

SUMMER VILLAGE OF BIRCHCLIFF MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2013



Bylaw 172-13
September 2013

**SUMMER VILLAGE OF BIRCHCLIFF
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A major land user is the Pentecostal Church Camp. It has the institutional buildings on the parcel north of Birchcliff Road and camp cottages to the south of the road. There is one Alberta Energy Regulator well site. Birchcliff has title to 21 municipal parcels, being either municipal reserve or environmental reserve lands.

Map 2 also shows the critical fish (aquatic) habitat that extends almost along the entire shoreline of Birchcliff. Also shown (locations are approximate) are drainage courses from the adjacent hills in Lacombe County. These impact lands in Birchcliff during spring snow melts and major rain events.

2.3.2

Population

The earliest recorded population of Birchcliff was 8 residents in 1976. In the 1981 census, 55 residents were reported and only increased to 63 in 1991. The resident population exceeded 100 for the first time in 1996 (102 residents) but only increased to 107 in 2001. In 2006 the recorded population was 125, but declined to 112 in 2011. Of course, during summer months, and especially weekends, the 'active' population of Birchcliff swells when a large percentage of homes and cabins are active with vacationers.

Because nearly all the private properties in the Summer Village are developed, without annexing additional land any population growth will occur through more families becoming permanent residents of Birchcliff.

3.0 STRATEGIC PLANNING DIRECTIONS

3.1 Vision Statement

The 2003 Municipal Development Plan provided a community vision statement. While some rewording and additions are included in the updated vision statement expressed below, the heart of the 2003 statement remains:

The Summer Village of Birchcliff remains a quiet, safe and secure community in serving to meet the lifestyle needs of permanent and seasonal residents. The community character will be personified by passive, family-oriented uses and activities and exemplified by the country lane atmosphere of Birchcliff Road. The natural attractiveness of the community continues to be conserved by the residents' attitudes of respect and stewardship of the landscapes, views, wildlife, vegetation, shoreline and water quality of the provincially significant Sylvan Lake.

3.2 Core Values

Intertwined within the Birchcliff community vision are the following core values.

1. This is HOME.
2. A traditional small village atmosphere, in which safety and security are mainstays.
3. The quiet, peaceful enjoyment of private property and public areas.
4. Retaining the quality of life of its residents.
5. Being champions of stewardship to conserve the natural setting of the village and the health of Sylvan Lake and its watershed.
6. Community autonomy, while still collaborating responsibly in planning, guiding and managing growth and land use change around Sylvan Lake.

3.3 Guiding Principles

In addition to the aforementioned vision and core values, the Birchcliff Municipal Development Plan 2013 is shaped by fundamental guiding principles. These guiding principles are:

1. Birchcliff will foster compatible land uses, including property and building standards, and manage development densities to maintain the community's small village atmosphere.
2. Birchcliff, while setting standards to sustain a small village atmosphere, recognizes that individual property rights need to be respected in planning, subdivision and development approval processes.
3. Birchcliff is committed to collaborating with all municipalities around Sylvan Lake to build and maintain positive and mutually beneficial relationships regarding matters of mutual significance.
4. Particularly, Birchcliff is committed to collaborating with all municipalities around Sylvan Lake to conserve the environmental health of the Lake and its watershed, and the enjoyment of their recreational attributes.
5. Birchcliff will consider options regarding the expansion of the community's land base, while also responding cooperatively to plans and proposals for land use change around the Summer Village.

1.1 Background

Located along the southeast shore of Sylvan Lake, the Summer Village of Birchcliff is strategically situated in an area of active high development interest. The attractiveness of lakeside and near lakeside year-round and seasonal living leads to continuous development pressures for residential subdivisions, often associated with desires for lake access for the enjoyment of water activities.

The nearby Town of Sylvan Lake has boomed as an economic centre, resulting in heightened pressure for places to live around the south end of Sylvan Lake. In its Growth Strategy (2008), the Town foresees the need to plan for a projected population of at least 60,000 people, over four times the current population. Also, in the Sylvan Lake Area Structure Plan, Lacombe County purposes to accommodate extensive land use change around the Lake, including adjacent to the entire Summer Village. The new regional wastewater system will assist and promote development, initially in an area adjacent to the eastern half of Birchcliff. This system will also be available to service properties throughout Birchcliff.

While the 2003 Birchcliff Municipal Development Plan is still largely relevant, it needed to be updated to address how the Summer Village will strategically respond to development pressures and guide change in ways compatible with the long-range vision of the community.

1.2 Legislative Framework

As the municipal development plan (MDP) for the Summer Village, the Birchcliff Municipal Development Plan 2013 is a statutory plan adopted pursuant to the Municipal Government Act (Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000 Chapter M-26). While the Act states it is optional for municipalities with a population of less than 3,500 to adopt a MDP, Birchcliff views that having an updated MDP is necessary to help the Summer Village retain its desired attributes as changes occur around the Summer Village.

The Municipal Government Act requires a municipal development plan to address:

1. the future use of land within the municipality,
2. the manner of and proposals for future development in the municipality,
3. the coordination of land use, future growth patterns and other infrastructure with adjacent municipalities if there is not intermunicipal development plan with respect to those matters in those municipalities,
4. the provision of transportation systems either generally or specifically within the municipality and in relation to adjacent municipalities,
5. the provision of municipal services and facilities either generally or specifically,
6. policies compatible with the subdivision and development regulations to provide guidance on the type and location of land uses adjacent to sour gas facilities,
7. policies respecting the provision of municipal, school or municipal and school reserves, and policies respecting the protection of agricultural operations.

The Municipal Government Act also indicates that a municipal development plan may address, among other matters:

1. environmental matters,
2. coordination of programs related to the physical, social and economic development, and
3. goals, strategies and policies.

1.3 Plan Preparation Process

A review of the 2003 Birchcliff Municipal Development Plan (MDP) began in January 2012. A report on the strengths and opportunities to update the plan was provided to Council in February. A Council session in April resulted in a draft of core values held by the community. These core values are highly important in guiding land use planning for the future.

With core values established, Council requested a draft 'Planning Strategy' to outline how the community will respond to the dynamics of change around Sylvan Lake, while still being true to the community's core values. A Council review led to refinements in the Planning Strategy, which was then made available to the Summer Village ratepayers.

At the July 2012 Birchcliff Annual General Meeting, key elements of the Planning Strategy were presented to the public. These key elements were a revised Community Vision Statement, the Core Values and Guiding Principles. How these elements related to present and future planning, including possible growth, for Birchcliff was discussed. Community members had the opportunity to provide their input through questionnaires or email responses. Input was reviewed by Council, who directed further refinements to the Planning Strategy.

The summer and fall of 2012 was primarily dedicated to field studies to review land uses, ongoing residential property improvements, inspect the 'natural areas' and 'open spaces' of the community and to assess the potential impact of future land use change around the Summer Village.

During the winter months, the preparation of a draft municipal development plan was completed. The draft was provided to Council in February 2013. A series of discussion meetings with Council and administration resulted in a number of revisions to the draft plan. Following their review of the revised draft plan, in May Council approved that the Draft Birchcliff Municipal Development Plan 2013 be released to the community ratepayers and referred to municipalities, interested government department and other agencies around Sylvan Lake for their review and input.

A public meeting was held in June. During the meeting there were discussions and questions related to various parts of the draft plan. Following the meeting there was written input. A response report of the input was considered by Council in July. Based upon the input received, on July 11, 2013 Council amended portions of the draft plan and gave first reading to adopt Bylaw 172-13, the Birchcliff Municipal Development Plan 2013.

A public hearing on the proposed plan was held on August 15. Council considered the public hearing input, and at second reading Council amended the proposed plan. Bylaw 172-13, the Birchcliff Municipal Development Plan 2013 was adopted with third and final reading on September 19, 2013.

1.4 Plan Purpose and Relationship with Other Plans

Birchcliff is a small lakeside residential community. Its limited land base essentially is fully developed, but retains considerable natural character. The essential purpose of Birchcliff Municipal Development Plan 2013 is to maintain the community character and amenities enjoyed by residents, and visitors, while cooperating with other municipalities and interests around Sylvan Lake to maintain the quality of the Lake and its watershed.

Birchcliff Municipal Development Plan 2013 is greatly directed by Birchcliff's 'Strategic Planning Directions'. These directions provide the Vision Statement of the municipality, as well as its core values and guiding principles (see Section 3). As required by the Municipal Government Act, all other statutory plans adopted by the Summer Village must be consistent with Birchcliff Municipal Development Plan 2013.

As one of eight municipalities around Sylvan Lake, Birchcliff remains committed to integrated watershed planning through the Sylvan Lake Management Plan: 2000 Update, and any successor documents. The Birchcliff Municipal Development Plan 2013 has been prepared to reflect the Sylvan Lake Management Plan.

1.5 Interpretation

To assist the reader to go through Birchcliff Municipal Development Plan 2013, the following reflects the meaning of words frequently used herein. More definitions are provided in Section 13.

"Shall" policies are mandatory and must be complied with.

"Should" policies encourage actions to achieve the intention or intentions of the policy, but action is not mandatory.

"May" policies are discretionary as to the level of compliance on a case by case basis as determined by the applicable authority.

"Birchcliff" refers to the Summer Village as a municipal entity, the Council and/or the applicable subdivision, development or appeal authority.

"Summer Village" means the Summer Village of Birchcliff.

"The Lake" means Sylvan Lake.

"This Plan" means the Birchcliff Municipal Development Plan 2013.

"Alberta Environment" means Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development and any successor department within which environmental responsibilities primarily lie.

2.0 THE SUMMER VILLAGE OF BIRCHCLIFF

2.1 Location and Setting

The Summer Village of Birchcliff is located along the eastern end of the north shore of Sylvan Lake, 22.5 km (14 miles) west of the Queen Elizabeth Highway (QE II) and the City of Red Deer (see Map 1). Based on its central location, natural amenities and high water quality, Sylvan Lake is a provincially significant recreation resource and tourist destination. Access to Birchcliff is from Highway 20 via Township Road 392. Birchcliff Road and Birch Way are the main roads that extend through the entire length of the Summer Village.

The parcels south of Township Road 392 to the east of the Summer Village lie in Red Deer County while the remainder of the lands adjacent to Birchcliff are in Lacombe County. Five other communities border the Lake, being the Town of Sylvan Lake and the Summer Villages of Jarvis Bay, Norglenwold, Half Moon Bay and Sunbreaker Cove.

Mostly located along gently rolling 'lowland', Birchcliff is nestled between Sylvan Lake and hills to the north, thus occupying land through which a number of small, often intermittent streams flow. Surface water runoff from at least nine quarter sections drain through the Summer Village.

Within its boundary Birchcliff has approximately 3.95 km (2.45 miles) of shoreline. Most lakefront properties have a bank abutting the shoreline, the height and steepness of which increases toward the northwest. The majority of properties are well treed, either with spruce or poplar or a combination thereof, thus contributing to the natural visual setting which Birchcliff enjoys.

2.2 Historical Overview

Seasonal cabins date to the 1920's in areas then known as Viewpoint and Sunnyside. The Sunnyside Pentecostal Camp was registered with the Societies Act in 1938. The Birch Bay subdivision was developed in the 1950's, followed by the Sprucecliff subdivision in the early 1960's.

The Summer Village of Birchcliff was incorporated in 1972. The original community boundaries were nearly the same as today. The land base of Birchcliff expanded in 2001 when a small annexation added land to the Summer village on the north side of the Sunnyside Church Camp.

Historically, Birchcliff functioned primarily as a seasonal residential community. Over the last twenty years the number of permanent residents has grown as cabins have been improved to provide for year-round residency while many other properties have been redeveloped with permanent homes.

2.3 Land Use and Population

2.3.1 Land use in Birchcliff is primarily residential (see Map 2). In 2012, there were 141 residential properties with a detached house or cabin. There were also 13 vacant taxable residential lots.

6. Birchcliff will collaborate with neighboring municipalities and other levels of government regarding utility, transportation, recreation, health and cultural services.
7. Birchcliff will advance the provision of safe, efficient and cost effective infrastructure and services which will meet the present and future needs of it's residents.

4.0 COMMUNITY ESSENCE - QUALITY OF LIFE

4.1 Introduction

A fundamental essence of Birchcliff is the continuation of the high quality of life enjoyed by its residents. Over the years the community has been a quiet, secure and safe place to live. Even with future growth these aspects (quiet, secure and safe) continue as a high priority as an essence of the livability and sustainability of Birchcliff.

4.2 Goals

4.2.1 The community essence - quality of life goals are:

1. To sustain the high quality of life enjoyed by Birchcliff residents.
2. To continue to evolve Birchcliff as a quiet, secure and safe, and thus healthy, community in which to live and recreate.

4.3 Policies

4.3.1 Birchcliff shall implement through Birchcliff Municipal Development Plan 2013 the strategic directions contained in the Summer Village of Birchcliff Planning Strategy in which, while recognizing change over time is inevitable, maintaining a high quality of life in Birchcliff and the natural amenities of the community are of paramount importance.

4.3.2 In guiding growth and managing land use change, a fundamental goal shall be to sustain the community essence of Birchcliff. The community essence of Birchcliff is a traditional small village atmosphere, in which:

- (a) safety and security are mainstays;
- (b) quiet and peaceful enjoyment of private property continues;
- (c) public areas remain accessible; and
- (d) residents are champions of environmental stewardship.

5.0 COMMUNITY FORM AND LAND USES

5.1 Introduction

The intent of the Birchcliff Municipal Development Plan 2013 is to maintain a community form and pattern of land uses that serves to retain the quiet, safe and secure community of the Summer Village. Woodland in community open spaces interspersed among substantially treed residential areas contribute significantly to the continuing natural attractiveness of the community while the country lane atmosphere of Birchcliff Road personifies the visual character of the community. Land uses are predominantly residential, with the Pentecostal Church Camp being the major exception. Access to the Lake is limited and controlled on municipal lands in order to protect sensitive steep banks, riparian areas and water quality.

5.2 Goals

- 5.2.1 The goals for managing community form and land use are:
1. To manage development and densities in keeping with the small village atmosphere of Birchcliff.
 2. To retain the country lane atmosphere of Birchcliff Road.
 3. To require new development areas to complement the country lane atmosphere of Birchcliff Road.
 4. To sustain the ambience of existing shoreline and backland residential areas.
 5. To encourage compatible land use patterns, consisting of residential and open space land uses, and other specific land uses recognized in specific land use plans.
 6. To not permit industrial and hazardous land uses.
 7. To require high development standards to complement and enhance the character of the Summer Village.

5.3 Policies

Community Form

- 5.3.1 Pursuant to the Summer Village of Birchcliff Community Vision, as stated in Section 3.1, two fundamental intents of the Birchcliff Municipal Development Plan 2013 are to maintain the Summer Village as a quiet, safe and secure place to live and to sustain the community's natural ambience.
- 5.3.2 Birchcliff shall guide the use of lands as shown on Map 2, General Land Use, which supports a compatible pattern of land uses.
- 5.3.3 Subdivision and development within the Summer Village shall be consistent with the regulations of the Land Use Bylaw, and the policies of this Plan and any other applicable statutory plan.
- 5.3.4 To keep a low density of development only detached residences and guest homes may be approved in residential areas within the Summer Village.

- 5.3.5 The continuance of the country lane ambiance in Birchcliff is very important such that:
- (a) healthy trees and shrubs are to be retained wherever possible along Birchcliff Road and Birch Way;
 - (b) development be set back from Birchcliff Road and Birch Way to accommodate landscaping so the views along these roads is more of a natural setting than a row of residential buildings.
- 5.3.6 Development along other roads in the Summer Village shall also be set back from the road to accommodate landscaping that includes a significant portion of trees and shrubs.
- 5.3.7 For parcels that abut the Lake, the rear yard shall be considered adjacent to the road.
- 5.3.8 Development along the lake shoreline, including any abutting bank, is to be consistent with the provisions of Section 6 of this Plan.

Residential

- 5.3.9 The only permitted land use allowed in the Residential District (R1), (R2) and R(3) shall be a detached dwelling.
- 5.3.10 A manufactured dwelling may be a discretionary use only in the Residential District (R1) District, but approval of this form of dwelling may only be where it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Summer Village that the design and appearance of the manufactured dwelling is compatible with other dwellings adjacent and nearby.
- 5.3.11 The only permitted land use in the Church Camp Cottage District (CC2) shall be church camp cottages for vacation and retreat purposes only. A cottage shall not be permanently occupied.
- 5.3.12 Within the rear yard of a residential parcel, a detached garage may be allowed if:
- (a) the garage is visually compatible with the main building; and
 - (b) the garage would not adversely affect the enjoyment of neighbouring properties.
- 5.3.13 Within residential areas, home occupations may be approved in accordance with the provisions of the Land Use Bylaw provided the home occupation:
- (a) is performed by an occupant of the main dwelling;
 - (b) remains the secondary use;
 - (c) does not change the character of the main use;
 - (d) does not adversely affect neighbouring properties and the enjoyment thereof; and
 - (e) there is no exterior signage or evidence of such secondary use.

Pentecostal Church Camp

- 5.3.14 All land uses and development within the Pentecostal Church Camp shall be in accordance with the provisions of the Church Camp Area Structure Plan, and any amendments thereto. Without limiting the provisions of the Church Camp Area Structure Plan, some of the key provisions of this plan shall be:

- (a) no development of institutional facilities between Birchcliff Road and the Lake;
- (b) where any institutional use abuts a residential property, a buffer strip or some form of screening shall be required;
- (c) there is to be adequate parking provisions for users and visitors to the Church Camp;
- (d) access/egress points shall be located to promote traffic safety and minimize impacts on adjacent properties; and
- (e) the safety of pedestrians shall be promoted by avoiding wherever possible pedestrian/vehicle conflicts.

Other Land Uses

- 5.3.15 Recreation uses in an open space undertaken in a manner compatible with Section 7 are supported.
- 5.3.16 Commercial or industrial land uses shall not be permitted in Birchcliff.
- 5.3.17 Regarding energy resource facilities, Birchcliff shall:
 - (a) strongly discourage the location of any additional facilities within the Summer Village;
 - (b) strongly encourage that no energy resource facility be placed within 1 km (0.62 miles) of the Summer Village; and
 - (c) encourage the timely phasing out of the existing energy resource facility within the Summer Village.
- 5.3.18 Birchcliff shall not support a formal public boat launch at any location along the shoreline of the Summer Village due to topographical considerations (steep or high banks), proximity to significant aquatic habitat along the Sylvan Lake shoreline and the traffic and noise conflicts that would be created by a public boat launch.
- 5.3.19 Birchcliff:
 - (a) shall require the marina, as defined in this Plan, adjacent to the Pentecostal Camp to not occupy any portion of the lake within 15 m (49.2 ft) of Range Road 1-5;
 - (b) shall determine, from time to time, the number of boat slips that the marina may accommodate; and
 - (c) will oppose any proposal to provide adjacent to the shoreline of Birchcliff services to boaters, including the sale of gasoline.
- 5.3.20 Birchcliff shall not permit vehicle access to Sylvan Lake on Range Road 1-4 and any subdivision road allowance. On Range Road 1-5 vehicle access may be permitted to Sylvan Lake only in winter months.
- 5.3.21 Birchcliff may require the preparation of an area structure plan to guide a major redevelopment, new development or multi-lot subdivision. If the nature of the change of a redevelopment, new development or multi-lot subdivision is determined by the Summer Village to have little effect on surrounding land uses, the Summer Village shall require an outline plan.
- 5.3.22 Birchcliff may require a developer to place and enforce architectural controls on a redevelopment or new development so the development is complementary to development in the area or a theme endorsed by the Summer Village. Where applied, architectural controls shall be registered as a

restrictive covenant on each lot subject to these controls. Matters to be considered may include, but are not limited to the following:

- (a) the maximum cumulative building footprint and building heights;
- (b) the architectural appearance of main and ancillary buildings, including the materials and colors of exterior facades and roofs;
- (c) type and pitch of the roofs;
- (d) the size, type and location of identification signs;
- (e) landscaping; and
- (f) driveways, parking surfaces and vegetation removal.

6.0 CONSERVATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

6.1 Introduction

The ongoing enjoyment of Sylvan Lake, by residents and visitors to the lake, is dependent on the conservation of the Lake and its watershed. Lake water quality and the retention of sensitive environments, including the immediate shoreline contact zones and riparian areas along the lake, are especially important.

6.2 Goals

- 6.2.1 The conservation of the environment goals are:
1. To protect the water quality of Sylvan Lake.
 2. To conserve areas and features which are especially significant or sensitive.
 3. To encourage residents to be more environmentally aware and become stewards of the environment of Sylvan Lake as a whole.
 4. To support initiatives that promote public awareness and involvement in conserving the environment of the Sylvan Lake watershed.

6.3 Policies

- 6.3.1 To promote the conservation of the environment of Sylvan Lake and its watershed, Birchcliff purposes to be an environmental stewardship leader. The Summer Village may undertake or be involved in initiatives to encourage landowners and all levels of government to recognize their stewardship roles and undertake appropriate actions to maintain and, where necessary, improve the quality of the environment of Sylvan Lake and its watershed.
- 6.3.2 Birchcliff recognizes the importance of ensuring the principles of sustainable development and environmental conservation are embodied in all planning decisions, particularly those related to the implementation of the Summer Village of Birchcliff Planning Strategy.
- 6.3.3 With the desire to protect the water quality of Sylvan Lake, Birchcliff shall:
- (a) encourage efforts by local environmental groups, municipalities and Alberta Environment to monitor the quality of lake water on a regular basis, and
 - (b) support the adoption of a Sylvan Lake Water Quality Management Plan.
- 6.3.4 While recognizing that remedial actions may be necessary from time to time, the Summer Village still strongly desires that banks abutting the shoreline remain as natural as possible to retain natural ecosystems. All development, including but not limited to the clearing of vegetation and the building of staircases and platforms shall require a development permit from the Summer Village.
- 6.3.5 Pursuant to Policy 6.3.4, Birchcliff shall not allow development adjacent to or near the shores of the Lake, including reserve lands and other open spaces, unless the proponent can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Summer Village the development will not:
- (a) reduce lake water quality;
 - (b) degrade aquatic habitat; and
 - (c) adversely impact the area's visual or natural quality through inappropriate or excessive removal of vegetation.

- 6.3.6 If shoreline and bank erosion control measures appear necessary, these may only be undertaken only with the prior approval of the Summer Village and/or Alberta Environment in a way that any impact on riparian vegetation and aquatic habitat is minimized and, where possible, mitigated.
- 6.3.7 Through community consultation, Birchcliff should consider adopting a program for private and municipal lands along the shoreline to conserve, whenever possible, the natural attributes of the shoreline and its adjacent banks.
- 6.3.8 Through community consultation, Birchcliff should consider preventative approaches to environmental concerns, including the implementation and enforcement of by-laws regarding vegetation management and tree removal.
- 6.3.9 Through the applicable approval processes, Birchcliff shall encourage the conservation and enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat by:
- (a) requiring subdivision and development to be designed in a way that is in character with the habitat; and
 - (b) ensuring that effects on natural features are minimized, including through actions to mitigate effects.
- 6.3.10 Birchcliff shall ensure any approval of a subdivision and a development application includes measures that minimize and, where required, mitigate any negative impacts on surface water drainage, soil erosion and the quality of ground water.
- 6.3.11 Birchcliff shall encourage the conservation of drainage courses by protecting the integrity of the channels and maintaining riparian vegetation through provisions in area structure plans, outline plans and subdivision and development approvals.
- 6.3.12 Birchcliff supports a regional approach to the provision of one or more formal public boat launches around the Lake providing the location is not in an environmentally sensitive habitat location as identified in the Sylvan Lake Management Plan and any amendments and successor plans thereto.
- 6.3.13 Birchcliff may require an environmental review (see Appendix A) to be prepared, to the satisfaction of the Summer Village, as part of a statutory plan, outline plan, subdivision or development proposal. An environmental review shall include, but is not limited to:
- (a) a description of the environmental sensitivity of the lands proposed for development and the surrounding area;
 - (b) the identification of the nature and significance of any adverse impacts associated with the proposed development during construction;
 - (c) the identification of the nature and significance of any adverse impacts associated with activities that will result from the development;
 - (d) the inclusion of an environment protection plan to:
 - (i) alleviate any adverse impacts;
 - (ii) monitor the performance of the environmental measures; and
 - (iii) identify any residual impacts and their significance on any or all of the following: fish and wildlife, vegetation, soils and terrain, water quantity and quality, shoreline, surface drainage and aquifers.
- 6.3.14 Birchcliff shall not permit the dumping of any materials, including grass clippings, leaves or branches, on any road allowance and open spaces.

7.0 OPEN SPACES

7.1 Introduction

Birchcliff has numerous community open spaces. Most are small or contain sensitive features and usually not linked except by the main entrance roads. These small enclaves of mostly 'natural' areas suit the character of Birchcliff, which does not desire large open spaces consisting of playing fields and playgrounds. The policies of this section seek to conserve the 'natural' character of open spaces and places to enjoy views of the lake. An open space 'plan' is outlined, consisting of a variety of classes of places, while also promoting over time a linked pathway system.

7.2 Goals

7.2.1 The open spaces goals are:

1. To establish and implement policies for the dedication and use municipal reserves, environmental reserves and other open spaces.
2. To conserve, wherever possible, areas having natural attributes so they remain an integral part of the community fabric.
3. To encourage the provision of areas for passive recreation opportunities and pathway linkages.

7.3 Policies

7.3.1 Open spaces in Birchcliff are deemed to include:

- (a) Environmental Reserve (ER) parcels;
- (b) Municipal Reserve (MR) parcels;
- (c) Reserve (R) and Park (P) parcels;
- (d) Subdivision roads and lanes not used as roads or lanes;
- (e) the portion of Range Road 1-4 and Range Road 1-5 between Birchcliff Road and Sylvan Lake; and
- (f) any other land shown on Map 3 Open Spaces not included in the above, which may in the future include Environmental Reserve Easement (ERE) parcels.

7.3.2 Open spaces shall be located so they have legal and physical access. Wherever possible, open spaces should have the ability to be linked to other open spaces by trails or paths.

7.3.3 Except as otherwise provided for in Policies 7.3.4, Birchcliff shall require 10 percent of the total parcel being subdivided, less any land dedicated as environmental reserve, to be dedicated as municipal reserve, school reserve or municipal and school reserve as provided for in the *Municipal Government Act*, unless the dedication of all or a portion of the reserve owing is to be deferred to the remaining portion of the land being subdivided.

7.3.4 For future subdivisions the Summer Village shall encourage, through consultation with the landowner, the dedication of reserve land to be greater than 10 percent where the additional dedication is to conserve natural areas that do not meet the definition of environmental reserve lands or to enlarge open space sites.

- 7.3.5 Birchcliff shall require, wherever possible, municipal reserve:
- (a) to be of a quality suitable for development and thus usable for open space purposes;
 - (b) to be located and configured to render the municipal reserve useful for the provision of recreation parks, more natural open space and/or trails;
 - (c) to promote linkages among open spaces, including municipal and regional pathways and trail corridors; and
 - (d) to promote trail access to the Sylvan Lake shoreline at appropriate locations.
- 7.3.6 If land adjacent to Birchcliff Road or Birch Way is proposed for subdivision and the provision of reserve land is possible under the *Municipal Government Act*, Birchcliff shall require the dedication of municipal reserve or environmental reserve adjacent to the road.
- 7.3.7 In accordance with the provisions of the *Municipal Government Act*, as part of an approval of a proposed subdivision Birchcliff shall require the dedication of environmental reserve for any land which is unsuitable for development, including a swamp, gully, ravine, coulee, natural drainage course, land subject to flooding and land which is unstable.
- 7.3.8 Where land to be dedicated as environmental reserve is not desired by the Summer Village for public use or as a natural area, the Summer Village may dedicate the land as environmental reserve easement.
- 7.3.9 Notwithstanding Policy 7.3.8, where a proposed subdivision contains land which abuts Sylvan Lake and the subdivision of the land is approved, in accordance with the provisions of the *Municipal Government Act* Birchcliff shall require the dedication of environmental reserve, as follows:
- (a) If sufficient depth remains on the land being subdivided to accommodate residential development in accordance with the Land Use Bylaw, the width of the environmental reserve shall be 30 m along the shoreline. If 30 m does not extend at least 6 m beyond the top-of-bank, the environmental reserve shall be widened to extend at least 6 m beyond the top-of-bank.
 - (b) If sufficient depth does not remain, the width of the environmental reserve shall be to the maximum that would still accommodate residential development in accordance with the Land Use Bylaw, but shall not be less than six meters along the shore or from the shore to 6 meters beyond the top of bank, whichever is greater.
- 7.3.10 Open Spaces in Birchcliff fall within one of the following classes:
- (a) Natural Area;
 - (b) Conservation Area Park;
 - (c) Viewpoint Park;
 - (d) Greenway Park;
 - (e) Community Green;
 - (f) Allowance Park.

Map 3 Open Spaces allocates open spaces to one or more of these classes. These open spaces shall be managed by the Summer Village in accordance with policies of this plan.

- 7.3.11 The following primary purposes shall guide the management of each class of open space:
- (a) Natural Area - landscape preservation and nature appreciation
 - (b) Conservation Area Park - landscape conservation and nature appreciation
 - (c) Viewpoint Park – path leading to lake viewing rest area within woodlands
 - (d) Greenway Park: connector trails and paths through woodlands and landscaped areas
 - (e) Community Green – combination of woodland conservation and open play areas, with trails/paths
 - (f) Allowance Park – lake access walking only for RA1-4, lake access motor vehicles only in winter for RA1-5 and landscape conservation.
- 7.3.12 Birchcliff shall prepare an Open Space Plan to guide the management and use of lands considered as community open spaces within the Summer Village. The Open Space Plan is to address, among other matters:
- (a) Open space vision;
 - (b) The uses and amenities appropriate within each class of open space;
 - (c) The uses not suitable within Birchcliff's open spaces;
 - (d) Actions to guide the management and use of open spaces.
- 7.3.13 Birchcliff may permit within open spaces the removal or alteration of natural vegetation only in accordance with the provisions of this plan and the Open Space Plan.
- 7.3.14 Should the land base of Birchcliff expand in the future, the Summer Village shall plan in the expansion area the allocation of land for one or more classes of open spaces to complement the open spaces currently within the community.

8.0 ROADS AND PATHWAYS

8.1 Introduction

Of fundamental importance to the character of Birchcliff is a convenient and safe road system to serve residents and visitors. Birchcliff Road and Birch Way are to remain the main arterials. An interconnected pathway system is advocated to promote safer walking and jogging within the community.

8.2 Goals

- 8.2.1 The roads and pathways goals are:
1. To provide for the safe and efficient movement of vehicular traffic, both within and near the Summer Village.
 2. To facilitate the development and linkage of pathways as an alternate means of movement within the community.

8.3 Policies

- 8.3.1 Birchcliff shall promote the development and maintenance of a road system that:
- (a) is safe and efficient;
 - (b) protects the character and ambiance of existing neighbourhoods;
 - (c) links the various parts of the Summer Village; and
 - (d) effectively ties into the road systems of adjoining municipalities.
- 8.3.2 All municipal roads within Birchcliff shall be developed to the standards required by the Summer Village.
- 8.3.3 To improve safer access into Birchcliff, the Summer Village will encourage Lacombe County to improve the Township Road 392 and Range Road 1-4 intersection. Birchcliff may participate to the extent necessary to promote the completion of the improvement.
- 8.3.4 Birchcliff, through subdivision and development approvals and landscape conservation in municipal open spaces, shall maintain a "country lane" appearance of Birchcliff Road and Birch Way.
- 8.3.5 Pursuant to Policy 7.3.6, where allowed by the *Municipal Government Act*, for any new subdivision adjacent to Birchcliff Road and Birch Way, Birchcliff shall require the dedication of reserve land. Where there is existing woodlands, the Summer Village shall seek to conserve these. Where there is little or no trees, the Summer Village shall seek the cooperation of the applicant to establish tree cover on the land to be dedicated as reserve land.
- 8.3.6 Pursuant to Policy 7.3.6, for private land adjacent to Birchcliff Road and Birch Way the Summer Village shall seek the cooperation of the landowners to retain adjacent to the road allowance trees and shrubs, or where needed to replace or reestablish these.
- 8.3.7 Birchcliff shall not allow parking within any road allowance unless it is an area designated by the Summer Village for parking.

- 8.3.8 Birchcliff shall place maximum speed signs along Birchcliff Road and Birch Way and contract traffic enforcement to monitor traffic speeds and fine speeders.
- 8.3.9 Through land use plans and decisions on subdivision and development, Birchcliff shall require that roadways be located and designed to minimize impacts on open spaces.
- 8.3.10 All road allowances between the Lake and Birchcliff Road and Birch Way are considered in this Plan as open spaces and addressed in Section 7.0. Only the following two are to be used for vehicle access, as follows:
- (a) Grassland Road, being RA 7 on Map 3, to provide access to the two parcels south of View Close;
 - (b) Range Road 1-5, being RA 1-5 on Map 3, to provide access only to the adjacent residential properties;
 - (c) Road Allowance RA 2 on Map 3: to provide access to Lot 11, Block 4 of Plan 4486AX, but not to the bank of the Lake.
- 8.3.11 Birchcliff should consider the development over time of an interconnected pathway system as proposed in the Open Space Plan. Wherever practical, paths may be developed along roads and through open spaces. Where necessary, a path may be located through private land, where easements have been secured.
- 8.3.12 Where paths are provided, the location of a path should wherever possible:
- (a) minimize impacts on adjacent private property; and
 - (b) complement the features of open spaces.
- 8.3.13 Where required to connect paths on opposite sides of a road, Birchcliff shall locate pedestrian crossings at locations where site distances provide ample opportunity for drivers and pedestrians to see one another.
- 8.3.14 Birchcliff encourages the development of a regional trail network, which includes links to, or possibly through, the Summer Village. Birchcliff may participate, to a level deemed appropriate by the Summer Village, with others in the planning and development of the trail system or portions thereof.

9.0 UTILITIES INFRASTRUCTURE

9.1 Introduction

The vitality and health of Birchcliff depends on adequate and safe utilities. The provision of municipal wastewater system will greatly assist the health of the community and the Lake over the long term. While individual private wells provide potable water, in the future a communal water system may be required if groundwater resources prove inadequate. Stormwater management will become increasing crucial as Lacombe County permits development on the higher lands adjacent to Birchcliff. Electric power, natural gas and communication services round out requirements for contemporary village living.

9.2 Goals

9.2.1 The utilities infrastructure goals are:

1. To require the provision of reliable and effective electric power, natural gas and communication utilities.
2. To require the provision of environmentally responsible, efficient and reliable water, wastewater and stormwater management utilities.

9.3 Policies

9.3.1 To promote a healthy quality of life in Birchcliff, the Summer Village shall require the development and maintenance of reliable, safe and effective utilities.

9.3.2 Birchcliff shall continue to partner in the intermunicipal wastewater system, which will serve the Birchcliff municipal wastewater system.

9.3.3 Birchcliff shall require each lot to be connected, when available, to the municipal wastewater system. Until the municipal wastewater system is available, as a condition of any development approval the Summer Village shall require to be placed on the title of the lot a deferred servicing agreement which will require the development to connect to a municipal wastewater system when available.

9.3.4 Birchcliff supports the continuation of groundwater capacity studies, and commits the involvement of the Summer Village therein, to determine the adequacy of potable groundwater supplies for future development or if and when an intermunicipal water system will be required.

9.3.5 Birchcliff may approve development that uses unfiltered groundwater, but shall not approve development if it is determined for the development that there is a lack of sufficient groundwater or the quality of groundwater does not meet provincial standards.

9.3.6 Birchcliff may become a partner in an intermunicipal water system, if there are distinct advantages to the residents of the Summer Village. The continuing adequate availability of groundwater, both quantity and quality, to serve development in the Summer Village may be the determining factor for the Summer village to participate, or not.

- 9.3.7 On a lot where development is approved with groundwater as the source of potable water, Birchcliff shall require to be placed on the title of the lot a deferred servicing agreement which will require the development to connect to a municipal or intermunicipal water system should Birchcliff become a partner in an intermunicipal water system.
- 9.3.8 All development within Birchcliff shall address stormwater management to the satisfaction of the Summer Village. Any new multi-lot development shall be required to implement stormwater management plans prepared by a qualified professional to manage stormwater so that run-off does not exceed the pre-development rate and the quality of run-off is comparable to or better than that of pre-development run-off.
- 9.3.9 Birchcliff shall encourage Lacombe County to undertake a stormwater management study for lands within the drainage areas of water courses that flow through the Summer Village to Sylvan Lake. A primary purpose of this study should be to manage stormwater to minimize its impacts on the water quality of Sylvan Lake, infrastructure, natural features, buildings and other property improvements.
- 9.3.10 For private development, Birchcliff shall require all roads and utility services to be at the cost of the developer, unless the Summer Village deems it in the greater community interest to cost share in the provision of roads and/or utility services.
- 9.3.11 Birchcliff shall continue to contract for the effective and efficient waste removal services.

10.0 PEOPLE SERVICES

10.1 Introduction

As a summer village, the demand for people services, such as recreation facilities, libraries, schools and other facilities, is not as evident as in a community where the majority of the population is permanent. However, for the Summer Village's permanent residents, access to these facilities is important, especially for families with school age children, so the cooperation of communities and service providers is important to the quality of life in the Summer Village. Like other communities, the availability of fire, ambulance and police services is important to the safety and health of Summer village residents, both seasonal and permanent. Birchcliff continues to support and seek the cooperation of health and protective service providers.

10.2 Goals

10.2.1 The people services goals are:

1. To cooperate with municipalities and providers in the delivery of recreation, library and cultural facilities and services.
2. To continue to promote access to quality education and health care facilities and programs.
3. To contract effective police, fire and ambulance services.

10.3 Policies

10.3.1 Birchcliff shall continue to provide the appropriate level of protective services, in cooperation with the police protection service providers, as needs change.

10.3.2 Birchcliff should promote crime prevention through such strategies as community education and CPTED (crime prevention through environmental design) in site planning and property development as a means to enhance security and safety within the municipality.

10.3.3 In cooperation with the providers of fire and ambulance services, Birchcliff shall continue to provide the appropriate level of emergency services.

10.3.4 Birchcliff shall continue to cooperate with neighbouring municipalities and the applicable agencies to ensure an effective emergency response plan is in place for the Summer Village and neighbouring lands.

10.3.5 Birchcliff shall continue to work with neighbouring municipalities to achieve a mutually beneficial approach to the provision of recreation, library and cultural facilities and services.

10.3.6 Birchcliff shall continue to encourage access to quality education facilities and quality health care facilities and services for its residents.

11.0 INTERMUNICIPAL PLANNING AND COOPERATION

11.1 Introduction

Birchcliff purposes to cooperate with the other municipalities around the lake to serve to protect the qualities of the lake and its watershed, the quality of life of the residents around the lake and the recreation experiences of both residents and visitors.

11.2 Goals

11.2.1 The intermunicipal planning and cooperation goals are:

1. To promote intermunicipal planning for the entire Sylvan Lake watershed that is rational and inclusive of regional, urban and rural needs.
2. To maintain communication with all municipalities around the lake to pursue mutually beneficial land use planning and operating strategies to address matters of common concern.
3. To promote land uses adjacent to and near the Summer Village that are compatible with existing and future planned land uses within the Summer Village.
4. To guide the annexation of land to the Summer Village.
5. To promote the provision of cost-effective utilities and services.

11.3 Policies

11.3.1 Birchcliff supports intermunicipal planning initiatives for the integrated planning of the shorelands around Sylvan Lake and the Sylvan Lake watershed.

11.3.2 Birchcliff shall promote and partner in reviews, updates and implementation of the Sylvan Lake Management Plan, and any successor plans thereto. Essential purposes of these plans should be to ensure the long term health of the Lake, a high quality lifestyle for residents and enjoyable recreation experiences for residents and visitors.

11.3.3 Recognizing that land uses, roads and utilities within the east end of the north shore of Sylvan Lake need to be planned and provided in an integrated manner, Birchcliff shall seek intermunicipal collaboration with Lacombe County, Red Deer County and the Town of Sylvan Lake to:

- (a) ensure land use and development policies are compatible;
- (b) promote key road linkages and standards;
- (c) integrate water and wastewater services;
- (d) promote effective stormwater management; and
- (e) address other matters of common interest.

11.3.4 Birchcliff shall:

- (a) consult with all municipalities around the Lake to obtain their views on possible amendments to this Plan, and
- (b) refer a proposed area structure plan or amendment thereto to an adjacent municipality and any other municipality the Summer Village feels is affected by the proposed plan or amendment.

- 11.3.5 For a proposed statutory plan, redesignation, subdivision or development of land adjacent to the Summer Village, Birchcliff:
- (a) may not support the plan, redesignation, subdivision or development if it would materially and aesthetically impair the quality of life for Birchcliff ratepayers, and
 - (b) may require changes that would eliminate or significantly mitigate the concerns the Summer Village has with the proposed plan, redesignation, subdivision or development.
- 11.3.6 Birchcliff shall participate in any meaningful regional approach to identify and provide additional public access to Sylvan Lake. Such participation does not infer any financial commitment by the Summer Village to assemble, purchase or develop lake access, or to share therein.
- 11.3.7 Birchcliff shall work cooperatively with other municipalities and agencies around the Lake to minimize noise pollution.
- 11.3.8 For any resource extraction proposed near the Summer Village, Birchcliff may advise the approving authority to establish appropriate setbacks and mitigation measures to minimize any possible adverse impacts upon the residents of the Summer Village caused by noise, traffic, dust, odor and flaring.
- 11.3.9 Birchcliff may enter into agreements with respect to any of the following services: water utility, wastewater utility, waste management, road maintenance, protective, emergency, administrative, recreation, preventive social services, cultural and other services as determined by the Summer Village.
- 11.3.10 Birchcliff shall approach Lacombe County to undertake a traffic study, particularly of farm vehicle and other truck traffic with originations and destinations in the County that utilize Birchcliff Road. A primary purpose of this study should be to identify and prioritize options that would reduce County traffic using Birchcliff Road.
- 11.3.11 Birchcliff may consider one or more sequential undertakings to annex land into the Summer Village.
- 11.3.12 Should lands be annexed to the Summer Village, Birchcliff shall require:
- (a) the lands to be used for residential purposes and where possible public open space in the form of municipal reserve and/or environmental reserve;
 - (b) development density and standards to be equal or greater than those of Lacombe County; and
 - (c) the provision of roads and utilities to a Summer Village standard.

12.0 IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

12.1 Introduction

The Birchcliff Municipal Development Plan 2013 will be most effective when it is implemented judiciously and with consistency. The purpose of Section 12 is to both guide and require the implementation of this Plan to achieve Birchcliff's community vision.

12.2 Goals

12.2.1 The implementation and review goals are:

1. To effectively implement Municipal Development Plan to enhance the quality of life, manage growth and land use change and guide the provision of services within the Summer Village.
2. To apply the policies of the Municipal Development Plan when collaborating with the provincial government, municipalities and other agencies and groups.
3. To require, where appropriate, a statutory or non-statutory plan to guide land use changes.
4. To provide a process for amendment of the Municipal Development Plan.

12.3 Policies

- 12.3.1 Birchcliff, through Council, the administration and development, subdivision and appeal authorities, shall apply the policies of this Plan when making decisions on any proposed redesignation, subdivision, or development application and any proposed statutory plan and outline plan.
- 12.3.2 Minor adjustments to land use boundaries and roadway locations shown on Map 2 may be approved without an amendment to this Plan provided the intent of this Plan is maintained. More significant adjustments shall be addressed through a proposed amendment to this Plan.
- 12.3.3 Birchcliff shall apply the policies of this Plan in a manner consistent with the Provincial Land Use Policies.
- 12.3.4 When providing input to lake-wide planning initiatives, Birchcliff shall advance the provisions of this Plan.
- 12.3.5 Birchcliff shall undertake a review of the Land Use Bylaw and Church Camp Area Structure Plan. Birchcliff shall amend these, where required, to promote consistency with Birchcliff Municipal Development Plan 2013.
- 12.3.6 Where required by this Plan, Birchcliff shall undertake or require to be undertaken area structure plans and area redevelopment plans. All adopted statutory plans shall be consistent with this Plan.
- 12.3.7 Unless initiated by the Summer Village, Birchcliff shall require the preparation of an area structure plan and area redevelopment plan to be the responsibility of the applicable landowner or developer.

- 12.3.8 If Birchcliff annexes land into the Summer Village, as soon as possible thereafter Birchcliff:
- (a) shall amend Birchcliff Municipal Development Plan 2013; and
 - (b) may prepare or have prepared, and adopt one or more area structure plans or outline plans for the annexed land.
- 12.3.9 An area structure plan shall describe:
- (a) the sequence of development proposed for the area;
 - (b) the land uses proposed for the area, either generally or with respect to specific parts of the area;
 - (c) the density of population proposed for the area, either generally or with respect to specific parts of the area; and
 - (d) the location of major transportation routes and public utilities.
- 12.3.10 In addition to the mandatory contents prescribed in Policy 12.3.9, Council may require an area structure plan to address:
- (a) the impact of development on adjacent uses and the environment, and the means proposed to mitigate impacts;
 - (b) how the development will conserve or protect the shoreline, tree rows, woodlands, water courses, wetlands, wildlife corridors and other natural features if any are contained within the site;
 - (c) the flow of the internal roadway system and any required improvements to address safe and convenient access and egress;
 - (d) identify traffic impacts on external roadways, including intersections with those roadways and ways to mitigate those impacts if necessary;
 - (e) the servicing of the land with water, wastewater, electric power, natural gas, visual and audio communication utilities and stormwater management;
 - (f) impacts on protective, emergency, education and recreation services;
 - (g) the provision of open spaces and trails;
 - (h) the provision for schools, if required; and
 - (i) the provision for separation and/or screening from main roads and land uses that may be incompatible.
- 12.3.11 During the preparation of a statutory plan and outline plan, and any amendments thereto, Birchcliff shall require that the appropriate level and forms of public involvement, including the public participation provisions in the Municipal Government Act, are part of the process.
- 12.3.12 Birchcliff may only approve an application for redesignation, subdivision or development when the application meets the satisfaction of the Summer Village regarding:
- (a) suitability of the features of the site for the proposed use or uses;
 - (b) site design, including scale, parcel sizes and density;
 - (c) impact on the site and adjacent lands, including land uses thereon;
 - (d) compliance with any applicable statutory plan, approved outline plan and the Land Use Bylaw;
 - (e) impact on the environment, including sensitive lands, and the proposed means to mitigate impacts;
 - (f) traffic impacts and the proposed means to mitigate impacts;
 - (g) provisions for road widening, road improvements and intersection improvements for access roads leading to the site;
 - (h) design of internal road linkages with adjacent lands;
 - (i) provisions for water, wastewater and other utility services;
 - (j) provisions for stormwater management;

- (k) provisions for open space, including open space corridors;
 - (l) dedication of land for environmental reserve, environmental reserve easements, municipal reserve, school reserve, municipal and school reserve or money-in-lieu of land;
 - (m) aesthetic details, including the retention of natural features and landscaping within and on lands adjacent to the site;
 - (n) impact on and provisions for public pedestrian access to the Lake;
 - (o) adequacy of the availability of community services;
 - (p) community consultation program; and
 - (q) any other matters required by the Summer Village.
- 12.3.13 As a condition of subdivision and development approval, Birchcliff may require an applicant to enter into an agreement to construct or pay for any or all of the following:
- (a) a road required to give access to the subdivision or development;
 - (b) a pedestrian pathway system;
 - (c) utilities, other than telecommunication systems,
 - (d) off-street loading and unloading facilities;
 - (e) off-street or other parking facilities; and
 - (f) security to ensure the terms of the agreement are carried out.
- 12.3.14 Birchcliff may adopt, in a manner consistent with the Municipal Government Act:
- (a) a redevelopment levy in respect of development in an area redevelopment plan area; and
 - (b) an offsite levy adopted by bylaw to pay for all or part of the capital cost of new or expanded water utility services, new or expanded wastewater services, new or expanded stormwater services, new or expanded roads required for or impacted by a subdivision or development, and land to connect any of the aforementioned roads and services.
- 12.3.15 Birchcliff may approve an application for subdivision approval and an application for development approval or conformity of a real property report if, in the opinion of the approving authority, the subdivision or development on that land, as the case may be, would not:
- (a) unduly interfere with the amenities of the neighbourhood,
 - (b) materially interfere with or affect the use, enjoyment or value of neighbouring parcels of land, and
 - (c) the proposed subdivision or development conforms with the use prescribed for that land or building in the Land Use Bylaw.
- 12.3.16 As part of the preparation of an area structure plan, an Environmental Review (Appendix A) shall be required and a Visual Impact Assessment (Appendix B) may be required.
- 12.3.17 Should an environmental review identify a site contains a former landfill or other hazardous land use, Birchcliff shall not approve development that is inappropriate on or adjacent to these sites. For any use of land that may be allowed on or adjacent to these sites, Birchcliff shall require the development to be designed to mitigate risk.
- 12.3.18 Birchcliff should prepare and implement a Capital Works Plan to guide the provision of and improvements to roads, utilities and open spaces. The Capital Works Plan should be reviewed annually.

- 12.3.19 Birchcliff shall review and update the Summer Village of Birchcliff Planning Strategy at least every four years.
- 12.3.20 Birchcliff shall monitor the ongoing effectiveness of this Plan when:
 (a) preparing and reviewing other statutory plans and outline plans;
 (b) processing redesignation, subdivision and development applications; and
 (c) reviewing and responding to referrals from adjoining municipalities.
- 12.3.21 Birchcliff shall require this Plan to be reviewed at least every four years to ensure its relevance and effectiveness.
- 12.3.22 Birchcliff shall amend this Plan shortly after any annexation of land to the Summer Village.
- 12.3.23 Birchcliff shall review, and amend as necessary, this Plan upon ratification by the Province of the Red Deer Regional Plan.
- 12.3.24 When an amendment is initiated by someone other than Council, prior to the bylaw amendment process Birchcliff may require the initiator of the amendment to provide a report and any other relevant information in support of the amendment.
- 12.3.25 In considering an amendment to this Plan, the provisions of the Municipal Government Act pertaining to notifications and holding a public hearing shall be followed.
- 12.3.26 When considering an amendment to this Plan, Birchcliff shall refer the amending bylaw to any adjoining municipality, school authority, provincial department and agency, and any other persons or agencies the Summer Village feels the amendment affects.

13.0 DEFINITIONS

The definitions in Section 13.0 are for use in understanding the directions and policies presented within Birchcliff Municipal Development Plan 2013. Where a definition in Section 13.0 differs from a definition in the Land Use Bylaw, the Land Use Bylaw definition shall be used in processing a subdivision or development application.

Area Redevelopment Plan is a statutory plan prepared pursuant to Section 634 of the Municipal Government Act. It provides a framework for the preservation, rehabilitation, removal and replacement of buildings and for the construction of new buildings.

Area Structure Plan is a statutory plan prepared pursuant to Section 633 of the Municipal Government Act. It provides a land use framework for more detailed subdivision and development, including the staging of development, densities and infrastructure matters.

Birchcliff means within the context of the policy or statement, the Summer Village as a municipal entity, the Council and/or the applicable subdivision, development or appeal authority.

Cluster means a development approach that concentrates residential buildings and/or lots within a portion of a site, with the intention of retaining a significant area of the land to be utilized for appropriate agricultural uses, open space, recreation, and conservation of environmentally sensitive features.

Conservation Easement is a voluntary legal agreement between a landowner and government or conservation agency, designed to protect the natural and cultural heritage of the land by restricting the landowner's right to develop the land.

Deferred Servicing Agreement means an agreement that places a future obligation on individual lot owners through a registered caveat on the title which requires future connection to municipal services when they become available.

Density means in a residential area the number of dwelling units per acre hectare.

Environmental Reserve is land designated as environmental reserve for environmental conservation or public access in accordance with Section 664 of the Municipal Government Act.

Environmental Reserve Easement is a caveat registered against a title for the protection and enhancement of the environment yet remains as private land rather than dedicating land as public environmental reserve, according to Section 664 of the Municipal Government Act.

Environmental Review is an assessment of the influence a project may have on the environment. The purpose of the assessment is to ensure that decision-makers consider environmental impacts before deciding whether to proceed with new projects. An environmental review is not an Environmental Impact Assessment.

Environmentally Sensitive Area is an undisturbed or relatively undisturbed site which has value to society and ecosystems worth conserving because of its natural features.

Environmentally Significant Area is a natural area, which because of its features or characteristics, are significant from an environmental perspective, and which have the potential to remain viable.

Goal is an idealized end toward which planning policies and actions are directed and which provide an indication of what is to be achieved.

Growth Strategy is a document that establishes a high level of policy direction for the long term growth of the Summer Village.

Hazard Land is land that is prone to flooding, erosion, slope instability or other natural or man-made hazards and land in proximity to sour gas facilities.

Hazardous use means a sour gas facility, active landfill and unreclaimed landfill.

Home Occupation is a small business operated within a residential property by a resident of that property in accordance with the Land Use Bylaw.

Intermunicipal Development Plan is a statutory plan prepared pursuant to Section 631 of the Municipal Government Act for lands of common interest to two or more adjoining municipalities.

Lake, or the Lake, means Sylvan Lake.

Lot means parcel.

Main Road refers to a road that serves as a major access road through Birchcliff.

Marina, in the context of this Plan, is a private communal boat dock and does not include facilities for the sale of gasoline or the provision of other services.

May is a discretionary term which provides notification that the policy in question can be enforced to the level of compliance on a case by case basis as determined by the applicable authority.

Municipal Reserve is land dedicated as part of a subdivision to be used for park/trail or school purposes, according to Section 666 of the Municipal Government Act.

Natural area is an undisturbed or relatively undisturbed site which because of its natural features has value to society and ecosystems worth conserving.

Open Space is land allocated for public use, the conservation of features or for wildlife areas.

Outline Plan is a non-statutory plan prepared to a standard similar to an Area Structure Plan but approved by Council resolution instead of by bylaw.

Policy is a statement of a course of action for achieving a vision and goals.

Parcel means lot.

Protective Services means police, fire and ambulance services.

Riparian Land refers to the area of land immediately adjacent to Sylvan Lake or a watercourse. Riparian lands act as natural buffers, protecting aquatic ecosystems from excessive sedimentation, runoff and erosion.

Redesignation is a change of a land use district designation within the Land Use Bylaw.

Reserve is land provided as part of a subdivision, by the developer without compensation, for environmental conservation, park and/or school purposes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Government Act.

Shall is a directive that the action or actions within the policy are mandatory and therefore must be complied with. Where the policy applies to a plan or study to be undertaken or required to be undertaken by the Summer Village, the Summer Village shall undertake the action as resources are available.

Should is a directive that encourages actions to implement the policy, but such actions are not mandatory.

Statutory Plan means an intermunicipal development plan, municipal development plan, area structure plan and area redevelopment plan adopted by bylaw in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Government Act.

Summer Village means the Summer Village of Birchcliff.

Sustainable Development means meeting the needs of today without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their environmental, social and economic needs.

Trail means path.

The Lake means the body of water named Sylvan Lake.

This Plan means the **Birchcliff Municipal Development Plan 2013**, being the Summer Village of Birchcliff Municipal Development Plan, and any amendments thereto.

Wetland refers to land having water at, near or above the land surface, or which is saturated with water long enough to promote wetland or aquatic processes as indicated by poorly drained soils, hydrophytes vegetation and various types of biological activity that are adapted to the wet environment.

Appendix A

Guidelines for an Environmental Review

Where an environmental review is required by this Plan, the assessment shall be undertaken by a qualified professional(s) and must address the following to the satisfaction of Birchcliff:

1. a description of the environmental sensitivity of the lands proposed for development and the surrounding area;
2. the identification of the nature and significance of any adverse impacts associated with the proposed development during construction;
3. the identification of the nature and significance of any adverse impacts associated with activities that will result from the development; and
4. the inclusion of an environmental protection plan to:
 - (a) alleviate (mitigate) any adverse impacts;
 - (b) monitor the performance of the environmental measures; and
 - (c) identify any residual impacts and their significance in any or all of the following :
 - fish and wildlife
 - vegetation
 - soils and terrain
 - water quantity and quality
 - the shoreline
 - surface drainage
 - aquifers.

Appendix B

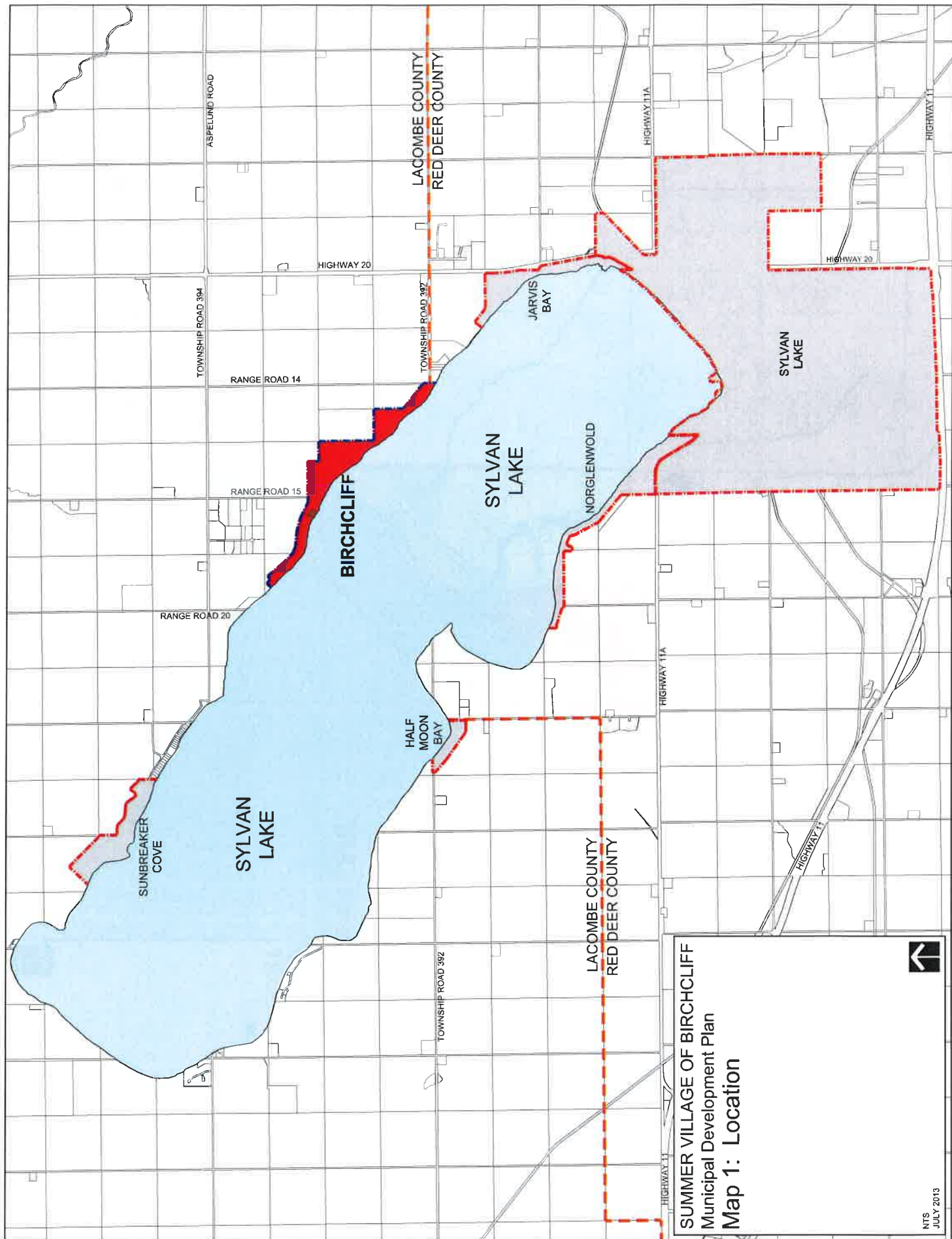
Guidelines for a Visual Impact Assessment

A visual impact assessment shall be undertaken by a qualified professional(s) and must provide sufficient information to show the likely effects of the proposed development and the extent to which any undesirable effects may be mitigated by the project design.

As general requirements, the assessment shall address to the satisfaction of Birchcliff:

1. how the natural features of the site will be preserved so as to contribute to the visual quality of the development.
2. the manner in which the density and form of the proposed development will be considered in terms of its visibility from important viewpoints on and off the Lake.

Except where necessary to sustain the woodlands or reduce the fire hazard, the clearing of vegetation is to be minimized in order to maintain the continuity of tree cover and screen the proposed development from view.



SUMMER VILLAGE OF BIRCHCLIFF
Municipal Development Plan
Map 1: Location

