size. However, due to the position of an existing dwelling, the lot is likely only suitable for 1 subdivision on the west portion resulting in **1 additional lot**.

## **RESIDENTIAL:**

**Existing Vacant Residential Titles:** (identified in yellow on Map 4)

- **10 lots** currently vacant.

**Infill Potential of Existing Residential Titles:**

- 1 existing large residential lot that has undeveloped portions that could be resubdivided to create **1 additional lot**.

**RESIDENTIAL TOTAL:**

- **11 Lots** – Existing and Infill Potential Residential Lots for Internal Hamlet Growth (with limited subdivision occurring).

## **COMMERCIAL:**

**Existing Vacant Commercial Titles:**

- None.

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<sup>3</sup> Vacant refers to land that has no current buildings or improvements on it.

- There are no vacant commercial parcels within the hamlet. There is one commercially zoned parcel at the entrance of Irons Springs adjacent to Highway 25 that is owned by the residential property owners to the immediate south. The former automotive garage and convenience store building is used by the land owners for their own private automotive use.

**Infill-potential of Existing Commercial Titles:**

- None - There is no readily available infill or new subdivision potential for commercial lots.
- There could be the potential for the buildings (old service station/auto garage site) or site on Lot 8, Block 1, Plan 1811821, on Centre Street to be re-purposed and rezoned to Hamlet Commercial (and possibly subdivided to separate it from the associated dwelling on the same title), to be used for some type of commercial use.



(Study note: A review of the provincial Environmental Site Assessment Repository (ESAR) was completed which did not uncover a reclamation report on file with the repository for either of the former hamlet service station/auto garage sites: one located on a portion of NW 21-11-20-W4 on the SE corner of Highway 25 and Centre Street; and the other on Lot 8, Block 1, Plan 1811821 at the west intersection of Centre Street and Railway Ave.)

**COMMERCIAL TOTAL:**

- **None** (in respect of current circumstances).

**INDUSTRIAL:**

There are 12.914 acres of land designated as ‘Hamlet Industrial – HI’ due to the decommissioning of the rail line. The County subdivided the railway lands in 2018 and created three large industrial titles and has sold two of them, while the east 4.35 acre title (Block 1, Lot 3, Plan 1810343) at the end of Railway Ave is leased by the County to an agricultural seed cleaning operation (Agrium).

**Existing Vacant Industrial Titles:**

- **1 lot** - The north 5.7 acre linear-shaped title, parallel to Highway 25, comprised of the former railway lands (Block 1, Lot 1, Plan 1810343) is currently undeveloped and is available for industrial use, although access to this parcel is somewhat limited and confined to Centre Street to the west. (Further subdivision this parcel will be somewhat challenging due to the location and access constraints.)

(Study note: The presently undeveloped westerly 2.64 title for Block 1, Lot 2, Plan 1810343 was not classified as ‘vacant’ inventory as it has been sold to a trucking business with plans to develop on the parcel.)

### **Infill-potential of Existing Industrial Titles:**

- An undeveloped portion of Block 1, Lot 3, Plan 1810343 (current fertilizer storage facility site) could be subdivided at the west end resulting in **1 additional lot**.
- The 2.64 acre title (Block 1, Lot 2, Plan 1810343) on the NW corner of Railway Ave and Centre Street could be subdivided at the west end resulting in 6 additional lots at the minimum bylaw lot size; however, for typical industrial use, only **3 lots** would be most likely.

### **INDUSTRIAL TOTAL:**

- **5 Lots** – Projected Existing and Infill Potential Industrial Lots for Internal Hamlet Growth (with subdivision occurring).

## **5.2 Future Hamlet Boundary Expansion (outward growth)**

### **GROWTH AND LAND USE PROJECTIONS**

Iron Springs presently is comprised of approximately 64 acres (25.9 ha) of land within its boundary. For both long-range planning and to identify potential suitable land for future growth, an analysis of lands outside the current hamlet boundary were examined.

Land consumption calculations were completed based on population projections to delineate potential land needs in order to accommodate future hamlet growth. Chart 1 in Appendix A outlines the potential land requirements for future residential growth in the hamlet, based on forecasted rates of growth and the number of people per dwelling unit. Land acreage calculations have been provided on the 2.5% and 5.0% growth scenarios to account for long-term planning. However, with no municipal sewer service in Iron Springs it is probable that growth will occur at a slower rate than most recently experienced, as suitable land available to support new growth is limited. Additionally, the higher concentration of CFOs in the vicinity may limit the number of new residents desiring to live in the hamlet unless they are employed in nearby agricultural operations. In respect of these issues, the 2.5% may be considered the most appropriate rate to use for future growth projections and planning.

In 2016, the average number of persons per dwelling unit was 3.7 and the average number of dwelling units per acre was 2.1. From a land use and planning perspective, this is considered a very low land use density. Based on these calculations, it is possible to predict the amount of land that may be needed in order to accommodate additional dwelling units that will be required with the forecasted growth over the next 25 years (if no infilling were to occur). The growth calculations were completed for three different household sizes (3.5, 3.7, and 3.9 persons per dwelling unit) using two different annual growth rates (2.5% and 5.0%). Two land use projection growth rate charts are provided, one at the current hamlet low density land use with the large lot sizes (12,000 to 15,000 sq. ft.), and a second at a slightly higher density (lots averaging 7,800 sq. ft. in size) if municipal sewer was made available. (Refer to Appendix A, Chart 1 - Land Use Projections.)

The calculations indicate that if growth continues at the current rate and development continues at the same density, 2.0 acres of additional land may be required to accommodate the 2041 population (3.5 acres if growth were to occur at the 5.0% rate for each census period). If household sizes became smaller overtime (3.5 persons per dwelling unit), potentially up to 4.5 acres of land could be required.

## **GROWTH STRATEGY AND LAND USE PLANNING**

### **Residential**

The required land projections in Chart 1 to accommodate growth assume that no land is available within the hamlet. If the existing 10 residential lots were first developed internally, then the projections would take slightly longer to fulfill. The land to the west or to the south of the present hamlet boundary are the logical future growth areas and may be efficiently planned to integrate to the existing community. With large agricultural tracts of land adjacent to Iron Springs on both the south (southeast) and west sides, there would be more than sufficient lands available to accommodate future hamlet growth, if ever required.

The primary direction for future hamlet growth would be to occur to the south (southeast) of the present hamlet boundary. For more traditional type hamlet residential development, potential future growth areas and a preferred road linkage network with a basic block design is displayed in Map 5. The future concept layout in the diagrams are for general planning analysis, and may not have to be developed exactly in this manner; however, the contiguous land use concept and main road connections should be respected.

The following future long-term growth planning matters should be considered:

- The area illustrated to the south encompasses approximately 15 acres (6.1 ha) of residential growth lands for Iron Springs which would adequately provide the projected lands needed to accommodate growth. The potential lot sizes would be contingent on the type of sewer servicing provided.
- The future hamlet growth area may be subdivided and developed in logical phases in a contiguous manner, from north to south. The north side could utilize the existing hamlet road network of 1 Ave, while the south side of the block development would require additional road construction.
- Phases may be planned for and developed in sequence based on considerations of contiguous segments, logical servicing and road connectivity. When such lands are contemplated for growth, a more detailed conceptual design plan or Area Structure Plan (ASP) should be prepared with some engineering details provided.
- Potential future subdivision and growth areas may also be considered in relation to any Area Structure Plan that Lethbridge County may approve for the highlighted lands.

- For the Hamlet of Iron Springs to continue to grow at a reasonable rate, it would be dependent on municipal sewer service being made available. Without it, it is projected that the hamlet will not experience the same past historical growth rates, and will most probably grow very slow.

### Industrial/Commercial

- For future industrial land use, the lands northeast of the current hamlet boundary (Lots 4-5 of Block 1, Plan 1810343) would be a suitable area for future general or light industrial type uses. The most westerly 3.5 acre (1.42 ha) lot contains the County municipal water truck-fill station (Lot 4), and the middle Lot 5 (6.32 acres) is also owned by the County and is the former hamlet water reservoirs site.
  - Lot 4 (water truck-fill station) may be unlikely for development, at least in the foreseeable future, as it contains the hamlet water supply cistern and the water station improvements but the north portion could potentially be subdivided and utilized if suitably planned. Alternately, at some future point the County could consider relocating the water truck-fill station and water tank.
  - The Lot 5 title contains 6.32 acres (2.56 ha) that could also be considered for potential industrial use. Depending on any future proposed specific land use for Lot 5, there may be the need for environmental reclamation on the property as this process was not undertaken when the reservoirs were removed (filled-in).
- As the two identified potential industrial land use parcels are presently between 3.5 to over 6.3 - acres in size, these may be developed without the need for municipal-provided sewer service depending on what the use may entail.

## 5.3 Municipal Services and Infrastructure

### EXISTING SERVICING

**WATER:** The hamlet is serviced with domestic potable water from the City of Lethbridge provided to the hamlet via the North County regional pipeline that also serves the Hamlet of Turin. Water is delivered to a County cistern (located at 452 Railway Ave) and then re-pumped for the residents' use. Although there are fire hydrants dispersed throughout the hamlet, the water system does not include a fire pump. The water is allocated under the County's own water license.

**SEWER:** Iron Springs does not contain a municipal sewer system and each individual property has to have an on-site private septic system. This is the reason why the minimum lot area in Iron Springs is 3-times larger than other hamlets in the County that have a municipal sewer system installed.

**DRAINAGE:** Storm water drainage is managed through surface and overland drainage means as no formal (i.e. piped) municipal storm water drainage infrastructure system is in place. Iron Springs is generally quite flat but the elevations drop slightly to the east (northeast) approximately 1 metre over a ½-mile distance from the very west to the very east. The hamlet centre-westerly area at 1 Ave and



Centre Street is the highest point and elevation in the hamlet. The hamlet has experienced some minor ponding and drainage issues encountered during significant rain events.

**ROADS:** The majority of local municipal roads within the hamlet are asphalt, with Railway Ave turning into gravel beginning east of 3 Street. Generally, the roads may be considered in somewhat average to poor overall condition. Some of the roads are experiencing surface breakup, cracking, and some potholes. The residential blocks in the west half of the hamlet have rear lanes but the blocks in the east portion are undeveloped with some being used by property owners as part of their yard spillover. There are no sidewalk provisions on streets within the hamlet.

### **GROWTH SERVICING CONSIDERATIONS**

In planning for future growth, the capacities for sewer and water infrastructure must be examined and addressed as part of the growth strategy.

**WATER:** As the hamlet is serviced with domestic potable water via the North County regional pipeline, there are no foreseen limitations to provide water for future growth at this time provided there is capacity under the County's water allocation license. The water distribution system should adequately be able to supply 20 years or more of growth at the projected rate.

**SEWER:** Iron Springs does not currently have a municipal sanitary sewer system. The lack of this infrastructure will limit the growth of the hamlet to accommodate new residential and possibly commercial/industrial development. In order to accommodate growth that would be more efficiently planned for future servicing with the existing unserviced properties and the available land of the surrounding area, the installation of a municipal sanitary system would need to be carefully examined and the benefits and the associated costs weighed. If such infrastructure were to be installed, the County may consider using a combination of local improvement levies, development fees, and service connection fees to help recover costs.

**STORMWATER MANAGEMENT:** It is anticipated future development would use overland/ditch type drainage systems with possible retention/detention storage areas, planned and utilized in a similar fashion to the existing hamlet situation. Landowners/developers who plan to develop future identified growth areas will need to address stormwater management as it pertains to their plans for subdivision at the conceptual design scheme or Area Structure Plan preparation stage. Developers will be obliged to submit an engineered stormwater management plan which must be professionally prepared by a licensed, qualified engineer. Approvals under the *Water Act* from Alberta Environment and Parks will also be required.

**ROADS:** The illustrated potential future parcel block and road network layout is conceptual to demonstrate the general location and required connection points to adjacent growth areas and must be refined further at the conceptual design scheme or Area Structure Plan stage. All new roads should be paved and are to be constructed by developers in accordance with Lethbridge County's *Engineering Guidelines and Minimum Servicing Standards*.

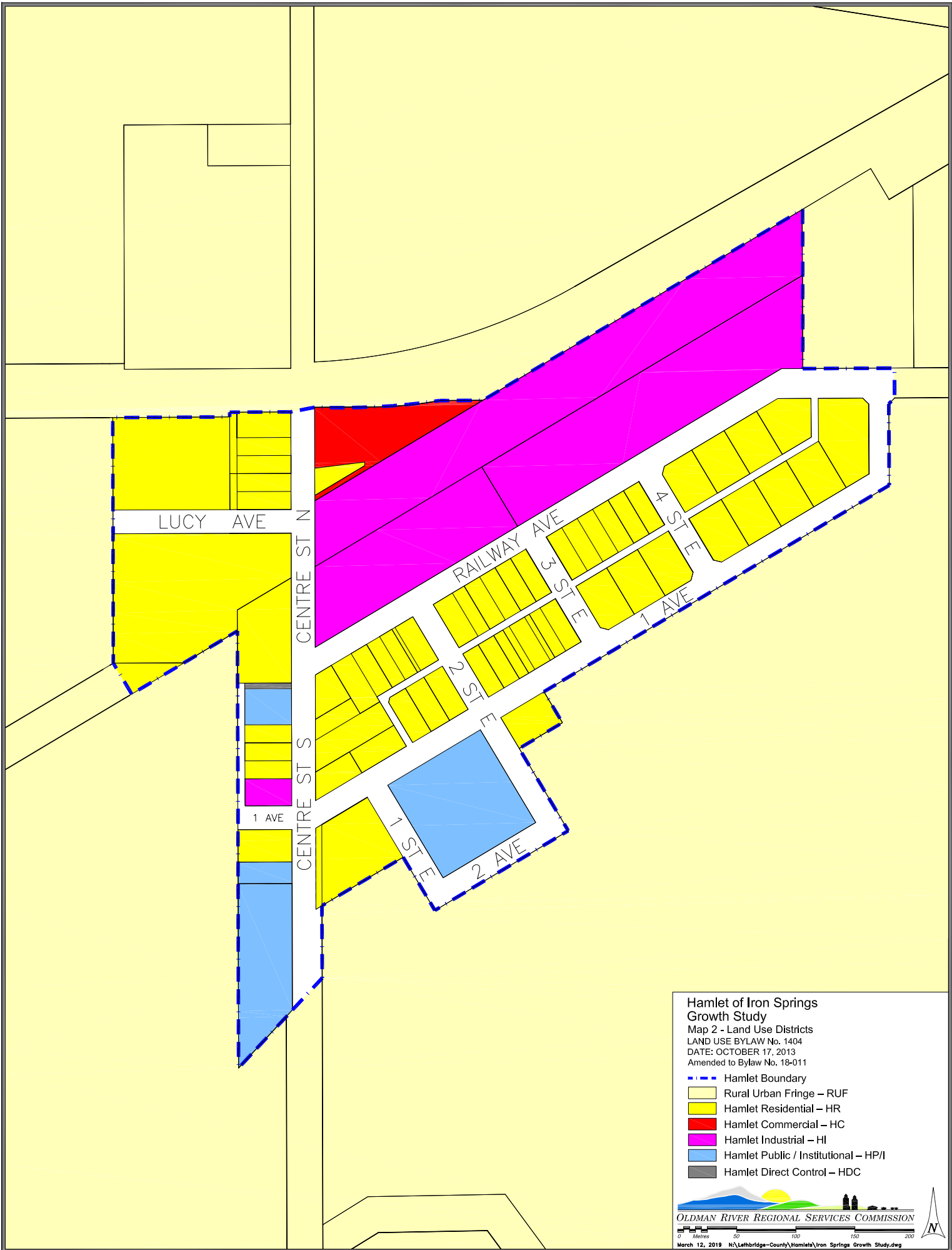
The County has also identified some existing lanes and roads, as illustrated on Map 6, to be considered for public closures. These registered public roads and laneways are undeveloped and neighboring property owners have been using the space for accessory structures or as part of their yard space. This process should include the public closure, sale and transfer to adjacent title owners, and consolidation by a plan of survey of the land areas into the adjacent titles. Lethbridge County may instigate this public process at its discretion. Map 6 also identifies the undeveloped road around the municipal park and playground site to be closed and the land area could be consolidated into the park space to make it one contiguous municipal land title.

#### **5.4 Area Structure Plan (ASP) Considerations**

With no large tracts of undeveloped internal hamlet land available, there is no present need for any Area Structure Plan (ASP) preparation.

For future growth, depending on the intensity or density of future development, an Area Structure Plan or conceptual design scheme would be required prior to multi-lot subdivision or at a land use redesignation stage for undeveloped lands in the identified future growth areas. When an Area Structure Plan is required, it must be professionally prepared at the developer's/landowner's expense and shall comply with any and all relevant and applicable County policies.

Information that may be requested for an Area Structure Plan or a conceptual design scheme in the County shall be in accordance with the requirements of Lethbridge County's Municipal Development Plan, Land Use Bylaw and this study, and may include: site plans, lot density and layout, sewer and water systems, roadways, utilities and services, surface drainage and storm water management, geotechnical investigations, municipal reserve, development concept, staging of development, development specifications, and any other matters deemed necessary by the County.



**Hamlet of Iron Springs**  
**Growth Study**  
 Map 2 - Land Use Districts  
 LAND USE BYLAW No. 1404  
 DATE: OCTOBER 17, 2013  
 Amended to Bylaw No. 18-011

-  Hamlet Boundary
-  Rural Urban Fringe – RUF
-  Hamlet Residential – HR
-  Hamlet Commercial – HC
-  Hamlet Industrial – HI
-  Hamlet Public / Institutional – HP/I
-  Hamlet Direct Control – HDC





CANAL R/W 0510978

SW28 11-20-4

1 1  
9412005

3575EZ

NW21

1810343

(1810344)

(1312053)  
7 6  
1212226

LUCY AVE

6 2  
1811821

RAILWAY AVE

8310792

CENTRE ST N

CENTRE ST S

6481DI

1041EA

A  
6481DI

(1211625)

1041EA

6357GH

NW21 11-20-4

Hamlet of Iron Springs  
Growth Study  
Map 3 - County Owned Parcels

- Hamlet Boundary
- Title Linework
- County Owned Property

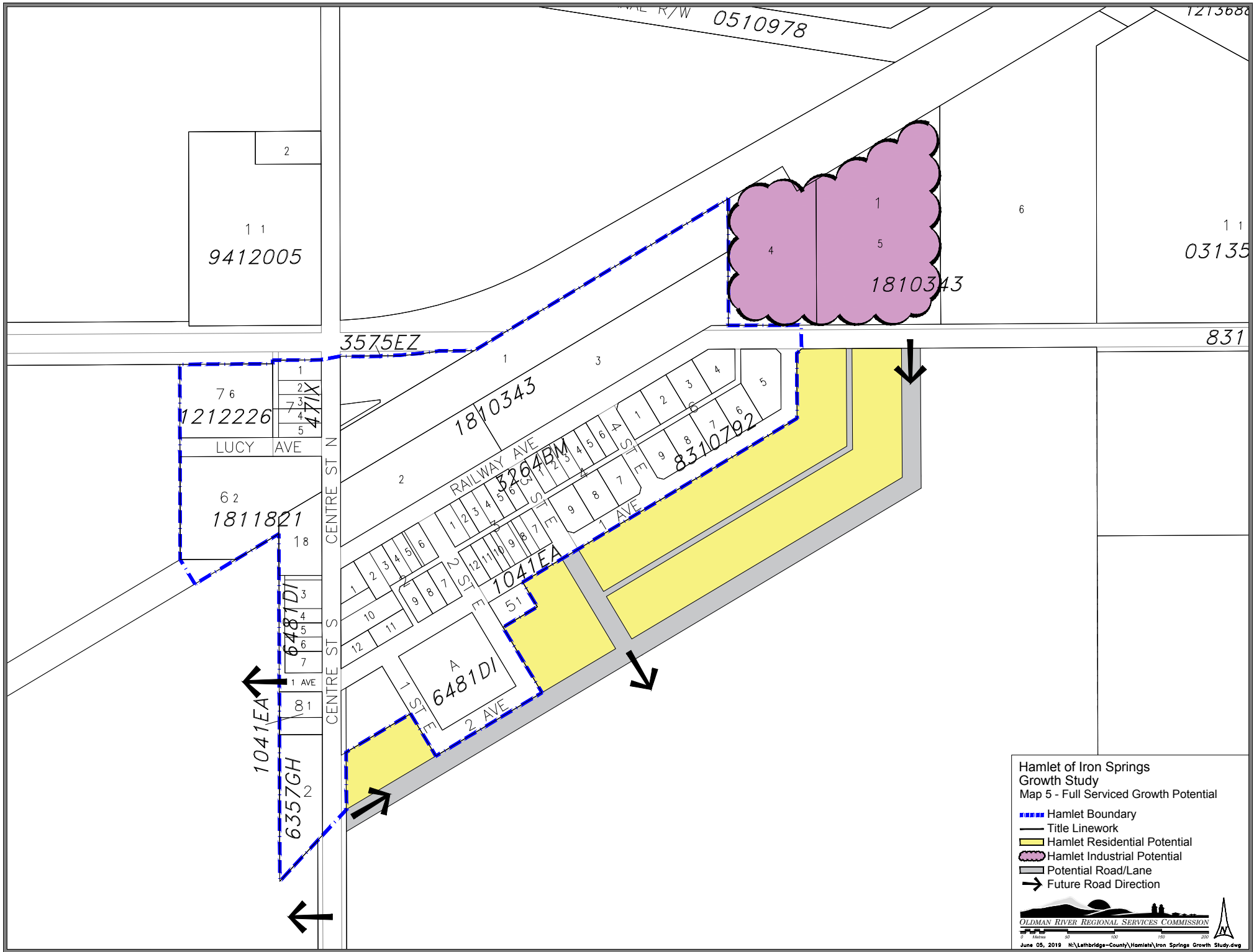








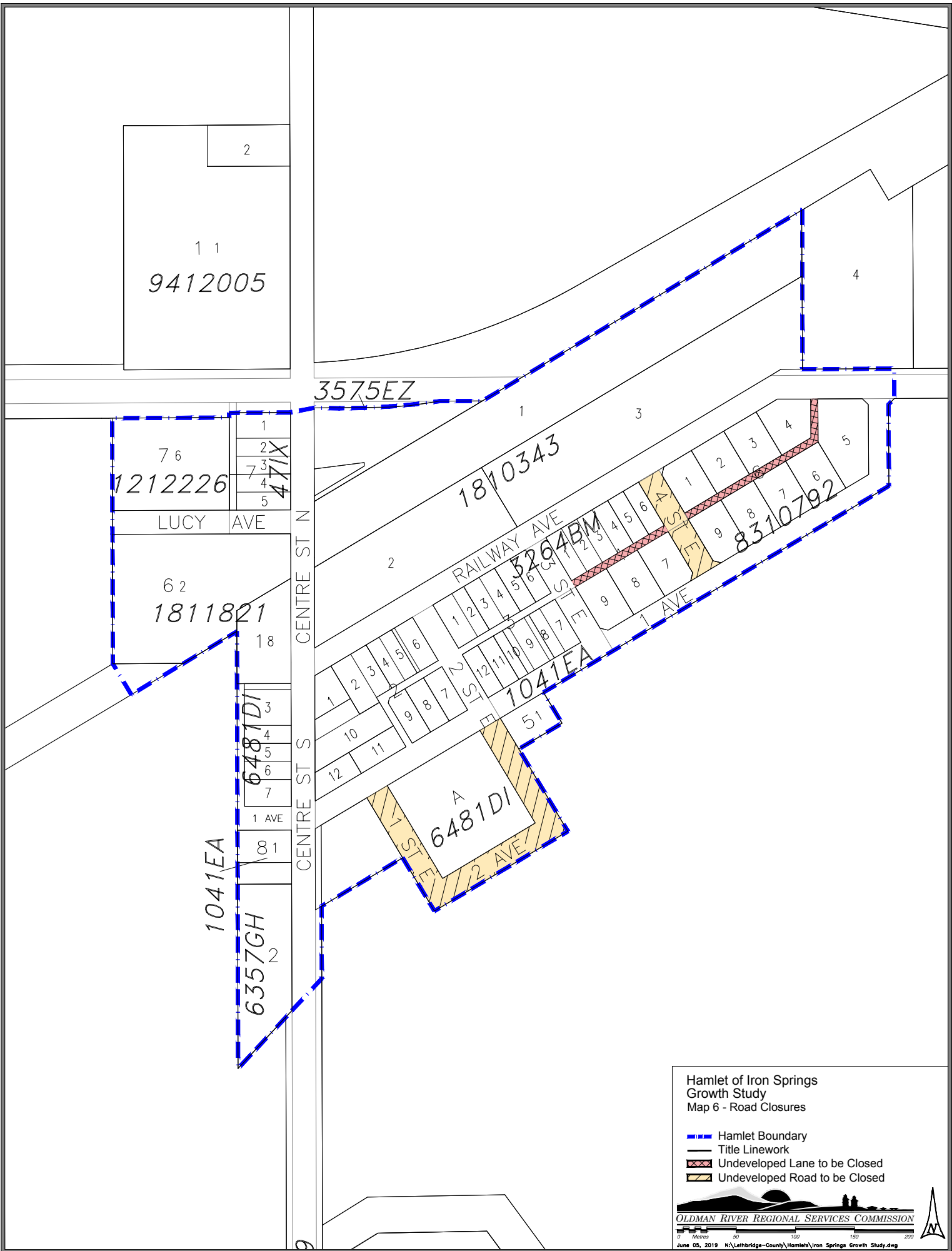




Hamlet of Iron Springs  
Growth Study  
Map 5 - Full Serviced Growth Potential

- - - - Hamlet Boundary
- Title Linework
- Hamlet Residential Potential
- Hamlet Industrial Potential
- Potential Road/Lane
- ➔ Future Road Direction





Hamlet of Iron Springs  
 Growth Study  
 Map 6 - Road Closures

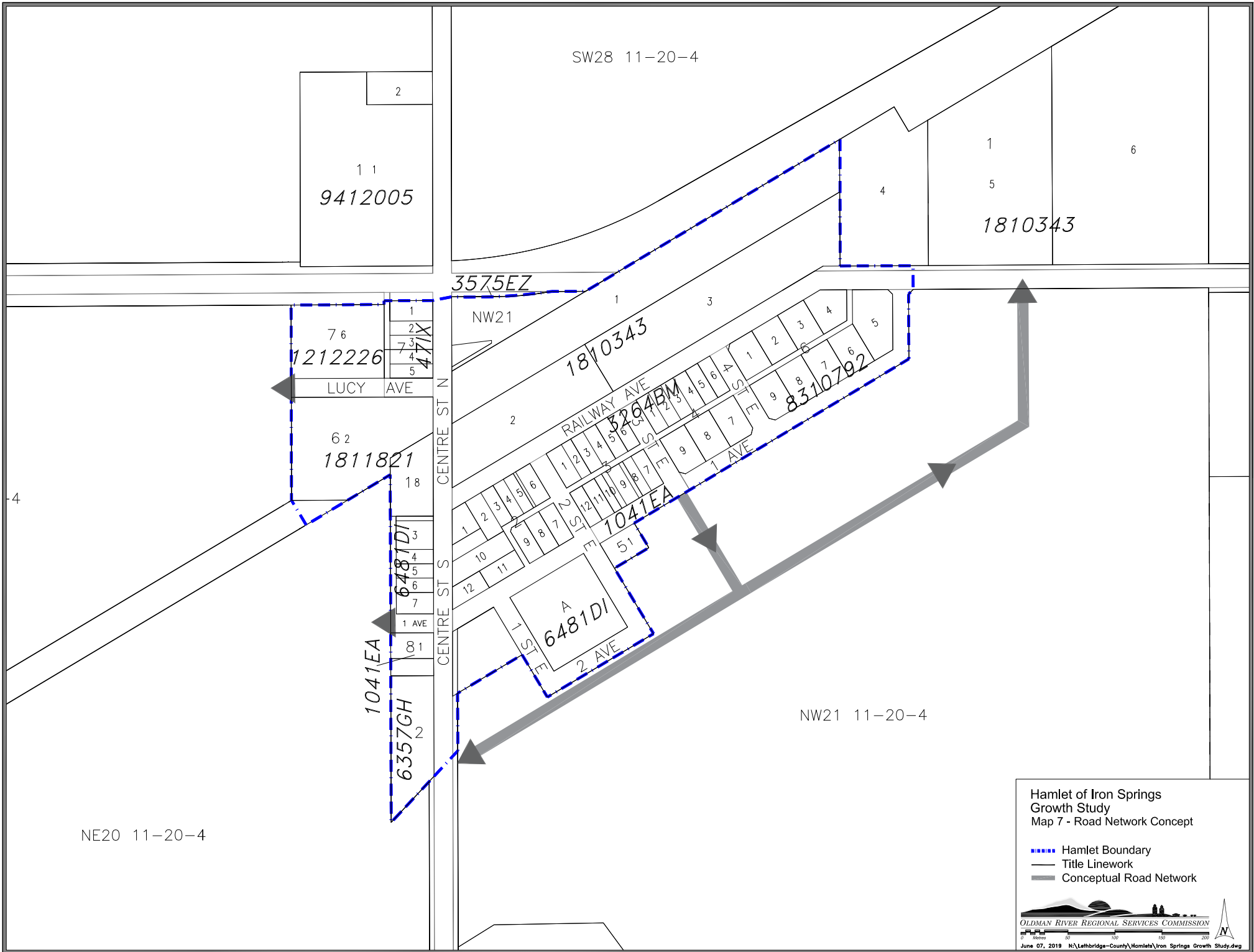
- - - Hamlet Boundary
- Title Linework
- Undeveloped Lane to be Closed
- Undeveloped Road to be Closed

**OLDMAN RIVER REGIONAL SERVICES COMMISSION**

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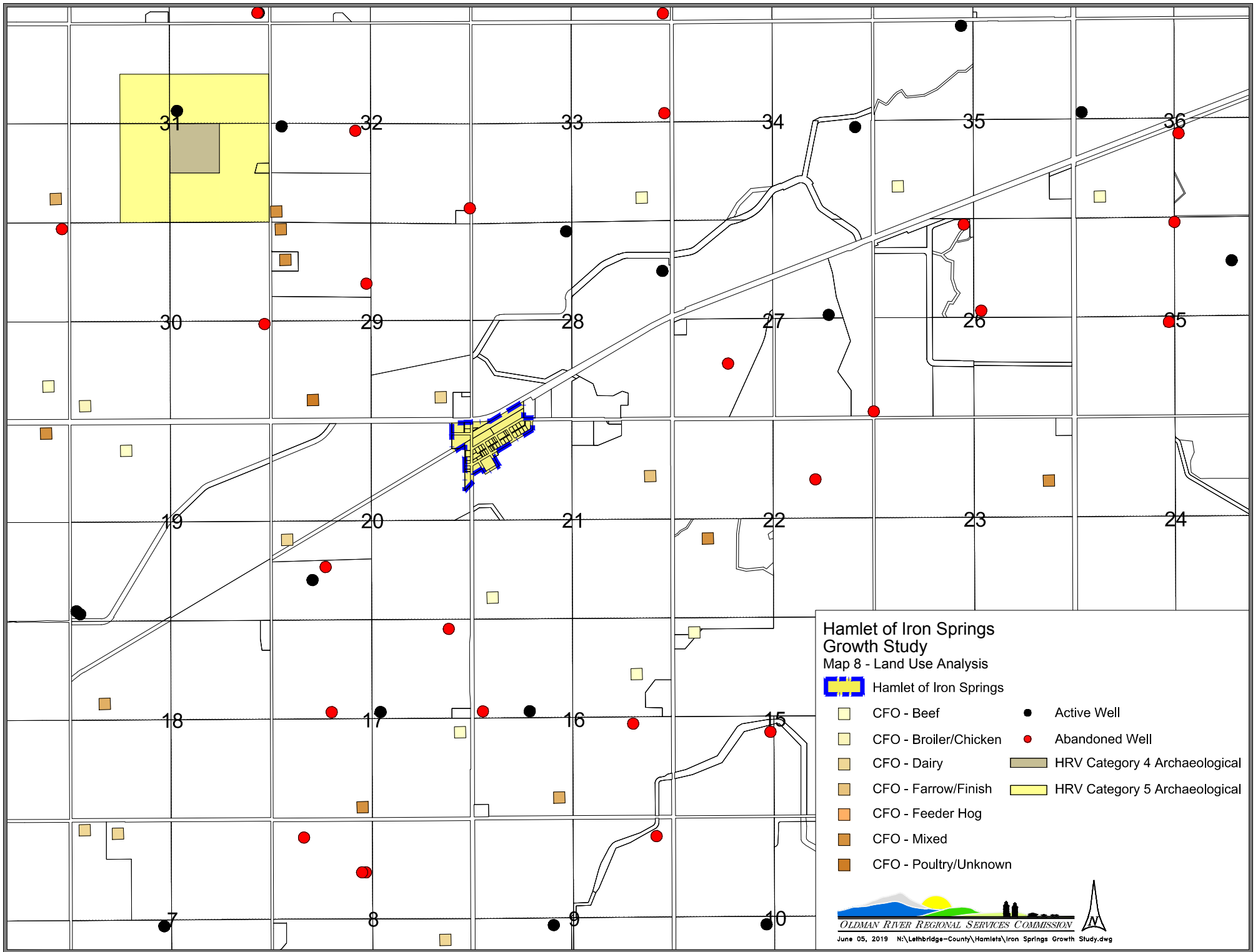
















Hamlet of Iron Springs  
 Growth Study  
 Map 7 - Road Network Concept

- - - - Hamlet Boundary
- Title Linework
- Conceptual Road Network





**Hamlet of Iron Springs  
Growth Study  
Map 8 - Land Use Analysis**

-  Hamlet of Iron Springs
-  CFO - Beef
-  CFO - Broiler/Chicken
-  CFO - Dairy
-  CFO - Farrow/Finish
-  CFO - Feeder Hog
-  CFO - Mixed
-  CFO - Poultry/Unknown
-  Active Well
-  Abandoned Well
-  HRV Category 4 Archaeological
-  HRV Category 5 Archaeological





# Part 6

## GROWTH VISION / STRATEGY

In respect of the hamlet planning analysis completed, land use constraints, and the feedback provided by the citizens of Iron Springs, a growth vision for the hamlet has been formulated based on the following main general planning strategies:

- A prime strategy goal of this planning exercise is to support the residents of Iron Springs in experiencing a decent quality of life by choosing to reside in the hamlet, and to efficiently maintain and upgrade the municipal services provided as determined as necessary and feasible.
- New hamlet growth would largely be to accommodate residential and industrial type land use, as it is not foreseen that there is any foreseeable need to dedicate or develop retail type commercial land within the hamlet as it is economically too small population wise.
- Land to the south (and potentially west longer-term) of the present Iron Springs hamlet boundary is identified as logical future growth areas, primarily for residential land use growth.
- The hamlet should not be planned for growth to occur to the north of its current boundary and Highway 25 as it would create a community divided by the highway resulting in concerns with safety and servicing.
- Existing larger industrial parcels of land within the hamlet, and to the northeast adjacent to the boundary (a shown on Map 5), may be subdivided and developed for industrial land use.
- A long-term municipal servicing strategy should be considered for Iron Springs. At some point, Lethbridge County may want to consider undertaking a planning and engineering analysis to determine the feasibility of providing municipal sewer service to Iron Springs such as been done in the other County hamlets.



# Part 7

## GROWTH EXPECTATIONS SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This final section provides an overall summary of the existing and future growth expectations for the hamlet. Recommendations are also offered on planning matters that need to be addressed to enable growth, and/or the constraints that may be present for providing various municipal or community services.

### LAND USE – GROWTH

1. With no municipal sewer service in Iron Springs it is probable that growth will occur at a slower rate than most recently experienced, as existing internal land available to support new growth is limited. Additionally, the higher concentration of CFOs in the vicinity may limit the number of new residents desiring to live in the hamlet unless they are employed in nearby agricultural operations. In respect of these issues, projecting and planning for realistic Iron Springs' growth is a little more challenging and may need to be monitored and reviewed more frequently by the County.
2. The vision for the land areas surrounding Iron Springs is to continue to use these lands for primarily agricultural purposes until such time additional hamlet urban residential expansion occurs. Where possible, these lands should not be prematurely fragmented.
3. A first priority to accommodate residential growth should be to encourage and allow infill development on the remaining vacant titles in the east portion of Iron Springs on the lots identified on Map 4, but additional subdivision should not be permitted as there is no municipal sewer service hookup available.
4. The existing undeveloped residential lots may be developed at their current size (11,500 to 15,000 sq. ft.), even though these would be considered deficient in size for private sewer use in respect of today's standards as they have been historically created and laid-out for this purpose.
5. As Iron Springs has experienced significant periods of growth (greater than 25% between two of the last four census periods), there could be a need to expand the hamlet boundary sooner rather than later. There is minimal infill or subdivision opportunity available due to the small size of undeveloped lots, and the need to meet the required larger minimum lot size standards of the hamlet for on-site private septic treatment.
6. The future identified growth areas south (and possibly west for longer-term) as identified on Map 5 will require an Area Structure Plan (ASP) or conceptual design scheme to more fully address future lot layouts, servicing, and utility rights-of-way that will be needed.

7. Any commercial or industrial developments planned for the parcels designated as such that are adjacent to Highway 25 will require consultation with Alberta Transportation and provincial roadside permit approval.
8. It is apparent there is little realistic need to plan for much retail/service type commercial activity to develop in the hamlet, as it is too small population wise to economically support such services. However, some limited non-retail type commercial activity may occur, particularly near Highway 25.
9. Any proposal to change the parcel located at the main hamlet entranceway (corner of Centre St and Highway 25) designated as 'Hamlet Commercial – HC' should be given careful consideration, as the hamlet has few other lots available for commercial activity. The siting of commercial land at the entrance to the community and along Highway 25 is also an important locational factor.
10. The County should support and encourage the establishment of certain non-intensive home occupations that cater to residents to provide personal services (such as health, fitness, hair and personal care, etc.) in order for the residents to benefit from quality-of-life type services in the absence of an active retail commercial sector being present in the smaller rural community.
11. The County should consider establishing a local improvement, redevelopment levy or off-site levy bylaw in the future to apply to new municipal infrastructure or upgrades that may be needed in the hamlet to accommodate growth.
12. New subdivisions must be planned with an associated stormwater management plan and land areas identified to manage the overland drainage. Any Area Structure Plan prepared for undeveloped land south or west of the current hamlet boundary will need to address stormwater management and the *Alberta Environment Protection Stormwater Management Guidelines* must be followed.
13. At the time future expansion outside the present hamlet boundaries is commenced and approved by Council, an adjustment to the official hamlet boundary in the Land Use Bylaw will be required and this should be filed with Municipal Affairs at that time.
14. As Lethbridge County has identified through this hamlet study process the potential to close some existing lanes and roads, as illustrated on Map 6, the County may instigate this public process at its discretion anytime it feels it is warranted. This process should include the public closure, sale and transfer to adjacent title owners, and consolidation by a plan of survey of the land areas into the adjacent titles.

## **COMMUNITY – GENERAL**

15. With a large number of complaints about the condition of the internal roads within Iron Springs, this may need to be a priority infrastructure item for the municipality to assess. The County should continue as best it can to regularly assess the conditions of roads, rear lanes, and municipal properties to ensure maintenance is carried out in a timely and efficient manner as budgetary considerations allow.

16. The existing community park space owned by Lethbridge County (Block A, Plan 6481DI) containing the open space and some playground equipment should be protected and remain as public space; however, some amenity enhancement may be considered in future plans. The County should assess what may be the best use of the park space by further engaging Iron Springs' residents and potentially using available community reserve funds to make upgrades as determined necessary on the County-owned parcel.
17. Due to the high concentration of CFOs in proximity to the hamlet, altering or expanding the CFO exclusion area around the hamlet may be challenging, as it could impact a large number of operators. This may be a future Municipal Development Plan review discussion for County Council in order to more fully attempt to both address the needs of agricultural operators, while also trying to balance and successfully promote residential growth and attract new residents to Iron Springs. This is an issue that may require some careful consideration and additional public engagement.
18. The County should attempt to regularly engage and communicate the citizens of Iron Springs and the local community association about possible future hamlet plans as the ongoing planning of the hamlet unfolds over time.
19. As Lethbridge County has bylaws with regard to unsightly premises, animal control, burning, etc., that apply to properties and citizens in Iron Springs, and similarly within all of the County's jurisdiction, and these may be reviewed by the County from time-to-time to address or update their applicability on such matters.
20. This Hamlet of Iron Springs Growth Study and long-range strategy should be reviewed by Lethbridge County periodically over time to confirm its relevancy and to consider any necessary updates that may be warranted, especially if any infrastructure or servicing conditions change.



**Appendix A**

**LAND USE PROJECTIONS**





# Appendix A

## LAND USE PROJECTIONS

**CHART 1**  
**Land Use Projections**

Year	Population		Assumed Persons per D.U.	Total Required D.U.		Existing Number of D.U.	New D.U. Needed		2016 Dwelling Units per Acre*	Land Acreage Requirement	
	High	Low		High	Low		High	Low		High	Low
2021	102	99	3.90	26	25	26	0	-1	2.10	0.07	-0.29
			3.70	28	27	26	2	1	2.10	0.75	0.36
			3.50	29	28	26	3	2	2.10	1.50	1.09
2026	107	102	3.90	27	26	26	1	0	2.10	0.68	0.07
			3.70	29	28	26	3	2	2.10	1.39	0.75
			3.50	31	29	26	5	3	2.10	2.18	1.50
2031	112	105	3.90	29	27	26	3	1	2.10	1.29	0.44
			3.70	30	28	26	4	2	2.10	2.03	1.13
			3.50	32	30	26	6	4	2.10	2.86	1.90
2036	118	108	3.90	30	28	26	4	2	2.10	2.03	0.81
			3.70	32	29	26	6	3	2.10	2.81	1.52
			3.50	34	31	26	8	5	2.10	3.67	2.31
2041	124	111	3.90	32	28	26	6	2	2.10	2.76	1.17
			3.70	34	30	26	8	4	2.10	3.58	1.90
			3.50	35	32	26	9	6	2.10	4.49	2.72

Note: \* Units per acre with area for roads, reserve land, utility right-of-ways removed

Year	Population		Assumed Persons per D.U.	Total Required D.U.		Existing Number of D.U.	New D.U. Needed		Dwelling Units per Acre* 2	Land Acreage	
	High	Low		High	Low		High	Low		High	Low
2021	102	99	3.90	26	25	26	0	-1	3.60	0.04	-0.17
			3.70	28	27	26	2	1	3.60	0.44	0.21
			3.50	29	28	26	3	2	3.60	0.87	0.63
2026	107	102	3.90	27	26	26	1	0	3.60	0.40	0.04
			3.70	29	28	26	3	2	3.60	0.81	0.44
			3.50	31	29	26	5	3	3.60	1.27	0.87
2031	112	105	3.90	29	27	26	3	1	3.60	0.75	0.26
			3.70	30	28	26	4	2	3.60	1.19	0.66
			3.50	32	30	26	6	4	3.60	1.67	1.11
2036	118	108	3.90	30	28	26	4	2	3.60	1.18	0.47
			3.70	32	29	26	6	3	3.60	1.64	0.89
			3.50	34	31	26	8	5	3.60	2.14	1.35
2041	111	124	3.90	32	28	26	6	2	3.60	1.61	0.68
			3.70	34	30	26	8	4	3.60	2.09	1.11
			3.50	35	32	26	9	6	3.60	2.62	1.59

Note 1: the 2.1 dwelling units per acre is the 2016 hamlet density for Iron Springs (average 12,000 to 15,000 sq. ft. sized lots).

Note 2: the proposed 3.6 dwelling units per acre is based on a slightly higher hamlet density (smaller lots at 8,000 sq. ft. on average).

Note 3: 2016 Census, the average number of persons per dwelling unit (D.U) was 3.7 for Iron Springs

Note 4: 'Low' population growth is based on 2.5% and 'High' population is based on 5.0%, for 5-year intervals



**Appendix B**

**HAMLET RESIDENTS SURVEY AND RESPONSES**



# Hamlet of Iron Springs

## Resident Engagement Survey

Connecting the Community - Lethbridge County

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*Please check a single box to answer the question, unless otherwise indicated. If a question has a space to add a comment or to elaborate, please feel free to write in a response. You do not need to sign the survey and answers can remain anonymous. If you have filled-out the paper version of the survey, please return it to Lethbridge County as indicated on the cover page notice. Thank you for your time!*

**1. Please describe your type of property/resident status within the hamlet.**

- Property Owner - non-resident (i.e. do not live in the hamlet)
- Property Owner - resident (i.e. live in the hamlet)
- Renter - resident

**2. If a resident, how long have you lived in the Hamlet of Iron Springs?**

- Less than 3 years
- 4 to 6 years
- 7 to 10 years
- More than 10 years, but less than 20
- 20 or more years

**3. Overall, how satisfied are you with residing in the hamlet and your quality of life?**

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

If dissatisfied, can you explain why?

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**4. What do you like best about living in the Hamlet of Iron Springs? (*please describe*)**

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5. What you like least about living in the Hamlet of Iron Springs? *(if anything, please describe)*

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6. Are any of the following items things you feel could be improved or added in the hamlet community? *(may choose more than one answer)*

- Better provision of services (please explain what) \_\_\_\_\_
- Provision of municipal sewer system
- Quality of housing available
- Increase homeowner's pride in yard/home ownership (i.e. less unsightly properties)
- Condition of roads
- More frequent policing or bylaw enforcement
- More retail / commercial businesses
- More recreational opportunities
- Nothing, I like things just the way they are
- Other (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

Comment?

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7. How often do you or your family use the park/playground site? *(weather permitting)*

- Never
- Somewhat Intermittently (every couple of months)
- Occasionally (1 to 2 times per month)
- Regularly (on a weekly basis, with weather permitting)

8. Iron Springs has some existing light hamlet industrial land use along the former CPR railway lands. Do you feel the hamlet would benefit from having some additional lands planned for and designated for light or general industrial type land use along the highway, in order to accommodate potential new businesses?

- Yes
- Yes, if appropriately located, such as to the north-east
- No, I see no need
- Neutral, no opinion on the matter

Comment?

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9. Lethbridge County prohibits new confined feeding operations (intensive livestock) being established within a specific distance of the hamlet boundary, approximately 1/2-mile north and 1/3-mile to the south, east and west. Do you generally feel this is suitable?

- Yes, this appears reasonable
- No, it should be a consistent 1/2-mile radius
- No, it should be a consistent 1-mile radius
- No, it should be increased to \_\_\_\_\_
- No, it should be decreased to \_\_\_\_\_
- Neutral, no opinion on the matter

Comment?

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10. What do you feel are the top two (2) needs, services or issues that need to be addressed or provided in the Hamlet of Iron Springs? *(feel free to comment)*

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_

11. Any additional hamlet matters you would like to provide comment on?

- No
- Yes, Comment:

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***Thank you for your time and feedback!***

***Please return by March 18, 2019***







**LETHBRIDGE COUNTY**  
**GENERAL COMMENTARY RESULTS**

# **SURVEY RESULTS**

## **Resident Engagement Opinion Survey**

Hamlet of Iron Springs Growth Study

### **Abstract**

Responses and results of a public engagement questionnaire survey that was sent to every property owner in the Hamlet of Iron Springs on March 1, 2019.

Compiled April 18, 2019  
By: Oldman River Regional Services Commission

# Hamlet of Iron Springs Growth Study

## RESULTS – Resident Engagement Opinion Survey

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### **SURVEY OVERVIEW**

The following are the results of a questionnaire survey that was sent to every property owner in the Hamlet of Iron Springs as part of public engagement for preparing the Lethbridge County hamlet growth study. The survey consisted of 11 questions with some opportunity for written comment. The purpose was to obtain citizen feedback and help Lethbridge County better understand existing conditions and issues to more comprehensively and efficiently plan for potential future growth and servicing.

A synopsis of the general findings of the completed survey is summarized below. The actual compiled resident responses to the individual questions and the written comments they provided is attached (starting on page 2, after the general summary). (The questionnaire was an anonymous exercise and individuals did not need to provide their name or contact information.)

### **GENERAL SUMMARY**

A total of 30 survey questionnaires were sent out on March 1, 2019. There were 10 surveys filled-out (4 responses provided on-line through the website portal and 6 hand written submissions), resulting in a 33% overall survey response rate. For a community survey this is considered as a fairly good response, as typically 20% or less is the usual experience in this type of exercise. However, it is noted the overall survey number and number of returns are a statistically small sample size. Nine of the surveys were completed by residents who were property owners, while only one of the returned surveys was from a non-resident property owner. The majority are long-term residents, as over 60% of the respondents have lived in Iron Springs for 10-years or more, and 50% indicate 20-years or more. Overall, residents seem generally satisfied with their quality of life, with 40% stating 'very satisfied' and 60% stating 'somewhat satisfied'.

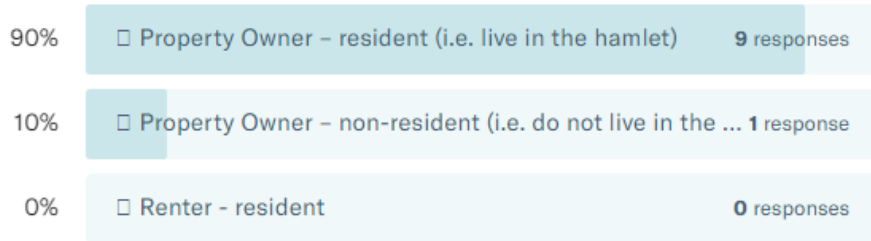
When asked what they liked best about Iron Springs, a few respondents stated they appreciate the peace and quietness, and small town feel of the hamlet. It was also commented they like the people and have good neighbors. In regards to opinions regarding the provision of any County municipal services (e.g. water, sewer and roads), the most frequent complaint mentioned was the road conditions (eight of the ten respondents stated this as a concern). Two of the survey respondents also mentioned the cost of water service was too expensive. A couple residents also expressed dissatisfaction with the absence of commercial services in the hamlet and having to commute to Picture Butte for milk or goods. Other commentary involved a small mix of various matters including: wanting more bylaw enforcement to occur, lowering the speed limit within the hamlet, encouraging a few property owners to tidy-up their yards, etc.

There was a mix of opinions on intensive livestock (i.e. CFOs) issues in the area. Forty percent are satisfied with the present CFO exclusion distances to the hamlet, while others thought it should be consistent ¼-mile all around, or greater on the west side, etc. There were also fairly split opinions provided about the County planning for hamlet industrial use along the former CPR railway lands (although overall, 50% are generally in favour). For the complete results and summary of comments as supplied by the property owners who filled-out the survey, refer to the attached results compilation.

### Question1:

Please describe your type of property/resident status within the hamlet.

10 out of 10 people answered this question



### Comments Summary:

- The majority of respondents are property owners who reside in Iron Springs. (One respondent indicated they are a property-owner, but not a resident.)

### Question 2:

How long have you been a resident of the Hamlet of Hamlet of Iron Springs?

10 out of 10 people answered this question



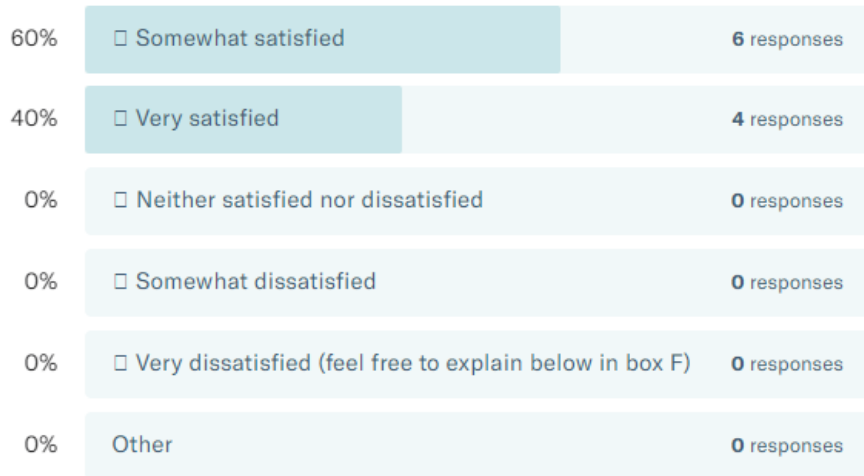
### Comments Summary:

- The majority are long-term residents, as over 60% of the respondents have lived in Iron Springs for 10-years or more, and 50% indicate 20-years or more.

### Question 3:

Overall, how satisfied are you with residing in the hamlet and your quality of life?

10 out of 10 people answered this question



#### Comments Summary:

- Residents indicate they are generally satisfied, with “somewhat satisfied” being the most frequent response, followed by ‘very satisfied’. No-one indicated they were dissatisfied.

### Question 4:

What do you like best about living in the Hamlet of Iron Springs?

10 out of 10 people answered this question

#### Comments provided:

- Many replied that it’s a nice and quiet community, and they like the country style living.
- It was also mentioned there is an appreciation for having space and a small town feel.
- A couple residents stated that they are grateful for the people in the hamlet and they have good neighbors.
- One survey respondent mentioned that having the Hunstville school close by is a positive attribute, but they wished it was located south of the highway within the hamlet.

### Question 5:

What do you like least about living in the Hamlet of Iron Springs?

8 out of 10 people answered this question

#### Comments provided:

- The most frequent response provided to this question was that the roads are in poor condition and need to be addressed, with one person stating that the roads do not seem to get repaired but their taxes keep going up.
- A couple survey respondents stated that they are of the opinion that the water service is currently very expensive. One respondent stated that they were satisfied with the water before the hamlet received Lethbridge water, and they are not pleased it is now going up from \$600/yr to \$900/yr in one year.
- It was indicated by one person that they were of the opinion the hamlet taxes were high for receiving what they considered as minimal services, such as minimal snow removal, poor street finishes that are turning into gravel and potholes, and no sewer system in place.
- Similar to the prior commentary, it was mentioned that one of the things least liked about living in Iron Springs is the lack of municipal infrastructure (no sidewalks, having gravel roads, etc.).
- There were a couple comments made regarding the lack of commercial services and having to go to Picture Butte to buy milk and other goods.

### Question 6:

**Are any of the following items things you feel could be improved in the hamlet community?**

10 out of 10 people answered this question (with multiple choice)



**Comments Summary:** Some of the responses to Question 6 (regarding what could be improved in Iron Springs) correlate to the previous question about what was liked the least, especially with the answer of “conditions of the roads” being the top response. Respondents could pick more than one item or issue for this question. Under the ‘Other’ box the following three written comments were submitted:

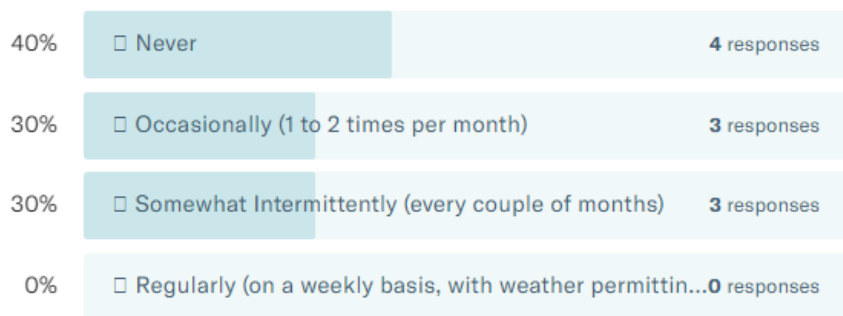
**Comments provided:**

- One person mentioned they would like to see the speed limit in the hamlet lowered to 18 mph (30 km/hr) or, speed bumps installed, as they felt speeding through the hamlet by out of towners is a problem.
- One resident provided comment that they mostly like things the way they are, but are of the opinion that some people could take better care of the appearance of their buildings and yard (but for the most part, they felt everyone's yard looks nice).
- One other person mentioned that they would like a proper drainage system in the hamlet.

**Question 7:**

**How often do you or your family use the park/playground site? (weather permitting)**

10 out of 10 people answered this question



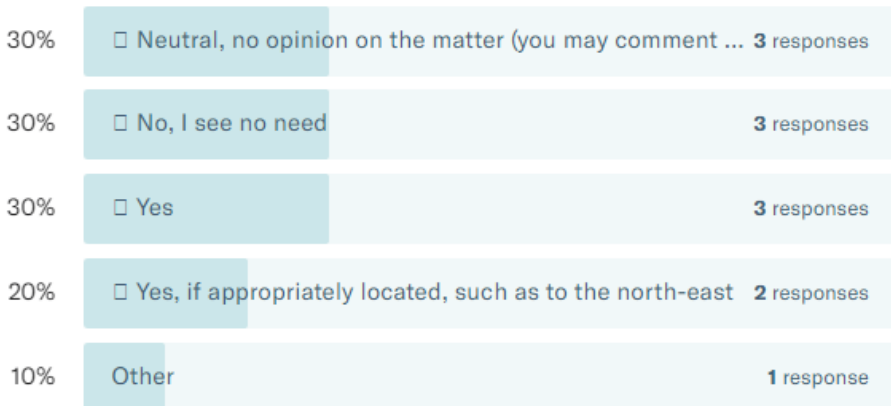
**Response Summary:**

- Residents generally indicate they only use the park/playground occasionally or somewhat intermittently. As such, expansion of such facilities would not appear to be a high priority need at this time. One respondent mentioned that they primarily used the park/playground area on the day of the annual Iron Springs parade and BBQ.

### Question 8:

Iron Springs has some existing light hamlet industrial land use along the former CPR railway lands. Do you feel the hamlet would benefit from having some additional lands planned for and designated for light or general industrial type land use along the highway, in order to accommodate potential new businesses?

10 out of 10 people answered this question (with multiple choice)



#### Response Summary:

- Residents have fairly split opinions about Lethbridge County planning for additional hamlet industrial use along the former CPR railway lands. At least 50% of the respondents indicated they see it as beneficial, with two of the five indicating 'yes' with the qualifier that they are supportive if it is appropriately planned for and located to the north-east. Three persons indicated that they were neutral and really had no opinion one way or the other, while three others stated that they did not see the need for additional industrial uses.

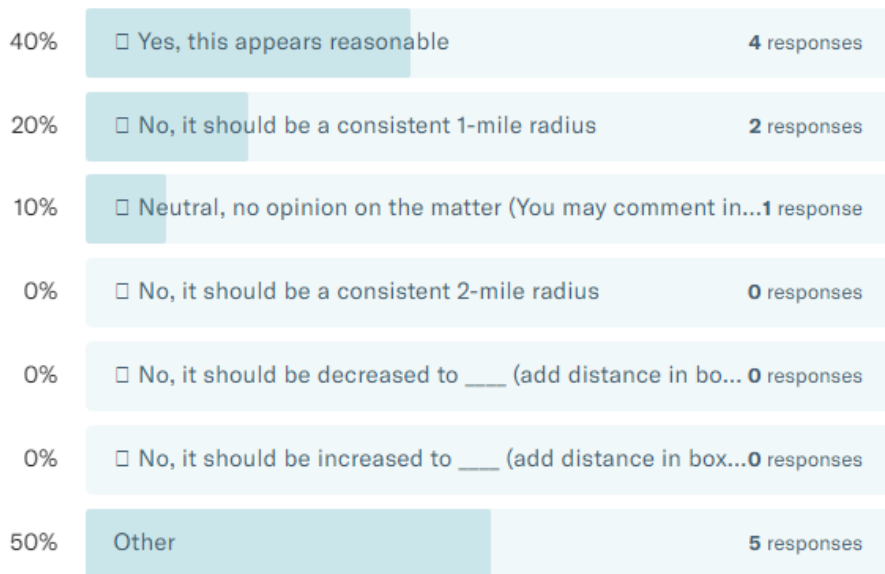
#### Comments provided:

- It is noted that there are more than 10 response boxes "checked" as a couple people provided multiple responses. One person who marked 'yes', also marked, 'Yes, if appropriately located to the north-east', and one person who marked 'I see no need' also checked the 'Other' box and wrote, "I'm not against it. I have heard the area might become a truck-stop. I am a trucker, I have no problems unless it gets noisy, messy, etc."

### Question 9:

Lethbridge County prohibits new confined feeding operations (intensive livestock) being established within a specific distance of the hamlet boundary, approximately ½-mile north and 1/3-mile to the south, east and west. Do you generally feel this is suitable?

10 out of 10 people answered this question (with multiple choice)



### Response Summary:

Residents have fairly split opinions about what they feel a suitable CFO exclusion distance or area should apply around Iron Springs. They also provided some comments or opinions on various livestock or animal issues affecting the hamlet.

### Comments provided:

- One person mentioned that they have no issues with the current policy and don't even care if people in town have chickens, rabbits, etc.
- A separate individual stated that in the summertime at dusk, the cattle in the area stir up dry manure and dust so residents are unable to enjoy the outside or have windows open.
- One resident indicated, "No' the current distance was not suitable' and they felt it should be a consistent ¼-mile radius all around the hamlet.
- Another individual indicated that the felt the exclusion distance should be increased to 1-mile to the west, and also mentioned that the east wind sets off their carbon monoxide detector.
- One person provided the commentary that it was "Much too late 'to answer'" this question.

### Question 10:



**What do you feel are the top two (2) needs, services or issues that need to be addressed or provided in the Hamlet of Iron Springs?** (Note: this survey questions was an open-ended opportunity for a survey respondent to provide their own written opinion or suggestions.)

6 out of 14 people answered this question

**Comments provided:**

- 1. Speed.  
2. Welcome to the hamlet of Iron Springs sign (elevation, population, incorporation date, etc.)
- 1. Sewer system, to solve high water level  
2. Proper street pavement
- 1. Water pressure (stable)
- 1. Better Roads  
2. The water costs should be decreased.
- 1. The snow plow plugging up the driveway after it's just been shoveled out.  
2. Properly fixing roads and drainage  
cleared by the culverts.

**Question 11:**

**Any additional hamlet matters you would like to provide comment on?** (Note: this survey questions was an open-ended opportunity for a survey respondent to provide their own written opinion, comments or suggestions.)

3 out of 14 people answered this question

**Comments provided:**

- I would like stricter livestock rules so people can't have horses, cattle, pigs, turkeys, etc. in town.
- No chickens, donkeys and dogs running loose.
- I am happy with Iron Springs the way it is and hope that it won't grow much.
- The County has neglected Iron Springs for years!!
- Could there maybe be an extra/different way for the industrial traffic coming into the hamlet verses the main road?
- One resident provided all the following comments: "Third Street needs a street light, it's the only dark part of town. - Also, don't like it when the grader guy chews up my lawn. - I wish they would have decided to build the new Hunstville School on the south side of Hwy 25, as that would have been great for the community! - Come on out to our annual Irons Springs parade & BBQ (first Saturday after Labour Day!)"

