

neighbouring business centers, such as Peace River and Grande Prairie, to meet their business, service and retail needs.



FIGURE 1 ALBERTA FRANCOPHONE, TOWN OF FALHER, PROVINCE OF ALBERTA AND CANADIAN FLAGS

PLANNING CONTEXT

ALBERTA LAND USE POLICIES

In 1996, the Alberta Government released its Land Use Policies. All municipalities must carry out these policies while undertaking their planning responsibilities. These policies provide direction for the municipality's general approach to planning and also address specific land use planning issues where there is a mutual interest of both the municipality and the Province. The Town of Falher will ensure that the vision, goals, and policies of the MDP are consistent with the Land Use Policies.

Alberta Land Use Policy Area	Addressed by MDP Section
The Planning Process	Sections 3.1, 3.10, 3.11
Planning Cooperation	Sections 3.10, 3.11
Land Use Patterns	Sections 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.6
The Natural Environment	Sections 3.1, 3.7
Resource Conservation	Sections 3.1, 3.8
Transportation	Section 3.5
Residential Development	Sections 3.2, 3.6



LAND USE FRAMEWORK

The Province of Alberta is currently in the process of developing seven regional plans with two completed thus far (Lower Athabasca Regional Plan and the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan). The seven regions are congruent with the province's major watersheds and are aligned with municipal boundaries. The Upper Peace Regional Plan, which will include the Town of Falher, has not yet begun.

JOINT GENERAL MUNICIPAL PLAN #84-02

The Municipal District of Smoky River No 130, along with the Village of Girouxville, the Village of Donnelly, the Town of McLennan, and the Town of Falher, developed this land use plan in 1984. It deals broadly with agriculture, residential, industrial, transportation, utilities, recreation, and the environment.

LAND USE BYLAW NO. 14-05

As required by the *Municipal Government Act*, the Town of Falher has a *land use bylaw* that regulates the use and development of private property in the municipality. Falher's *land use bylaw* was updated in 2014. The *land use bylaw* may be updated subsequent to the completion of this MDP to reflect the policy direction therein. The *land use bylaw* is a key implementation tool of the municipal development plan.

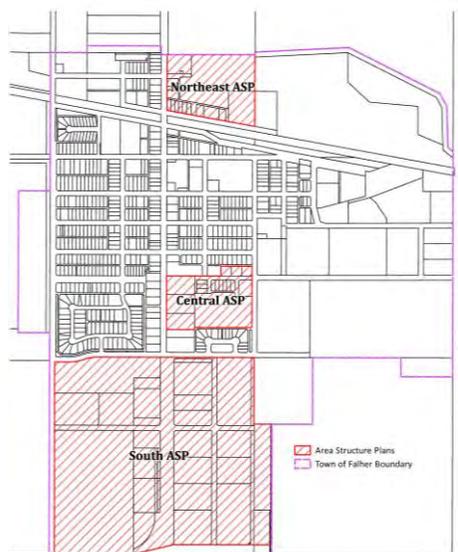


FIGURE 2 ASP LANDS, AS OF JANUARY 2016

CENTRAL FALHER AREA STRUCTURE PLAN BYLAW #08-09

The Central Falher ASP provides a framework for the development of a new commercial and residential development. The 2009 plan was an update to a plan originally adopted in 1987. The bulk of the lands within this ASP are owned by the Town, and the Town is currently working to develop the lands in accordance with the ASP.

SOUTH FALHER AREA STRUCTURE PLAN BYLAW #07-06

The South Falher ASP provides a framework for the development of secondary commercial and industrial development, characterized by large lots, at the south entrance of the Town. The 2006 plan was an update to a plan originally adopted in 1992. The lands within this ASP area are predominantly privately owned. A portion of the lots have been subdivided in accordance with the ASP, while the remainder is undeveloped.

NORTHEAST AREA STRUCTURE PLAN 1989

The Northeast ASP provides for the development of manufactured (mobile) homes, industrial, and commercial lands in the north end of Town east of Main Street. As of 2015, the area is largely undeveloped. The current zoning applied to these lands is largely inconsistent with the direction provided by the Northeast ASP.



GENERAL MUNICIPAL PLAN 1985

The 1985 General Municipal Plan had a planning horizon of 15 years, to the year 2000. The plan included a future land use and based on the 1984 Smoky River Joint General Municipal Plan (rescinded), set out where annexation should occur.

GENERAL PLAN 1977

The 1977 General Plan provided analysis and discussion of the present and possible future of the Town of Falher with respect to eight topics

- Residential Facilities
- Town Centre
- Transportation
- Economic Base
- Community Aesthetic and Facilities
- Utilities and Communication
- Financial Analysis
- Future Land Use Synopsis

The Plan provided a set of policies to address future growth and development.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

LAND BASE

The Town of Falher has a land area of 2.87 square kilometres (287 hectares)¹. The land area of the town has not changed since 1981. Currently 50 hectares (approximately 22% of land within the Town boundary) are undeveloped and designated as Urban Reserve lands by the *land use bylaw*. Land within the town boundaries are either privately owned or publicly owned by the Town.

TABLE 1 LAND BASE

Land Use (by land use bylaw zone)	Existing Net Area
Residential	17.52%
Community and Park Areas	13.49%
Primary Commercial	3.90%
Secondary Commercial	16.13%
Industrial Lands	27.36%
Urban Reserve	21.60%

Recent growth in the community has largely focused on manufactured (mobile) home development as an affordable option for residents. Through three existing *area structure plans* (the North East, Central, and South ASPs) a large portion of the vacant land within the Town of Falher has undergone planning consideration. However, since these plans were adopted minimal greenfield development has occurred. The Town is currently moving forward with the Central Falher ASP. New development has primarily focused on infill development within existing neighbourhoods.

¹ Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census of Population



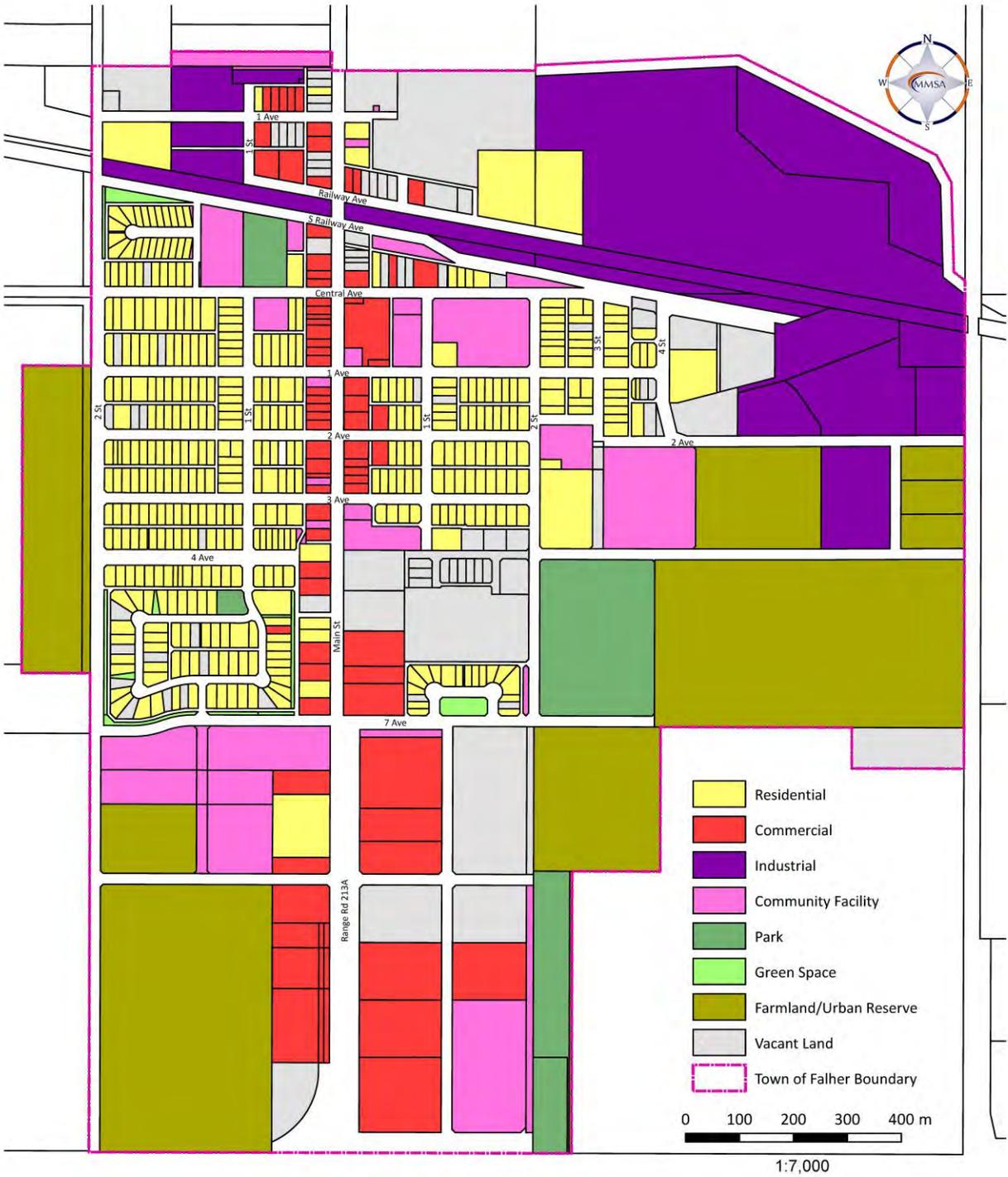


FIGURE 3 CURRENT LAND USE



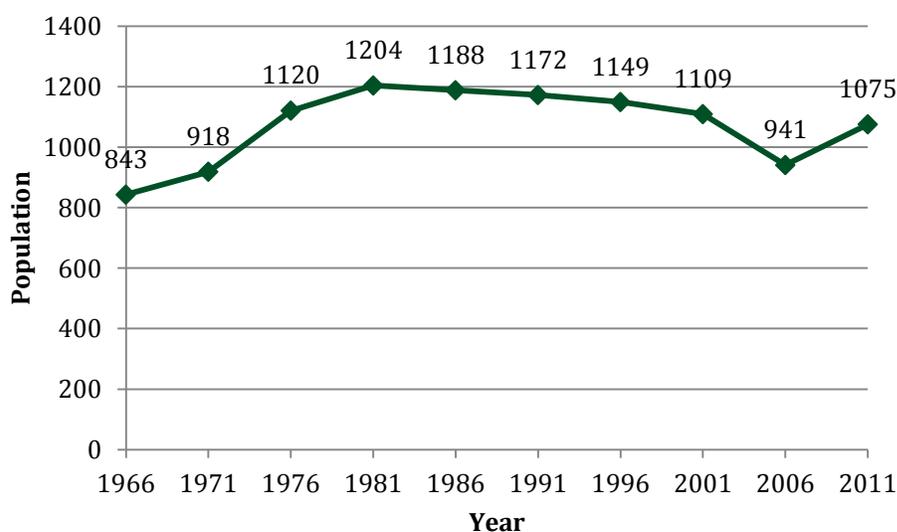
POPULATION

As shown in Table 2, the Town of Falher experienced a significant population increase between 1971 and 1976, reaching over 1,000 residents for the first time. Since a peak in 1981 the Town's population experienced a slow decline, reaching a low of 941 residents in 2006 and climbing back over the 1,000 mark to 1,075² in 2011. Population growth within the Town since the 2011 census appears to be positive but will not be confirmed until 2017 with the results of the 2016 Population Census.

The average number of people per census family within Falher was 2.7 people, slightly below the provincial average of 3 people (2011 Census).

Tables 3 and 4 illustrate the ratio of males to females within each age cohort in Falher and in Division No. 19³, respectively. Typically the shape of this type of graph is a pyramid, showing a population that decreases as it ages, as demonstrated in Table 4. However, the shape of the graph in Table 3 indicates that Falher's population is not similar to the region as a whole, with both a disproportionately aging population and a large number of 30 to 59 year olds.

TABLE 2 FALHER POPULATION, 2011



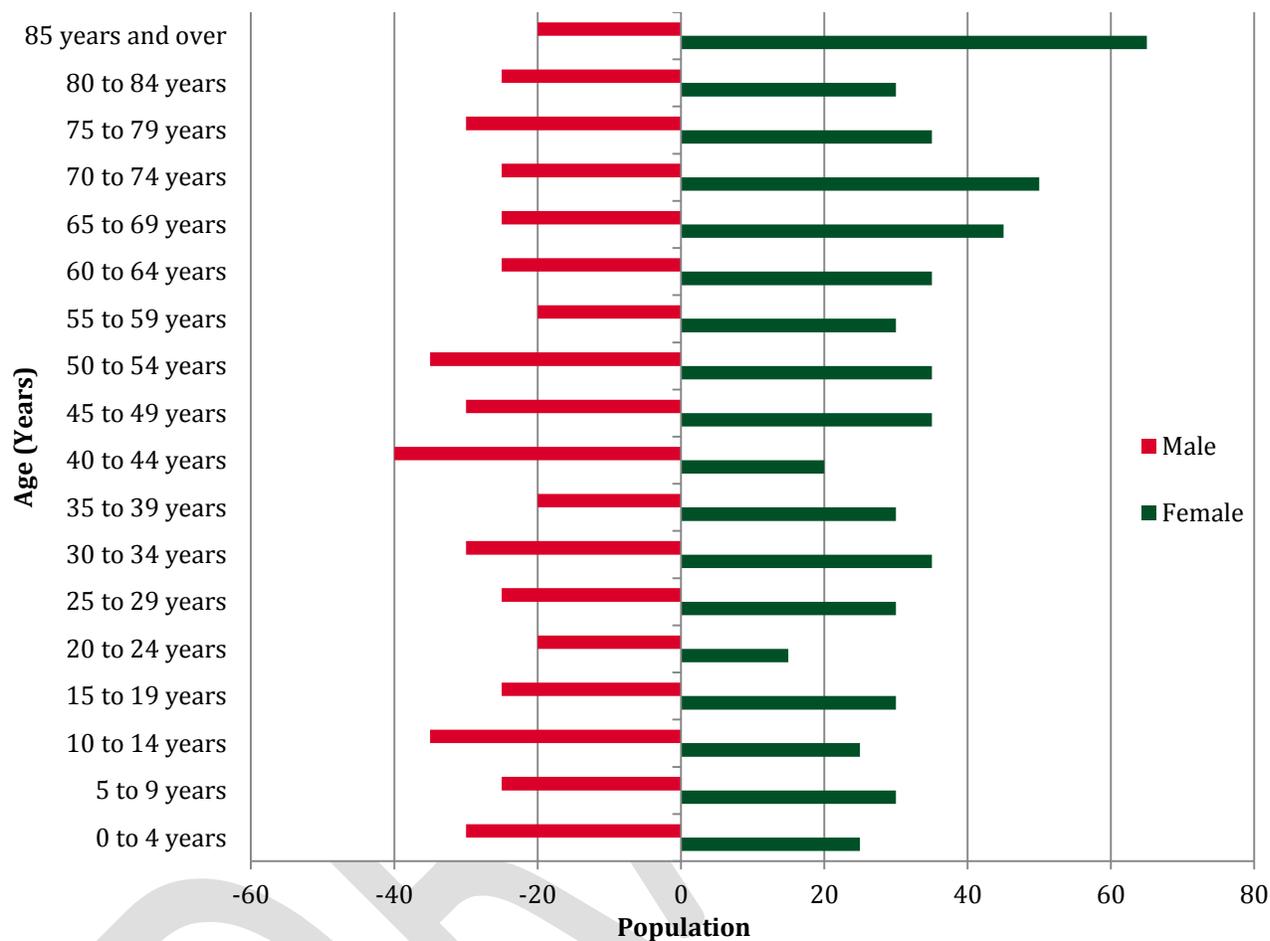
² Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census of Population

Several inconsistencies in the Census population numbers were noted by staff.

³ Division No 19 is a census division that encompasses rural and urban municipalities in the Peace River region, including but not limited to Grande Prairie, Peace River, Falher, the MD of Smoky River No 130, and Birch Hills County.



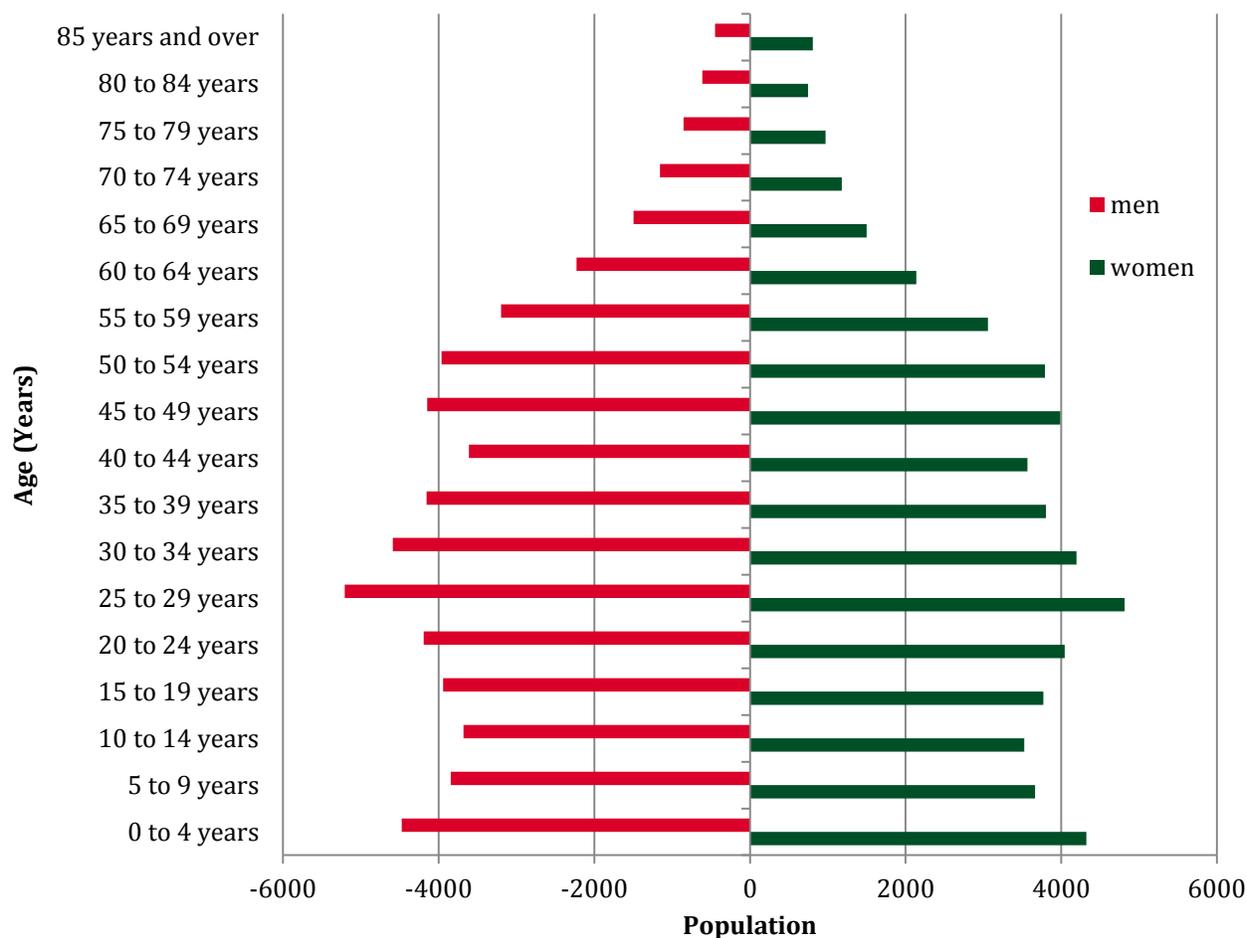
TABLE 3 POPULATION OF FALHER BY AGE AND GENDER, 2011



The female to male ratio in Falher shows a considerably higher number of women to men in the 65 years and older cohorts, especially when compared to the ratio within the region, shown in Table 4.



TABLE 4 POPULATION OF DIVISION NO. 19 (PEACE REGION) BY AGE AND GENDER, 2011



DEVELOPMENT CLIMATE

Over the last five years development in the Town has largely consisted of accessory structures, such as signs, fences, sheds, and garages (Table 5). In 2013, the development of a crude oil transload facility brought a significant change to the Town's industrial development, moving the Town away from its traditional agricultural economic base. The majority of residential development permits have been issued for manufactured (mobile) homes.

TABLE 5- SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT PERMITS (2010 TO 2014)

Year	Development Type				Total Value
	Accessory Structures	Residential	Commercial	Industrial	
2014	25	6	0	0	\$ 1,127,800.00
2013	9	2	1	1	\$ 7,013,300.00
2012	22	3	0	0	\$ 884,500.00
2011	16	1	1	0	\$ 524,500.00
2010	26	1	0	0	\$ 116,300.00



The Town has a total of 22.02 km of municipal roads: 10.38 km of paved, 8.97 km of gravel, and 2.67 km of undeveloped. Falher's road system is connected to Highway 49 via Main Street (paved), 2nd Street to the west (gravel), and Range Road 213 (paved) to the east. This configuration allows for good access into the town. The outer roads also provide good access to the industrial lands at the northern edge of the town, allowing the majority of industrial traffic to remain out of the town center. Within the Town, much of the road system is based upon a traditional 'grid' pattern. However, newer residential subdivisions to the south-west and manufactured (mobile) home lands have been developed with a loop road system.

A service road provides access to large commercial lots on the south-east side of town, while access to commercial lots to the west is directly off Main Street. Future plans for undeveloped industrial and commercial lands in the south end of town include a large-scale grid network.

The 1985 General Municipal Plan established a road hierarchy, as follows:

Arterial Roads – Are intended to move large volumes of traffic. This includes Main Street and the truck route.

Collector Roads – Are intended to move traffic and provide land access. They are designed to collect traffic from local roadways and carry it to arterial roadways.

Local Roads – Local roads are intended to provide local access. They are designed to provide for small volumes of local traffic only.

Parking requirements in the commercial core of Falher are accommodated with on-street angle parking, as well as, an off-street public parking lot at the corner of Main Street and Central Avenue. Larger commercial developments also provide off-street parking, in accordance with the requirements of the *land use bylaw*.

UTILITIES

Falher's treated water is supplied by the Smoky River Regional Water Commission which also serves Girouxville, Donnelly, the MD of Smoky River No 130 hamlets of Guy and Jean Côté, and the members of the Smoky River Water Co-op. The treatment facility draws water from the Little Smoky River and has two reservoirs; one for raw water located near the draw area and another one for treated water adjacent to the water treatment plant located northwest of town. The storage capacity of the treated water reservoir is 1135 cubic metres and maximum daily capacity of water that can be treated by the facility is 2500 m³/day. The average daily use of water for the region in 2014 was 700 m³/day and the maximum for 2014 was 1237 m³/day⁴. The treatment facility was upgraded in January and July of 2015. The Town has 15 km of water mains and 12 km of wastewater mains⁵ (Figure 5 & 6).

⁴ Manager of the Smoky River Regional Water Commission, in conversation, September 11, 2015.

⁵ Municipal Affairs Profile

