



Agricultural Situational Statement for the Municipality of Crowsnest Pass

The Municipality of Crowsnest Pass (CNP) is situated in the Foothills and Rocky Mountains of the southwest corner of Alberta, adjacent to the British Columbia border to the west, the Municipal District of Ranchland to the north, and the Municipal District of Pincher Creek to the south and east. The Crowsnest Pass runs along the North American continental divide at the headwaters of the Crowsnest River, and encompasses 6 small settlements (west to east): Sentinel, Coleman, Blairmore, Frank, Bellevue, and Hillcrest, which were amalgamated into the current Municipality in 1979. The 32km, linear shaped Municipality is bordered on the north by the Southwest Rockies Forest Area and Allison/Chinook Public Land Use Zone, and on the south by the Castle Special Management Area (which is scheduled to be designated Castle Wildland Park and Castle Provincial Park). The total Municipal land base is 94,439 acres (Municipal Development Plan, 2001).

Because the area is a mountain pass, municipal land consists of thousands of small parcels in all shapes and sizes. Crown land comprises approximately 56,459 acres (60%), and municipal land comprises 37,980 acres. Nearly half of the municipal land is taxed as farmland, mostly consisting of dryland pasture. There are also 25 tributaries (19 which are named) that drain into the Crowsnest River that flows west to east along the valley bottom (Matthew Coombs, 2013). The busy primary highway number 3 and the Canadian Pacific rail line run along the valley bottom next to the Crowsnest River. Additionally a multitude of major utility right of ways (power and gas) link the Crowsnest Pass to Alberta and British Columbia.

Table 7
CROWSNEST PASS LAND ACREAGE
COMPARISON OF DESIGNATED AND EXISTING LAND USE

LAND USE DISTRICT	DESIGNATED IN LAND USE BYLAW		EXISTING LAND USE 1999	
	Acres ±	(ha) ±	Acres ±	(ha) ±
R-1	537.09	(217.36)	426.00	(172.40)
R-2	3.50	(1.42)	6.50	(2.63)
R-3	22.96	(9.29)	65.40	(26.47)
GCR-1	1598.60	(646.95)	1632.40	(660.63)
C-1	33.50	(13.56)	70.70	(28.61)
C-2	30.40	(12.30)	40.80	(16.51)
C-3	8.30	(3.35)	17.20	(6.96)
I-1	289.30	(117.08)	276.20	(111.78)
SIP-1	37.10	(15.01)		*
RO-1	202.50	(81.95)	333.30	(134.89)
P-1	205.56	(83.19)	268.04	(104.48)
UFG-1		N/A		N/A
NUCR-1	148.70	(60.18)		N/A
NUA-1	34,808.80	(14087.12)	34,733.37	(14,056.59)
DC-1	53.60	(21.68)		N/A
U **		**	110.00	(44.52)
Forest Reserve ***	56,459.23	(22,849.05)	56,459.23	(22,849.05)
TOTALS (+-)	94,439.14	(38,219.52)	94,439.14	(38,219.52)

* Industrial land from the Sentinel Industrial Park is included in the Industrial total under the Existing Land Use.

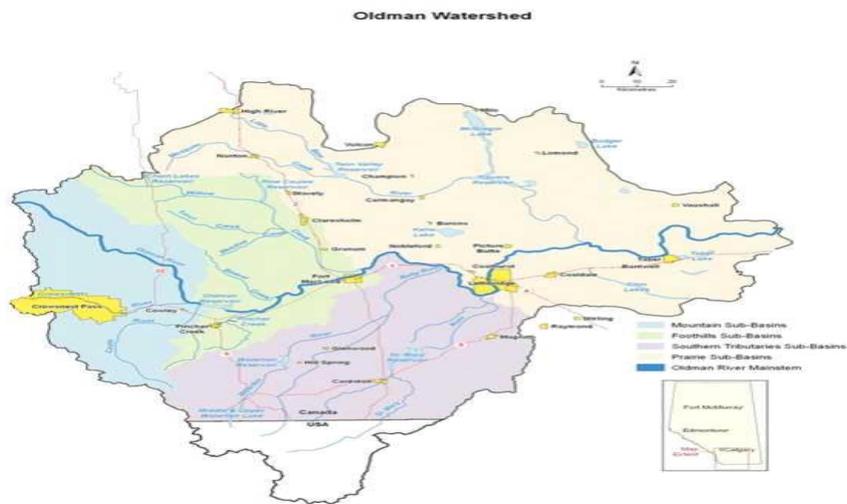
** Utility U is not designated in the land use bylaw.

*** Forest Reserve is not designated in the land use bylaw.

LAND USE CODES	
CODE	
R-1	Residential
R-2	Duplex Residential
R-3	Multiple Residential
R-4	Manufactured Homes
R-5	Narrow lot Residential
GCR-1	Grouped Country Residential
GCR-2	Grouped Country Residential
C-1	Retail Commercial
C-2	Drive-In Commercial
C-3	Comprehensive Commercial
I-1	Industrial
SIP-1	Sentinel Industrial Park
RO-1	Recreation & Open Space
P-1	Public
NUCR-1	Non-Urban Commercial Recreation
NUA-1	Non-Urban Area
CRV	Comprehensive Resort Village
CSV	Comprehensive Ski Village
DC-1	Direct Control
DC-2	Turtle Mtn Restricted Development Area

The Municipal Development Plan is scheduled to be revised 2017.

Municipal Environmental Reserves (MER's) are included within the Recreation and Open Space land use zoning, many of which are situated along creeks that flow through the various settled communities, plus several along the Crowsnest River. Most of the MER's range from 1 meter to 6 meters in designated width along waterbodies, but some are larger parcels on land immediately next to water, or too steep to develop. Riparian land adjacent to the creeks is always changing, especially after the June 2013 and June 2014 flood events. Local lakes include Island Lake, Crowsnest Lake, Emerald Lake, Window Mountain Lake, Chinook Lake, and Frank Lake. The Crowsnest Pass is part of the Oldman River Basin headwaters.



(Oldman Watershed Council, 2013)

Historically, agricultural practices have been limited to woodland ranching due to the area's shallow and nutrient poor soils (Walker et al. 1991). Black and Dark Brown soils are present in montane grassland, and forested grassland consists of some Dark Gray Luvisolic and Dark Brown soils. Brunisolic soils are present on steeper slopes with coarse textured gravel beneath. Most soils are not suitable for cropland due to elevation, steepness, and underlying bedrock that prevents tillage practices.

Though some traditional small scale livestock operations exist grazing the mountain and foothills, country residential horse ownership is a considerable factor associated with overgrazing on these small parcels.

Local ranchers and other country residential rural landowners live with wildlife species such as skunks, ground squirrels, pocket gophers, and occasionally, beavers and wood rats (sometimes mistaken for Norway rats). Citizens count on the Agricultural Service Board's Agricultural Fieldman, working in cooperation with local provincial fish and wildlife officials, to advise them on (and assist with) controlling these species in an effective and humane fashion when necessary.

As of the 2011 Census, 5565 people resided in the Municipality of Crowsnest Pass. Individual town sites had been established over 100 years ago, when coal mining was the main industry in the Crowsnest Pass, with dryland ranching and small scale forestry operations as the other major land uses. The last coal mine closed in the early 1980's, with a single limestone quarry serving as a reminder of the community's industrial heritage. Since that time, the land base has been gradually subdivided into smaller acreages, raising the cost of available land for sale. Acreage subdivisions (grouped country residential) accounted for 1632 acres in 2001, and have been growing steadily since that time (Municipal Development Plan, 2001). Approximately 24% of the community are part-time residents who have purchased properties or acreages for recreation, retirement, or as long term investments (Alberta Government 2010).