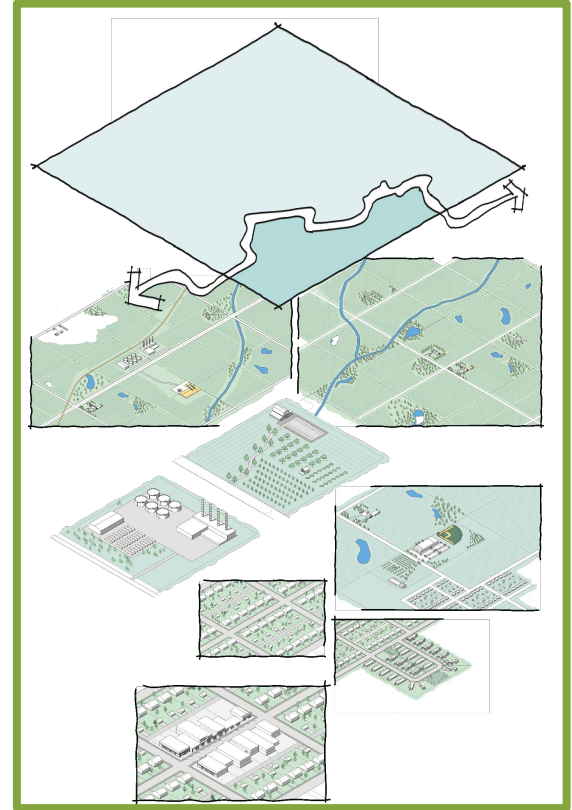# Beyond Boundaries:
Reimagining Communities Through Neighbourly Planning

May 2024

Dnyanesh Deshpande, RPP, MCIP
Marcelo Figueira, RPP, MCIP
Green Space Alliance

GSA
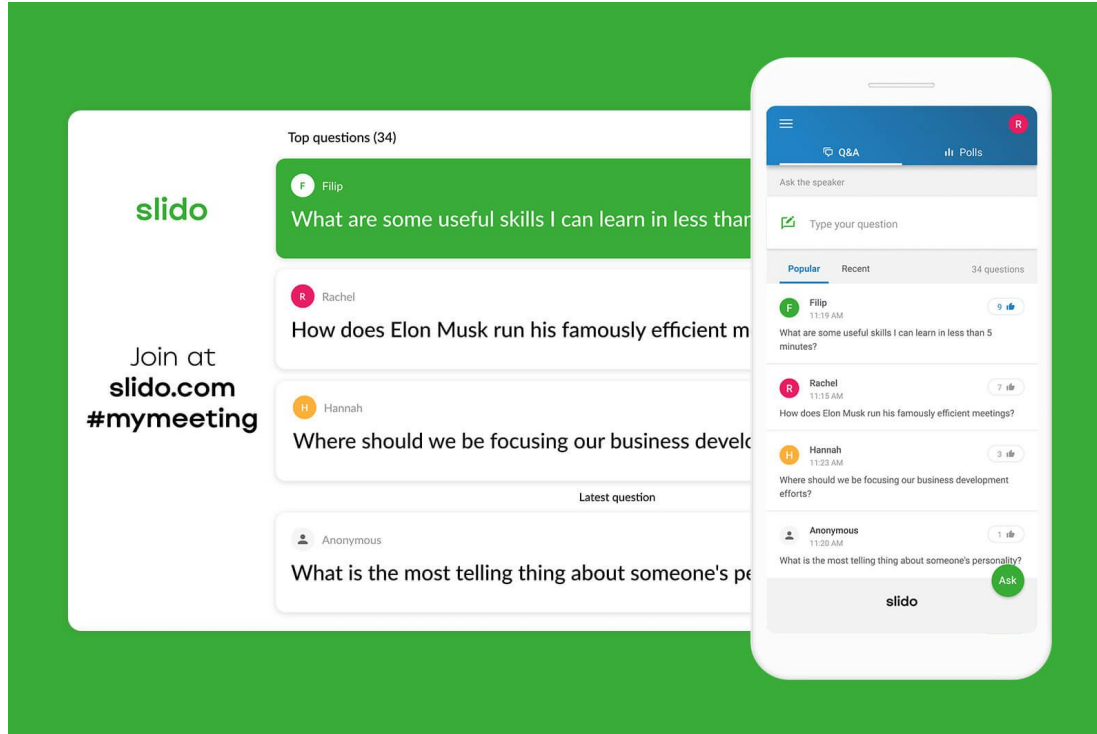Green Space Alliance

Presentation Outline

Neighbourly Planning
Who are we planning for?
Key Players
Lessons Learned and Key Takeaways

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Neighbourly Planning

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Image Source: freepik.com

Key Terms: Descriptive vs Normative Perspectives

Descriptive
- Refers to 'observing and gathering data to understand the world.

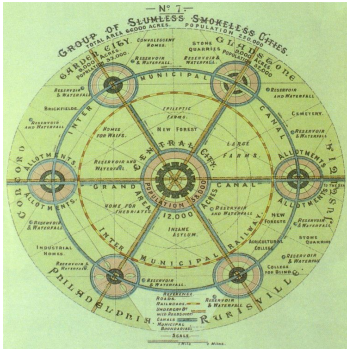- How do you see the world? How are you observing? What things are happening right now?
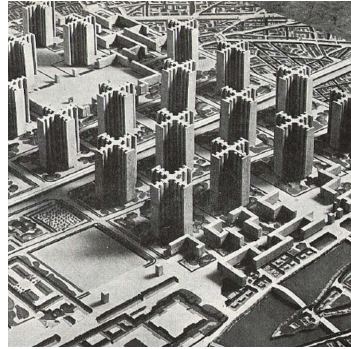

Normative
- Refers to 'combining the descriptive approach with personal values'

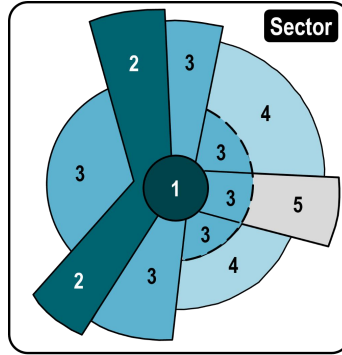- How you think the world ought be? What is your vision for the future?

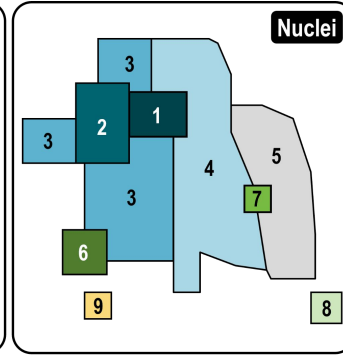# Planning Paradigms / Theories / Movements

Garden City (1889)

Radiant City (1930)

Sector Theory (1939)

Nuclei Theory (1945)

Community Development (1960s)

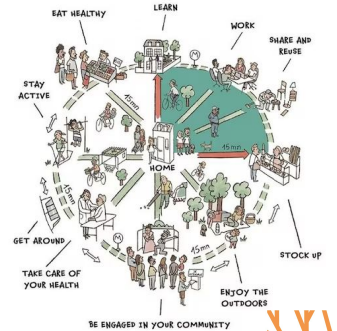Sustainable Development (1972)

New Urbanism (1980s)

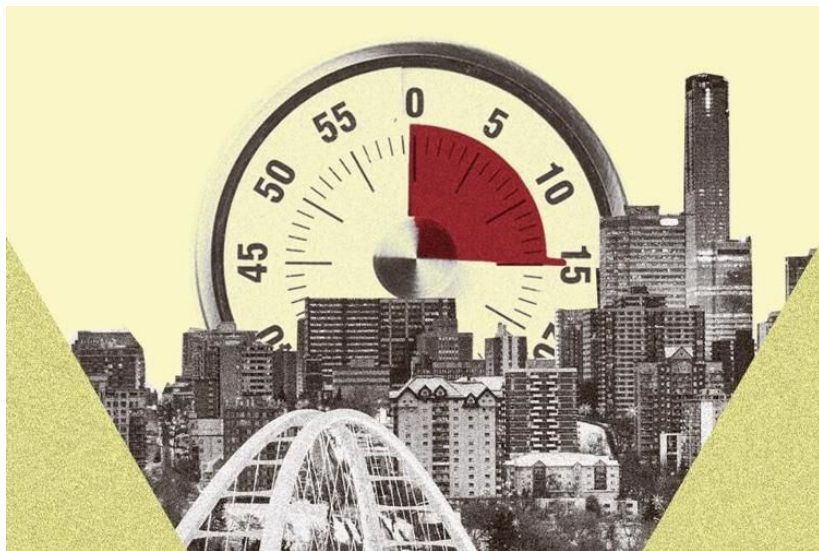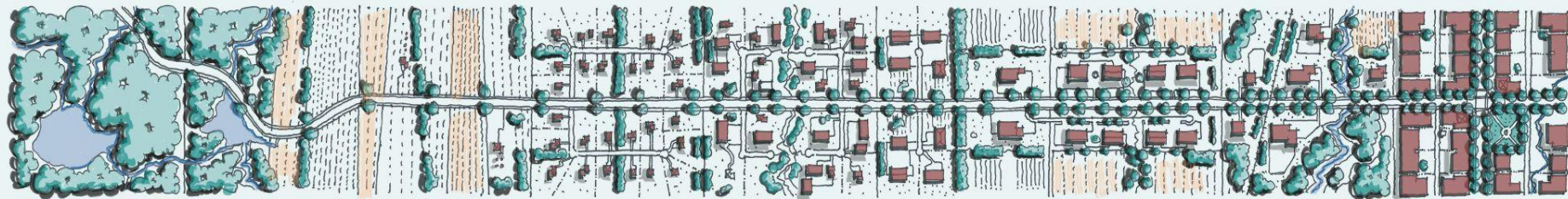Smart Growth (1990s)

Superblock Model (1993)

15-Minute Cities (2016)

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Why Are We Talking About This?

Current Unbalance Between Descriptive and Normative

Poll Questions 1 and 2:
Descriptive vs Normative Examples and Questions

Descriptive Example
- Communities that charge low transit fares are likely to attract higher ridership than communities with expensive transit fares.

Normative Example
- People living in suburbs should take transit because in my community transit fares are low.

Question 1:
- The city has a high population density, tall buildings dominating the skyline, and the streets are bustling with pedestrians and vehicles. Is this statement **descriptive or normative?**

Question 2:
- To alleviate traffic congestion, it is recommended to implement a comprehensive public transportation system and create more pedestrian-friendly spaces. Is this statement **descriptive or normative?**

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What is Neighbourly Planning?

Neighborly Planning is a balance act between descriptive and normative approaches to how communities are planned at various scales
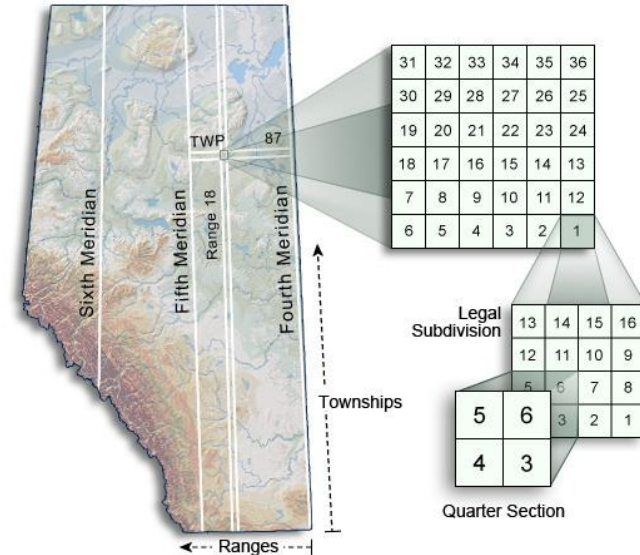
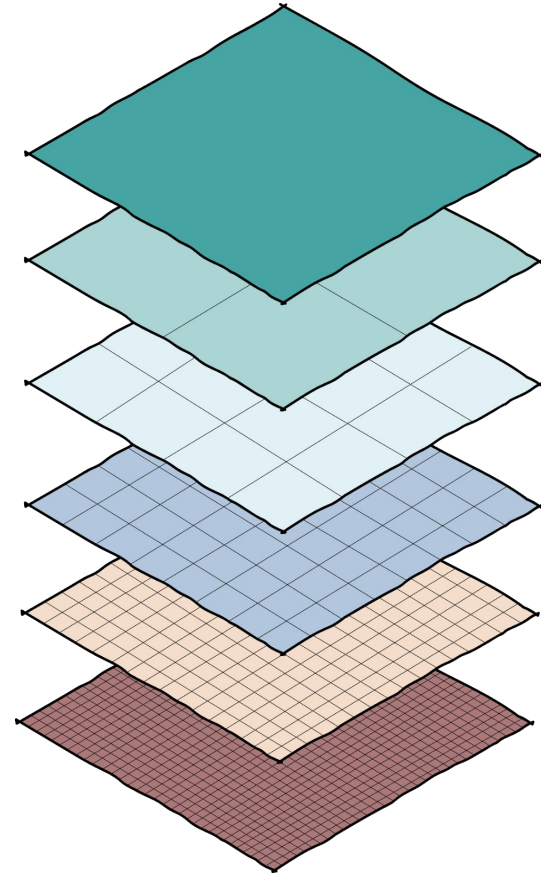**Descriptive**
As a process is more descriptive than normative.

Normative
The values that have stood time through generations.

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Neighbourly Planning Layers

Joint Land Use Planning

Integrated Transportation Networks

Shared Public Services and Facilities
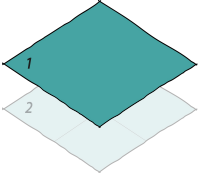
Cross-Boundary Environmental Initiatives

Collaborative Economic Development Strategies

Community Engagement and Participation
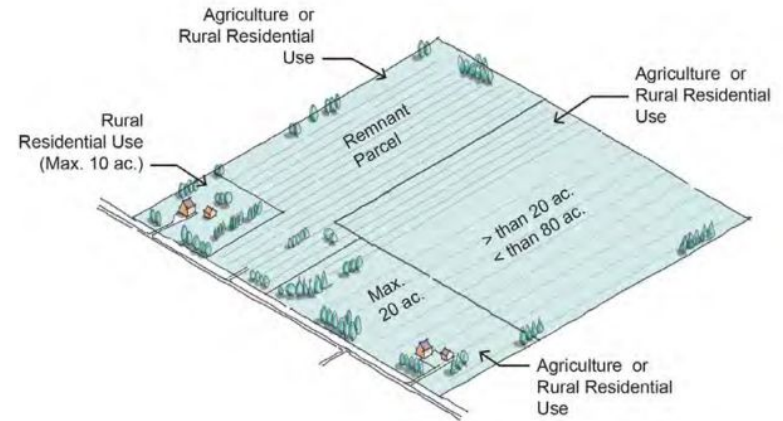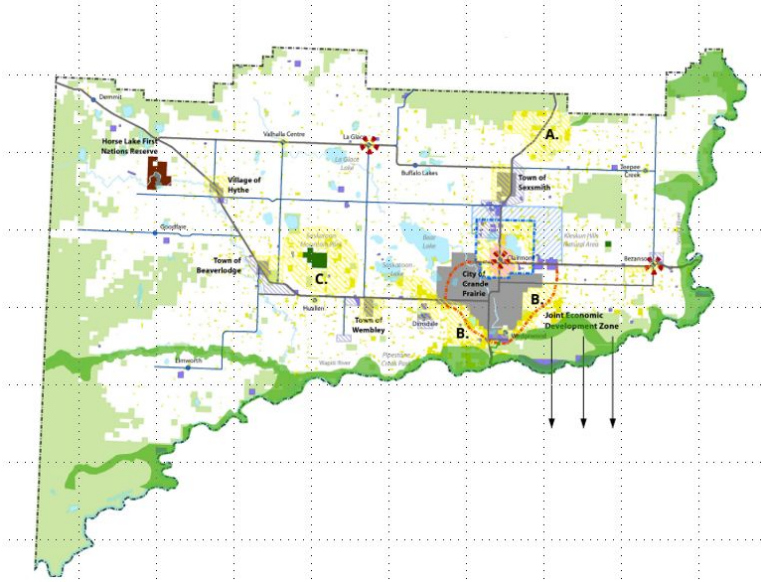
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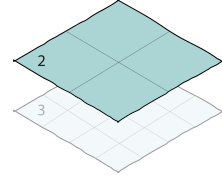# Neighbourly Planning Layer 1: Joint Land Use Planning

Supporting Diversified Economic Development to enhance resilience during economic downturns

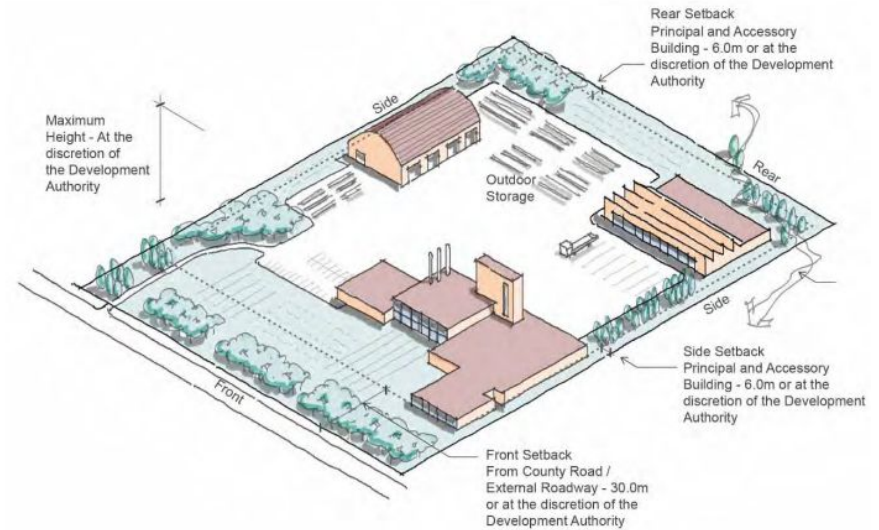Preserving Agricultural Land and Natural Resources

Criteria for Rural Residential Lot Subdivision

Neighbourly Planning Layer 2: Integrated Transportation Infrastructure

Diversifying Transportation Infrastructure

Access to Employment Opportunities

Neighbourly Planning Layer 3:
Shared Public Services and Facilities
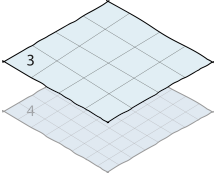
Enhancing Community Resilience
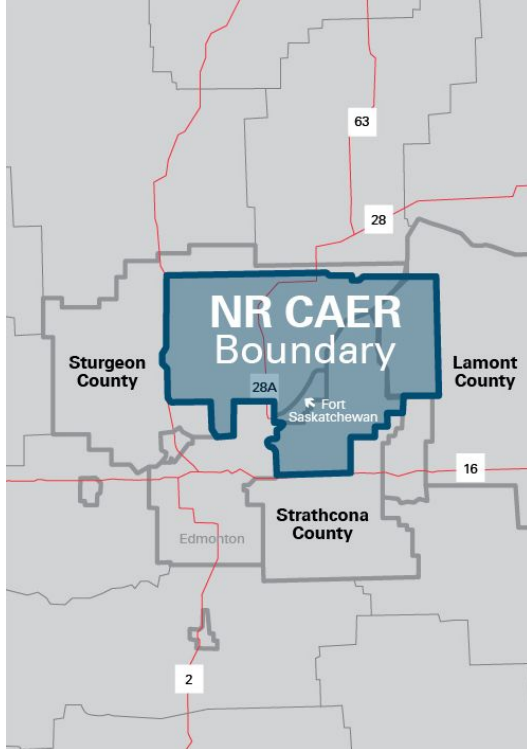
Supporting Resource-Based Industries
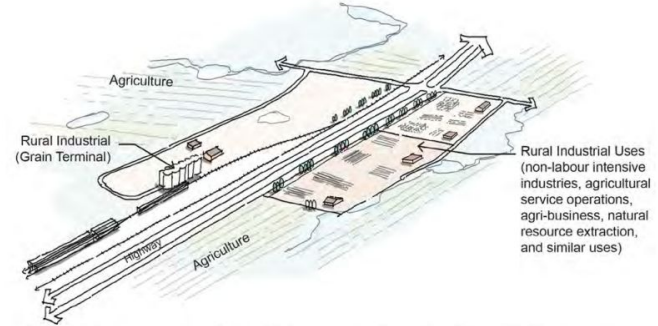
Neighbourly Planning Layer 4: Cross-Boundary Environmental Initiatives
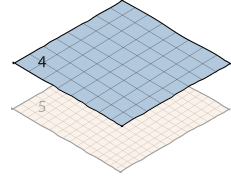
Sustainable Resource Management

Climate Adaptation and Mitigation
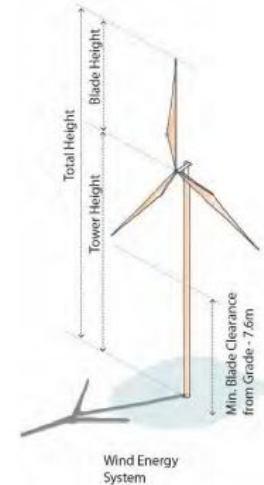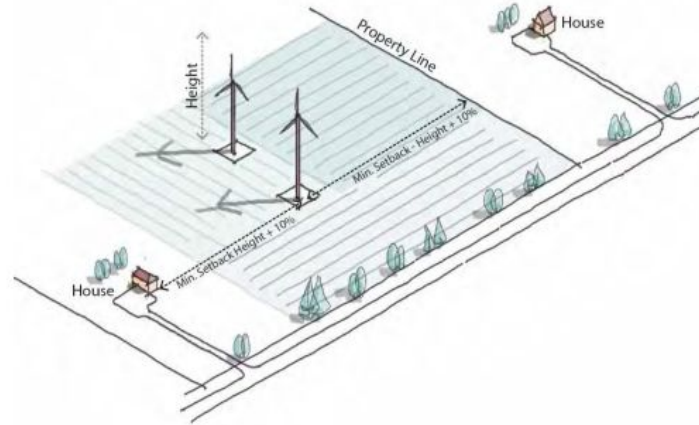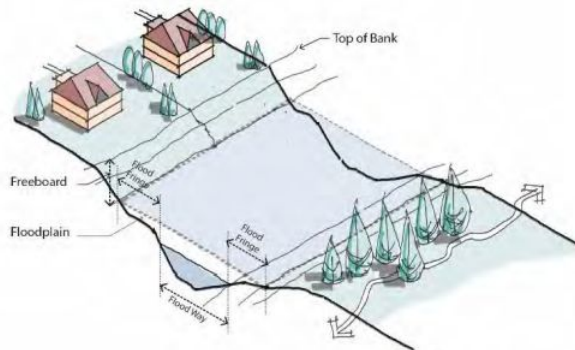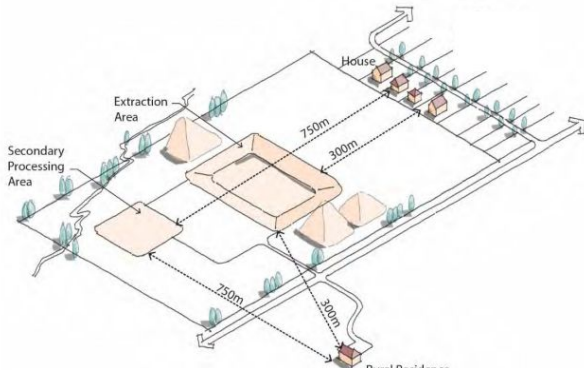
Implementing a cross-boundary watershed policies to address water quality issues and protect critical habitats

Neighbourly Planning Layer 5: Collaborative Economic Development Strategies
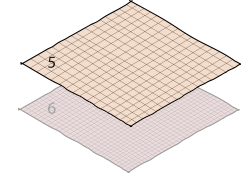
Diversifying Economic Base

Supporting Small Businesses and Entrepreneurs
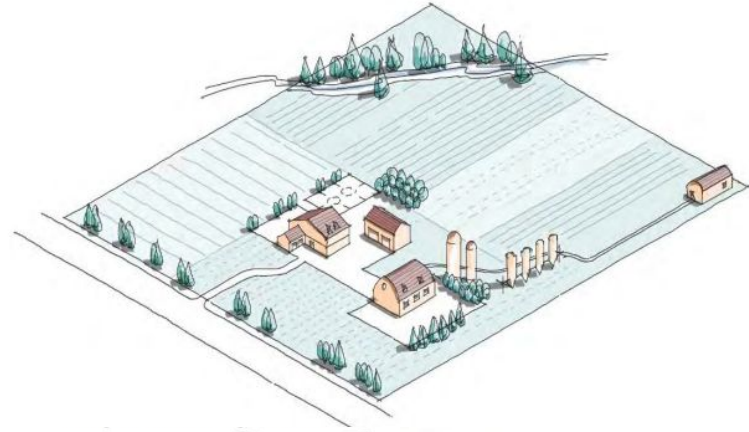
Neighbourly Planning Layer 6: Community Engagement and Participation
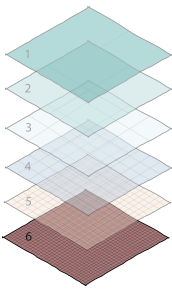
Inclusive Economic Planning to build
Social Capital:

- economic equity
- affordable housing
- accessible transportation
- and community support

The NINJA Generation - No income. No jobs. No assets.

Poll Question 3:
Neighbourly Planning

Question 3:

- Which of the 'neighbourly planning' layers identified in this presentation are **most critical in your municipality?**
  - Joint land use planning
  - Integrated transportation networks
  - Shared public services and facilities
  - Cross-boundary environmental initiatives
  - Collaborative economic development strategies
  - Community engagement and participation

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Image Source: GSA

Who Are We Planning For?

Population Forecast

Population growth in Canada and Alberta
% change, year-over-year
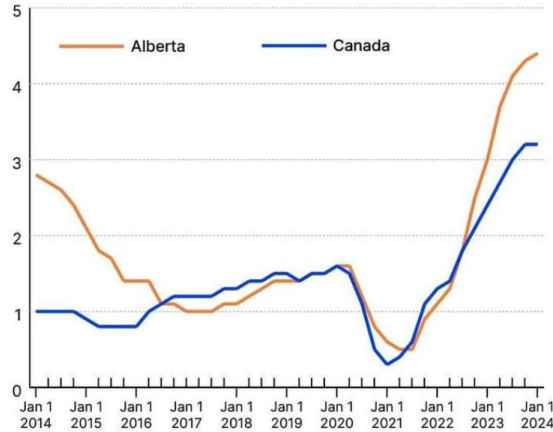
Statistics Canada Table 17-10-0009-01 and ATB Economics
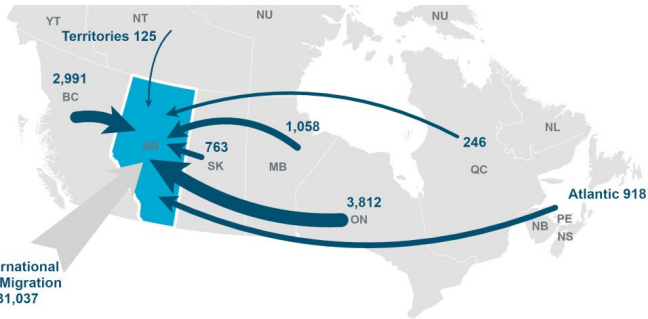
Average Annual Population Growth (%), 2022-2051, Medium Scenario

- -0.6% - -0.2%
- -0.2% - 0.0%
- 0.0% - 0.6%
- 0.6% - 1.0%
- 1.0% - 1.4%
- 1.4% - 1.8%
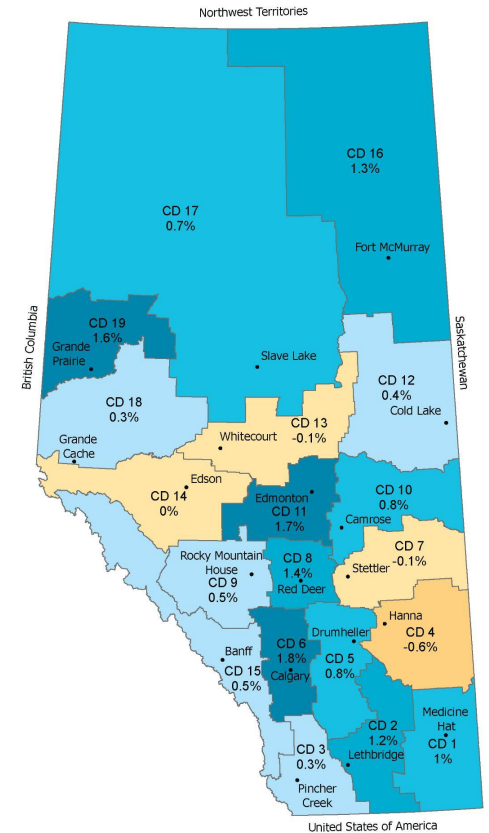
Alberta = 1.5%

Net population movement for Alberta
(October 1, 2023, to December 31, 2023)

**Canada's immigration dilemma:
not enough homes or not enough workers
(Financial Post, April 20, 2024).**

Population Forecast

2022 = 4.5 million

2051 = 7.1 million

Larger
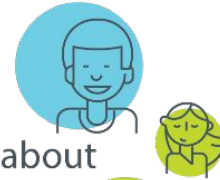
Adding about 2.6 million people

Average annual growth of 1.5% per year

	2022		2051
65+	673k		1,391k
15-64	3,042k		4,496k
0-14	829k		1,207k

Equity Inclusion and Diversity

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Tools to Address Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in the Planning Process

Personas

- **Personas** are the profiles of people who are actually impacted.
- The use of personas can help **create empathy** for the issue at hand
  - What other people may be feeling?
  - How the issue at hand could impact me?
- The use of personas also **make planning more relatable** through storytelling of lived experiences

Current GSA project:
City of Lethbridge Land Use Bylaw -
Social Use Engagement

Key Players - Neighbourly Planning
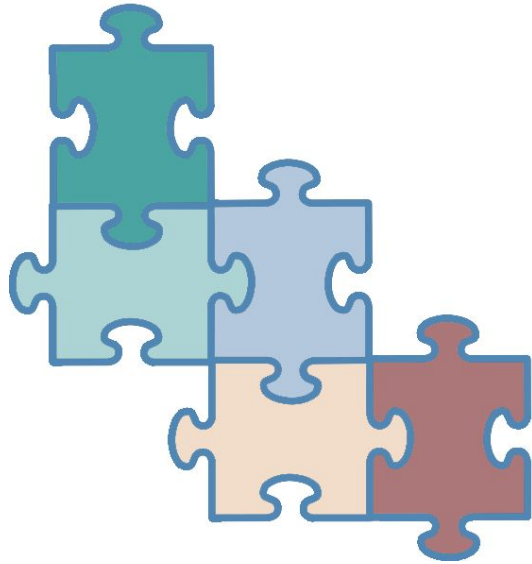
Decisions → **Elected Officials**

Balance between perspectives → **Descriptive Vs Normative**

Voices

- Municipal Administrators
- Landowners and Business Owners
- Civic Organizations
- Development Industry

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Poll Question 4:
Who Are We Planning For?

Question 4:
- Bob is a CAO of XYZ municipality working on many council initiatives involving planning and engineering.
- Jane is a single mom working two part-time jobs who has recently been in a women's shelter.

Who is the persona for planning purposes? Bob or Jane?

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Lessons Learned and Key Takeaways

Past / Current Experience: Intermunicipal Planning

- Lac Ste. Anne IDPs
  - Town of Mayerthorpe
  - Summer Village of Alberta Beach
- Two Hills IDPs
- Summer Villages and Leduc County IDP
- Town of High Prairie and Big Lake County IDP
- Edmonton Annexation Area - Land Use Planning support
- Grande Prairie IDP (Ongoing)

Success means achieving balance between the **descriptive and normative perspectives**
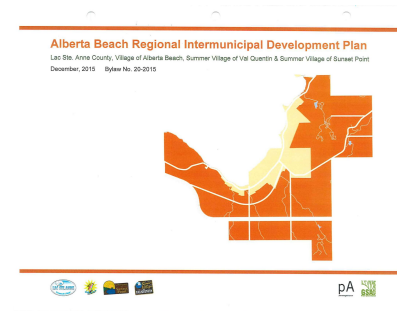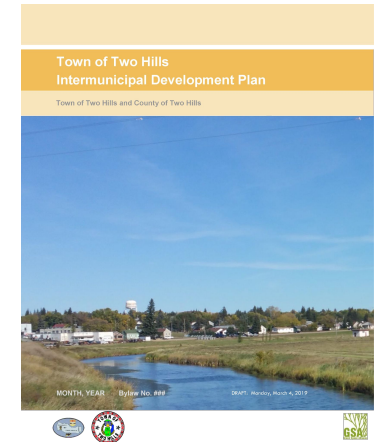
Lessons Learned: Summer Villages and Counties IDPs

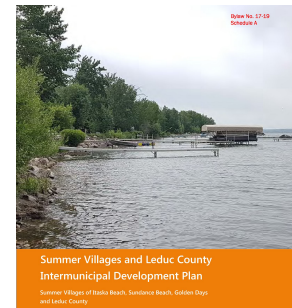| Theme	Neighbourly Planning Layer	Descriptive Perspective	Normative Perspective
Connection to the waterfront	Joint Land Use Planning	Access to waterfront is limited due to private ownership and control	• More public access is required along the waterfront (ER and MR), but not at the cost of individual privacy
Trails network	Integrated Transportation Networks	Gaps exist between regional and local trails	• Trail connections impact local privacy • Less appetite to create an integrated systems
Lake Water Quality	Cross-Boundary Environmental Initiatives	Quality of water is impacted by surrounding land use practices	• Limited appetite to establish restriction on agricultural practices

Image Sources: GSA
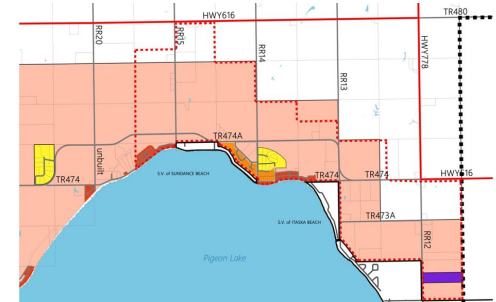
Lessons Learned: Town and County IDPs

Map 7 - Regional Economic Development Strategy

Theme	Neighbourly Planning Layer	Descriptive Perspective	Normative Perspective
Defining roles of regional partners (Two Hills IDP)	Joint Land Use Planning	Each municipality has different strengths - Agricultural focus, mennonite work force/trades background. Educational Vs Work centres	• All regional partners worked together to build consensus about individual roles
Finding synergies (Town of High Prairie and Big Lakes County IDP)	Collaborative Economic Development Strategies	To attract talent, there is a need for alternative housing types and expand the industrial base	• Provide opportunities for Country Residential development adjacent to urban boundary. • Establish a cohesive future industrial development area

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Lessons Learned: City and County IDPs

Theme	Neighbourly Planning Component	Descriptive Perspective	Normative Perspective
Political Will (City of Grande Prairie and County of Grande Prairie)	Shared Public Services and Facilities	Discussion between the two municipalities about their needs for amenities and resources	Agreement on what services and facilities they can share (Addressed through ICF)
Land Use	Joint Land Use Planning	Landowners and stakeholders aspire for future flexibility	* Could be - instead of creating a detailed land use plan develop a planning framework for future approvals

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Poll Question 5: Lessons Learned

Question 5:
What are the key **hot topics** you are facing in your intermunicipal fringe areas that may need a balance between **descriptive and normative perspectives**?

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Key Takeaways

Neighbourly Planning Balance
If there is no balance between descriptive and normative perspectives, the Plan may not work for all key players.

Planning Without Boundaries
Community needs and normative values are same across boundaries. Collaborative spirit is critical for success.

Generational Challenge
Planning for the generation born in 1985 onwards (millennials and Gen Z) is more challenging than planning for the previous generations (Gen X and Baby-boomers). Most are not accumulating wealth.

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Image Sources: pinterest.com, slideteam.net

Dnyanesh Deshpande, RPP, MCIP
Marcelo Figueira, RPP, MCIP
GSA Consulting Inc. (Green Space Alliance)

Additional Sources

Paradigms - Slide 6:
- https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/architecture-design-blog/2014/mar/17/ebbsfleet-garden-city-george-osborne
- https://transportgeography.org/contents/chapter8/urban-land-use-transportation/sector-nuclei-land-use/
- https://99percentinvisible.org/article/ville-radieuse-le-corbusiers-functionalist-plan-utopian-radiant-city/
- https://www.cnu.org/publicsquare/2017/10/31/25-great-ideas-new-urbanism
- https://urbandesignlab.in/top-15-theories-in-urban-planning/
- https://wearemodeshift.org/group-helps-michigan-develop-smart-growth-transportation-strategies
- https://barcelonarchitecturewalks.com/superblocks/
- https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/03/15-minute-city-stickiness/
- https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/transit-oriented-development-what-tom-goodrum/

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