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A. INTRODUCTION

A partnership of twelve urban and rural municipalities, located in the central part of the province, the Mid Sask Municipal Alliance, (MSMA) faces a variety of issues related to growth and development. These include housing, health and education services, infrastructure, a decline in population and the challenge of both attracting and retaining families. At the same time, the MSMA is preparing for the impending development of a major potash mining operation by BHP Billiton in the region. The mine has the potential to introduce 2,000 temporary workers during a four year construction phase and, eventually 1,000 new employees and families as part of the permanent operations of the mine.¹ When the Potash Saskatchewan mine opened in the region, many of the employees chose to live locally first and later moved to larger communities such as Saskatoon and Humboldt, outside of the region. Notwithstanding this relocation to larger municipalities, the potash industry has generally had a very positive economic impact on the District. The impact has included spinoff businesses that have benefitted from the overall growth in potash mining.

In order to place their communities in a position that will allow them to benefit from the establishment of the BHP Billiton Jansen mine and the continuing growth and expansion of other potash mines in the area (Potash Corp. in Lanigan and Allan, and the Colonsay Mine operated by Mosaic) as well as to meet the challenge of dealing with the other diverse issues that face them, the MSMA has determined that a long range planning document should be prepared collectively. This document – the District Plan - will provide policies for responding to the growth challenges of the region, as well as lay the groundwork for the preparation of more detailed Official Community Plan (OCP) for each of the communities of the MSMA.



¹ BHP Billiton, Resourcing the Future, [Latest News](#) “Environmental Impact Statement Approval for the Jansen Potash Project,” June 30, 2011.

A.1 The Mid Sask Municipal Alliance

The MSMA is comprised of twelve communities to work co-operatively on issues that can best be addressed at an intermunicipal or regional level as well as at a municipal level. The MSMA's composition includes both rural (RM of LeRoy #339, RM of Prairie Rose #309, RM of Osborne #310 and RM of Morris #312) and urban (Towns of Lanigan, LeRoy, Nokomis, Watrous, Watson, the Resort Village of Manitou Beach, and the Villages of Drake and Jansen) municipalities. Covering an area of 3,550 km² and located generally in the east central portion of the province, these municipalities² banded together to explore ways of dealing with challenges that faced them both individually and collectively. A series of meetings facilitated via the Province's Municipal Capacity Development Program, (MCDP) took place in 2009 and 2010. These meetings culminated in the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement in which the member municipalities agreed to develop a "common line of action." In its work through the MCDP, the MSMA also developed a Community Action Plan or Strategic Plan. The Plan identified goals, objectives and developed vision and mission statements. The information collected and developed in that Plan has set the stage for the subsequent development of this District Plan.

A.2 Authority

Following the completion of its Action Plan, the MSMA authorized the preparation of a District plan. In addition to this regional document, the MSMA directed that individual Official Community Plans (OCPs) where such OCPs need updating, or, where new ones are required, be prepared. Zoning Bylaws will also be completed for the MSMA's member municipalities.

The legislative authority for community plans is set out in the *Planning and Development Act 2007*. The *Act* also defines the rules and guidelines for developing such plans. The District Plan has been prepared in accordance with Section 102(10) and 102(11) of the *Act*.

The mandatory requirements set out under Section 102(10) are those "...statements of policy with respect to matters the affiliated municipalities consider:

- a) To be of intermunicipal or regional significance in the planning district;
- b) To be necessary to coordinate community and land use planning and services within the planning district; and
- c) To be necessary to ensure that the district plan is consistent with any provincial land use policy or statement of provincial interest."

Section 102(11) identifies optional components that *may* form part of a District Plan. These include:

- sector-specific planning



² The RM of Morris #312 joined the MSMA later and was not a participant in the earlier discussions with the original MSMA members.

- district public works
- district service delivery
- district public facilities (educational, cultural, recreational and health care)
- district economic development
- coordination of approaches for stewardship of environmentally sensitive lands
- significant transportation and municipal infrastructure matters
- district settlement patterns

Other matters considered by the district planning commission or planning authority to be of a regional/interjurisdictional nature may also be included in the District Plan.

A.3 The District Plan and the Official Community Plans

The District Plan is a long term regional statutory land use policy document. The Plan will be adopted by bylaw by all 12 municipalities and will provide high level policy statements that support the vision, goals and the strategic initiatives of the MSMA region. As has been noted earlier, the District Plan will form the framework for the preparation of individual OCPs of the MSMA’s member municipalities. While these OCP’s will contain policies that are specific and unique to each municipality, the policies will also need to conform with the relevant policies of the District Plan. The municipal Zoning Bylaws will, in turn, also be required to have consistency with the District.

Sections 31 and 37 of the Planning and Development Act set out the purpose and content requirements of Official Community Plans. The OCP’s that are prepared for each of the MSMA communities will be ‘stand alone’ documents and will be adopted separately. At the same time, pursuant to Section 102(13) of the Act, the adoption of the District Plan will require all affected OCP’s to be consistent with that Plan.

102(13) *“If an affiliated municipality has an official community plan, the official community plan must be consistent with the district plan.”*

Hierarchy of Planning Documents



A.4 District Plan Organization

Following this introductory section, the District Plan is organized sequentially as follows:

- A description of the vision statement, mission statement and values set out by the MSMA for their region and the complementary vision statements derived from the public engagement process held in April 2011
- A backgrounder on the MSMA municipalities, noting the present state of affairs in the district and the changes that have been occurring
- A description of the issues, challenges and opportunities for the district including
 - The issues, challenges and opportunities noted by the MSMA in its Action Plan
 - The issues, challenges and opportunities as offered by individuals during the public consultation process
- An identification of district goals and a setting of objectives and policies for the district “themes”. The “themes” are based on the issues and challenges derived from the consultation process and speak to such district matters as health care and education, housing, infrastructure, development and the economy, etc. Each theme includes a discussion, a set of objectives and policies
- A district planning strategy that includes a future land use concept and speaks to the roles that the municipalities will play in that strategy.
- A description of the implementation strategies and the monitoring process for the District Plan.
- Official Community Plans

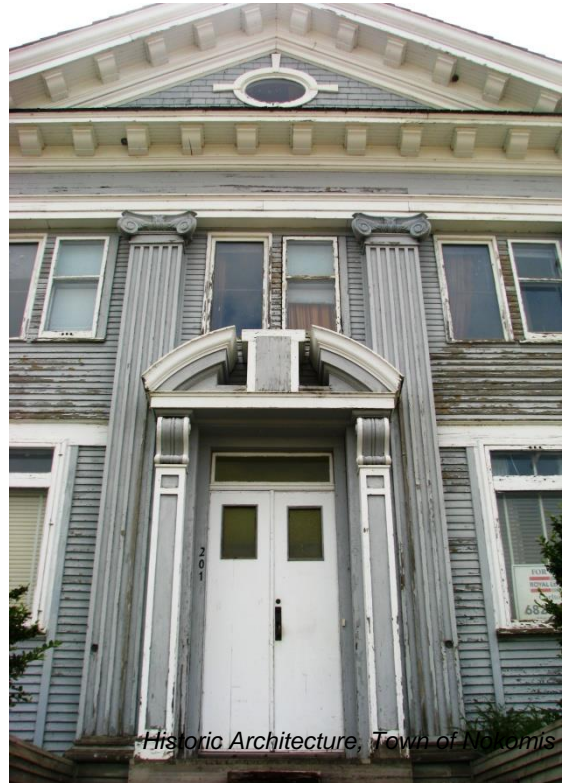


Dellwood Reservoir, RM of Usborne

B. PRINCIPLES

In creating its Action Plan, the MSMA first laid out the guiding principles which would form the foundation of the District Plan. These were enunciated through the Alliance's Vision Statement, Mission and Values all of which are repeated in this section of the Plan. As an adjunct to these principles, the vision statements which were derived from input received during the public engagement process have been included here as well. These statements have been grouped according to common themes both reinforcing and complementing the Vision Statement, Mission and Values developed initially by the Alliance.

The importance of the Vision Statement, Mission and Values cannot be understated. These principles will act not only to support the evolution of the District Plan, offering direction on the goals and policies for the region, but will also ensure that a clear understanding has been provided to prospective developers, residents, and businesses of the wishes and desires of the regional community.



B.1.1 MSMA Vision

We are a progressive group of small and large communities in a rural setting committed to working together as a regional collective for the long term betterment of the area. Our richness in agriculture, potash, and manufacturing creates a strong economy for the region and the province. The area supports a variety and abundance of wildlife and numerous tourist sites and opportunities. Our region contains cooperative and ambitious community spirits that create a unique quality of life for everyone.

B.1.2 MSMA Mission

Our group is working together to sustain, build, and grow the communities in the region. By sharing information and resources, and identifying our strengths and opportunities, we are finding solutions to common problems and improving the quality of life in the region. We believe that progress is important to enhance the communities and strengthen the region. Our cooperative efforts are intended to preserve the past while improving the lifestyle and quality of life for present and future generations.

B.1.3 MSMA Values

Honesty, Transparency, and Integrity

Our group will move forward with transparent agendas and will portray ourselves honestly to residents, ratepayers, newcomers to the area, to governing bodies and to each other as a group.

Dedication and Commitment

Our group is dedicated to working and fulfilling responsibilities to reach common goals. We are committed to promote the interest of our communities.

Preservation

The group will strive to preserve the quality of life in the region and to keep all of the communities healthy, vibrant and thriving. The group will also work to continue the strong partnership between the rural and urban communities in the region.

Unification

The group is dedicated to working together as a whole towards common goals. The group believes that the pursuit for common interests will create a stronger voice and better opportunities for the area.

Tolerance and Open-mindedness

The group is committed to be tolerant of one another's ideas and opinions and to be open to change. The group will work to promote acceptance of newcomers and diversity of culture and ethnicity. The group will ensure that everyone is heard around the table and will keep an open mind to all ideas.

Logical Thinking

The group will work toward realistic and achievable goals.

Cooperative, Sharing and Equitability

The group is dedicated to exhibit true cooperation trusting each other, listening and working together in making equitable decisions.



B.2 Public Engagement Vision Statements

Over the course of three public consultation sessions – April 4, 2011, Lanigan; April 5, 2011, Watrous; April 6, 2011, Watson – feedback from the participants attending those meetings resulted in the development of vision statements. These statements addressed the environmental, social and economic future of the area. While more specific than the statement created by the MSMA, they are fully complementary and supportive of the Alliance’s vision, mission and values. They should therefore be viewed as an important component of the overall principles directing the development of the District Plan. The vision statements derived from the public engagement sessions are as follows:

Environmental Vision

The MSMA Region balances the desire and need for a vibrant community with a commitment to protect its natural features, particularly the valuable agriculture land that is an integral part of the region’s roots and future.



Sacred Heart Church, Town of Watson

Economic Vision

The municipalities of the MSMA Region cooperate to promote, facilitate and support a diverse economy. The Region provides the capacity for new economic growth in industries which enhance or complement the area’s traditional pillars of agriculture and mining as well as the establishment of new unrelated industries.

Social Vision

The MSMA is an area with a long tradition of solid family and rural values. It welcomes new residents of all ages to become part of its diverse and vibrant community. The region offers an enhanced quality of life by providing its residents a safe and affordable place to live with convenient access to health care, education and recreation services.



Town of LeRoy

C. COMMUNITIES OF THE DISTRICT

C.1 The Site and Situation of the MSMA

The twelve municipalities comprising the Mid Sask Municipal Alliance are located in the east central sector of Saskatchewan, east of Saskatoon and north of Regina. The District covers an area of nearly 3,550 km² and in 2011 had a total population of 7,045. The Alliance's membership is diverse – characterized by both urban and rural communities. This diversity of four rural municipalities, five towns, one resort village and two villages offers both choice and opportunity to prospective residents, businesses and tourists. See *Map 1 – Land Use Overview*.

C.1.1 The District Resources

Soils

The MSMA is located within a larger physiographic region commonly described as the Great Plains. The rich soils generally found in the MSMA District are the chernozems, characterized typically by a black-grey upper zone colour. The Canada Land Inventory's (CLI) Soil Capability for Agriculture Classification system rating system uses a 1 - 7 scale for determining the ability of soils to produce field crops. The highest ratings are assigned a 1 and the lowest a 7. The Canada Land Inventory indicates that MSMA soils are predominately in the 1–3 classes of capability for crop production, which are described as follows:

“Mineral soils capable of sustained production of field crops. With crop use limitations ranging from insignificant to moderately severe, these soils require only normal conservation practices.”

Some exceptions to the highly rated 1-3 categories are found in the soils that are adjacent to the lakes and water bodies of the MSMA District (e.g. between Kutawagan Lake and Quill Lakes in the RM of Prairie Rose and the soils around Little Manitou Lake extending southeast to Boulder Lake in the RMs of Morris and Osborne). See *Map 2 – Agricultural Capability in the MSMA*. These include soils that are rated as a Capability Class 4 (“Mineral soils of marginal capability for sustained production of field crops” characterized by.... “severe limitations influencing the choice of crops and/or requiring special conservation measures”) and Classes 5 and 6 (“Mineral soils unsuitable for sustained production of field crops” characterized by.... “very severe limitations generally restricting their use to pasture and forage production”).

Soils are a vital resource to a region that relies heavily on an economy tied to agriculture. The presence of soils that have high capability ratings for agriculture may warrant consideration of policies relating to protection of that resource. At the same time, the presence of less desirable areas for crop production offers opportunity for other types of uses whether agricultural or non-agricultural-related.

Natural Features and the Environment

Water

The chernozome soils support the broad prairie ecosystem known as the Aspen Parklands that runs through the MSMA region. The Aspen Parkland is characterized by a mix of woodland areas and prairie grasses interspersed with lakes, marsh areas, ponds and low areas. The effects of erosion from continental glacial action have acted to create this unique environment. Evidence of these features can be seen in the presence of lakes such as Jansen Lake in the RM of LeRoy, Little Manitou Lake in the RM of Morris, Boulder Lake in the RM of Osborne and Kutawagan Lake in the RM of Prairie Rose. The numerous wet depressions that cover the district also bear witness to the work of these glaciers. The presence of these low lying areas may create a limitation for certain types of development within the region (e.g. residential or Intensive Livestock Operations). Additionally, flooding and natural hazards related to water tend to occur on a sporadic basis and pose a potential challenge to the communities of the District. See **Map 3 – Water Drainage and Flood Risk**. As recently as the spring of 2011, the RMs of Prairie Rose and LeRoy experienced flooding problems and received disaster assistance from the provincial government.

Some of the water bodies of the District also demonstrate a uniqueness that is matched by only a few places in the world. Glacial in origin and fed by underground springs, the waters of Little Manitou Lake have special properties. With very high concentrations of mineral salts, the water is extremely buoyant and has reputed recuperative benefits.

Zelma Reservoir, RM of Morris

An important organization responsible for managing water resources in the province and in the MSMA District is the Water Security Agency of Saskatchewan. Its wide range of responsibilities related to water, includes, operating dams and related facilities, administering the allocation of water, protecting watersheds, including ecosystems, erosion control, waterfowl conservation and fish habitat. The Water Authority has defined watershed sub-units within the province to better manage this resource. It has also created advisory committees at the



local level to deal with issues that can be handled more effectively at that level. A significant part of the MSMA District falls within the Watrous/Manitou Planning Unit a part of the larger Qu'Appelle River Basin. Its advisory committee includes membership from the Towns of Watrous, Lanigan, Nokomis, the Resort Village of Manitou Beach and the RM's of LeRoy, Morris and Prairie Rose. The Zelma Dam and Reservoir located in the RM of Morris are under the control of the Authority. Any demand for water from this source therefore requires the

Authority's approval. This has become important in providing the water needs of the future Jansen BHP potash mine project. The Advisory Committee has been playing a prominent role in the public consultation process for the routing of a pipeline from the reservoir to the Jansen mine site.

As noted, the relevance of the Authority also extends to the protection of the important waterfowl lakes and fish habitats. Some of the key sites in the District that could be affected by the Authority's mandate are the Quill Lakes as well as the important fish habitat of the Zelma Reservoir.

Climate

The climate of the MSMA District is typical of the more general continental climate of Saskatchewan. This is a climate characterized by temperature extremes with warm to hot summers and cold winters. Precipitation is also variable, typically occurring as summer rainfall and snowfall in the winter that may result in snow pack that lingers well into spring. Precipitation in the District varies between 375 -450 mm. (approx. 15 - 18 inches) annually. The dryness and high pressure that occurs in this climate regime frequently provides the sunny skies for which the province is famous.

Flora/Fauna

The combination of woodlands – reflected by deciduous and coniferous species (poplar and spruce) - and prairie grasses (fescue and spear/ wheat grass), support an extensive wildlife habitat. White tailed deer, fox, coyote, beaver and muskrat are among the species found in the region. Numerous bird species, both upland and shorebirds, also inhabit the MSMA District. The CLI capability inventory for ungulates (white-tailed and mule deer in particular) suggests that the MSMA District has some areas of relatively high capability (Class 3) lands for these animals, a fact borne out by the popularity of hunting in the area.³ The District is also an important area for waterfowl hunting. This underscores the need to ensure that policies for the protection of appropriate habitat are considered for all prairie species (e.g. woodlands, hedges, marshes/wetlands, etc). Some of the most visible habitat areas include the bird habitats around Quill Lake, and the fish habitat at Zelma Reservoir. The shore around the prime recreation area at Little Manitou Lake is also an important resource that requires special consideration. See *Map 4 – Resources and the Environment*.



³ The Canada Land Inventory's land capability for ungulates (moose, elk, deer) is a national system for classifying the capability of lands to support this form of wildlife. It has developed largely through the work of the Canadian Wildlife Service and provincial game associations. The components of the capability evaluation include food quantity and quality, protective cover and space needs for the growth and survival of these species. The classes range from 1 (lands have no significant limitation to ungulate production) through 7 (lands have limitations so severe that there is no ungulate production). The class 3 and 3W areas that are found in the MSMA District are lands that "have slight limitations to the production of ungulates." The 3W classification is a special class of "Class 3 areas that are winter ranges on which animals from surrounding areas depend."

Mineral Resources

The MSMA District is part of an extensive area of Saskatchewan underlain by potash and salt deposits. The mineral *Carnallite*, another source of potash, is also present in quantities in and around the Town of Lanigan as well as the western edge of Quill Lakes.

C.1.2 Accessibility

The District is well served by a major highway system that includes Yellowhead Highway 16, and Highways 2, 5, 6, 15, 20 and 365. Secondary highways and local roads also serve the District. Both CN rail and CPR provide both access and potential connections to the communities within the District. The CN mainline, which handles both freight and passenger service – include the “Canadian” – passes through the Towns of Watrous and Nokomis and the RM's of Morris and Usborne. The CRP's main and branch lines provide freight service via the communities of Watson, LeRoy, Lanigan, Jansen, Nokomis and Drake traversing the RM's of LeRoy and Prairie Rose.

C.1.3 The Economy

The main drivers of the District's economy are agriculture, potash, tourism and manufacturing.

Agriculture

Good access to markets, an excellent highway/roadway system and the presence of rich chernozemic soils have all contributed to the success of agriculture in the region and made it the most important sector of the economy. The most common farming activity in the MSMA District is crop production. Indeed, the 2006 Statistics Canada Community Profile determined that more than 70% of all the farms operating in the area are involved in producing oilseed and grains.

Other significant farming operations include cattle ranching and to a lesser extent other animal production. Intensive Livestock Operations (ILOs) operate in the rural municipalities and are an important segment of the agricultural industry. At the same time, the location of ILOs is frequently an issue that municipalities must consider, particularly with respect to separation distances from other land uses.

Mining Operations

Potash mining represents another significant contributor to the economy. Major potash deposits in the region led to the opening of a mine in the 1960's by the Alwinal organization. Acquired by the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan in 1977, the mine operates near the Town of Lanigan with a labour force that exceeded over 550 employees in 2010. It is a major component of the diverse employment opportunities that the District offers. Other potash mines outside of the MSMA District, but nonetheless important to the local economy, include the Colonsay Mine operated by Mosaic and Potash Corp's mine in Allan. The proposed BHP Billiton Jansen mine – expected to be producing saleable potash by 2015 - has the potential to make this industry an even larger player in the region's overall economy.

Tourism

The municipalities of the MSMA offer a wide variety of tourist opportunities. These include golf courses, camping facilities and municipal recreation facilities. Some of the municipalities offer attractions that are unique and have become an important draw for tourists to the region. As described earlier, the Resort Village of Manitou Beach, located on Little Manitou Lake is the site of a shallow saline lake and a mineral spa that are major destinations for thousands of visitors every year. Fishing and wildlife viewing also contribute significantly to the overall recreation experiences available in the District. The Zelma reservoir site in the RM of Morris and the nationally significant Quill Lakes bird watching and habitat area located partially in the RM of Prairie Rose are but two examples of those opportunities.

Manufacturing

Manufacturing represents an important sector of the MSMA's economy. A significant part of the District's manufacturing operations have developed in order to serve the needs of the agriculture and potash industry. Some of the local businesses producing specialized agriculture equipment (e.g. Bergen Industries of Drake) have extended their reach well beyond local and regional markets and have achieved successful international sales.

The anticipated development of the potash industry in the region offers additional opportunities for the local manufacturing sector.

C.1.4 Health Services/Education

Schools

The MSMA District falls within the Horizon School Division No. 205. It includes both elementary and K-12 educational services. These are located in the communities of Drake (elementary), Lanigan (elementary), LeRoy (K-12), Nokomis (K-12), Watrous (elementary), Watson (K-12), and Young (K-12). There are also 2 high schools: one in Lanigan (Lanigan Central High School) and the other in Watrous (Winston High School). The Carlton Trail Regional College (regional campus in Watrous) offers a variety of courses including entry level university courses and accreditation programs for students seeking to be electricians or licensed practical nurses.

Health Services

From a health services perspective, the municipalities of the MSMA are under the jurisdiction of the Saskatoon Health Region. The distribution of health related facilities in the MSMA is as follows:

- The Town of LeRoy has a health centre, and an assisted living facility
- The Towns of Watson and Nokomis have a health centre and long term care facilities.
- The Towns of Lanigan and Watrous both have hospitals and long term care facilities.
- Ambulance service is provided through the Saskatoon Health Region. Ambulance service is in Watrous, Lanigan and Watson.



The Saskatoon Health Region's "Strengthening Rural Communities: Rural Health Strategy 2010" notes the challenges of providing accessible and appropriate services to cover a large geographic region comprising more than 100 urban and rural municipalities. Of significance to the MSMA is the Study's recommendation to increase Telehealth sites/equipment by expanding to Watrous by March 2011 and to Lanigan by March 2013. Although not specific to the MSMA, the Health Region's recommendation to develop a strategy to recruit, as well as, retain physicians in rural communities, if successful could have a positive impact for the MSMA region.

C.1.5 District Population and Housing Accommodation Overview*

The 2011 Statistics Canada census showed a combined population of the MSMA's four rural and eight urban municipalities at 7,045. The largest population centre was the Town of Watrous with 1,857 residents and comprising approximately 26% of the regional total. The Village of Jansen with 126 residents was the smallest. (See [Table 1- Population Change by Municipality 2006-2011](#)).

***Note on Population Numbers** – This District Plan was completed prior to the release of all of the 2011 Statistics Canada population figures. At the time of writing, only the population change from 2006-2011 was available. As a result, the analysis and commentary on population in the document have had to rely on statistics that are five years old. To capture the newest changes in the District's population characteristics and growth, it is essential that an updated version of Section C.1.5 be prepared when the complete new Census data become available.

First Nations and Metis Involvement

The provincial government's policy on First Nation and Metis consultation requires dialogue in circumstances where treaty or aboriginal rights are impacted. The MSMA District has no First Nations areas within its boundaries. The 2006 Statistics Canada Profile indicated that the District's Aboriginal Population comprised approximately 4.5 % of the total population of the MSMA's municipalities.

Population Changes 2006-2011

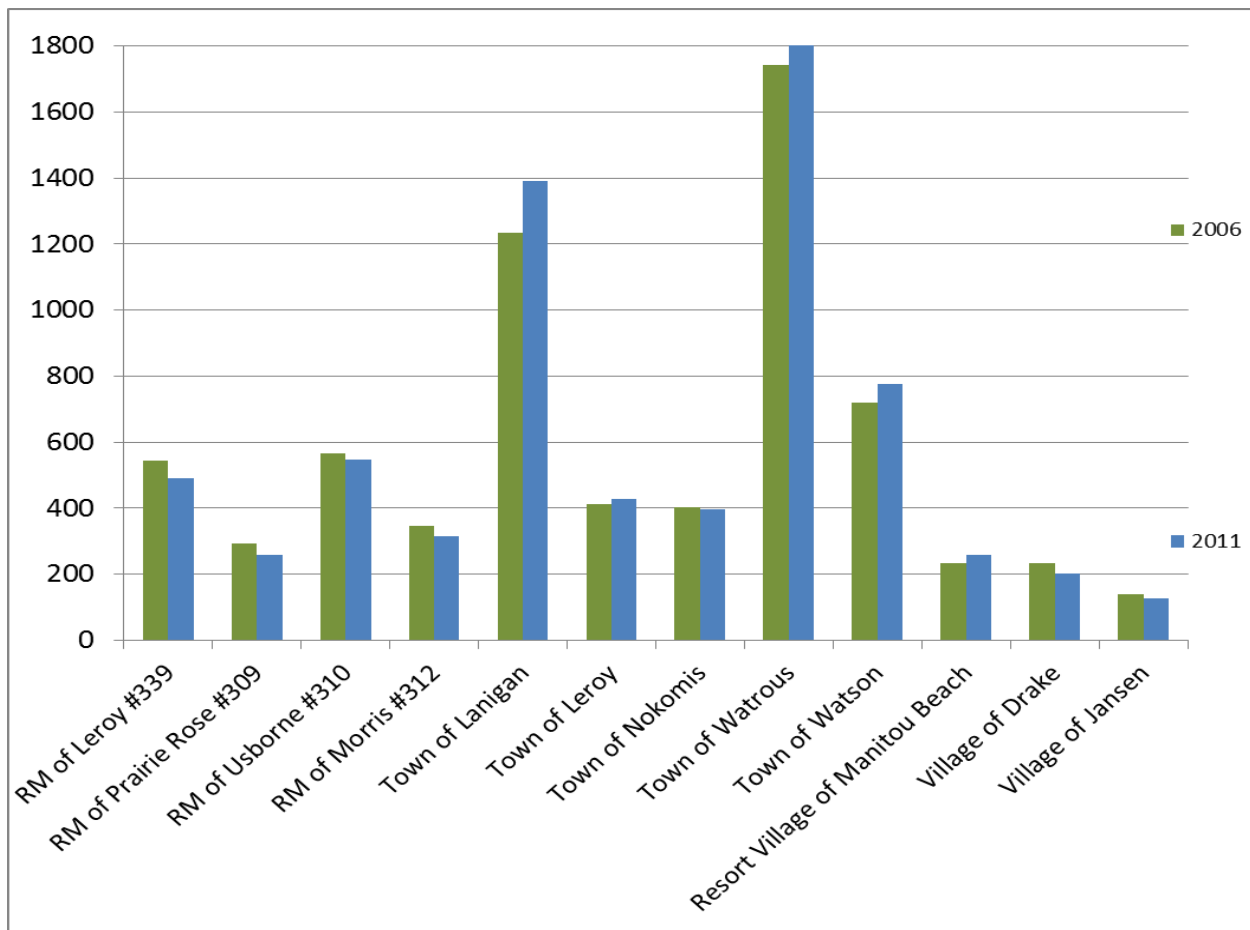
A comparison of the 2006 and the 2011 population numbers shows an overall increase in the number of District residents. **Table 1- Population Change by Municipality 2006-2011** and **Figure 1 - Population Change by Municipality and MSMA District 2006-2011** depict the differences between these census years. The figures indicate that there has been a decline among the rural municipalities while the urban areas have experienced a population increase. The higher overall number for the MSMA is reflective of the positive census picture for the province of Saskatchewan which experienced negative growth rates between 1996-2001 and 2001-2006 but saw a population increase of 6.7% between 2006-2011.⁴

Table 1 Population Change by Municipality: 2006-2011

Municipality	2006 Population	2011 Population	% Change
RM of LeRoy #339	544	490	-9.9
RM of Prairie Rose #309	292	259	-11.3
RM of Usborne #310	566	547	-3.4
RM of Morris #312	347	316	-8.9
Town of Lanigan	1233	1390	+12.7
Town of Leroy	412	427	+3.6
Town of Nokomis	404	397	-1.7
Town of Watrous	1743	1857	+6.5
Town of Watson	719	777	+8.1
Resort Village of Manitou Beach	233	257	+10.3
Village of Drake	232	202	-12.9
Village of Jansen	140	126	-10.0
TOTAL	6865	7045	+2.62

Figure 1 Population Change by Municipality and MSMA District 2006-2011

⁴ Statistics Canada, The Canadian Population in 2011: Population Counts and Growth, modified, January 30, 2012.



Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census of Population

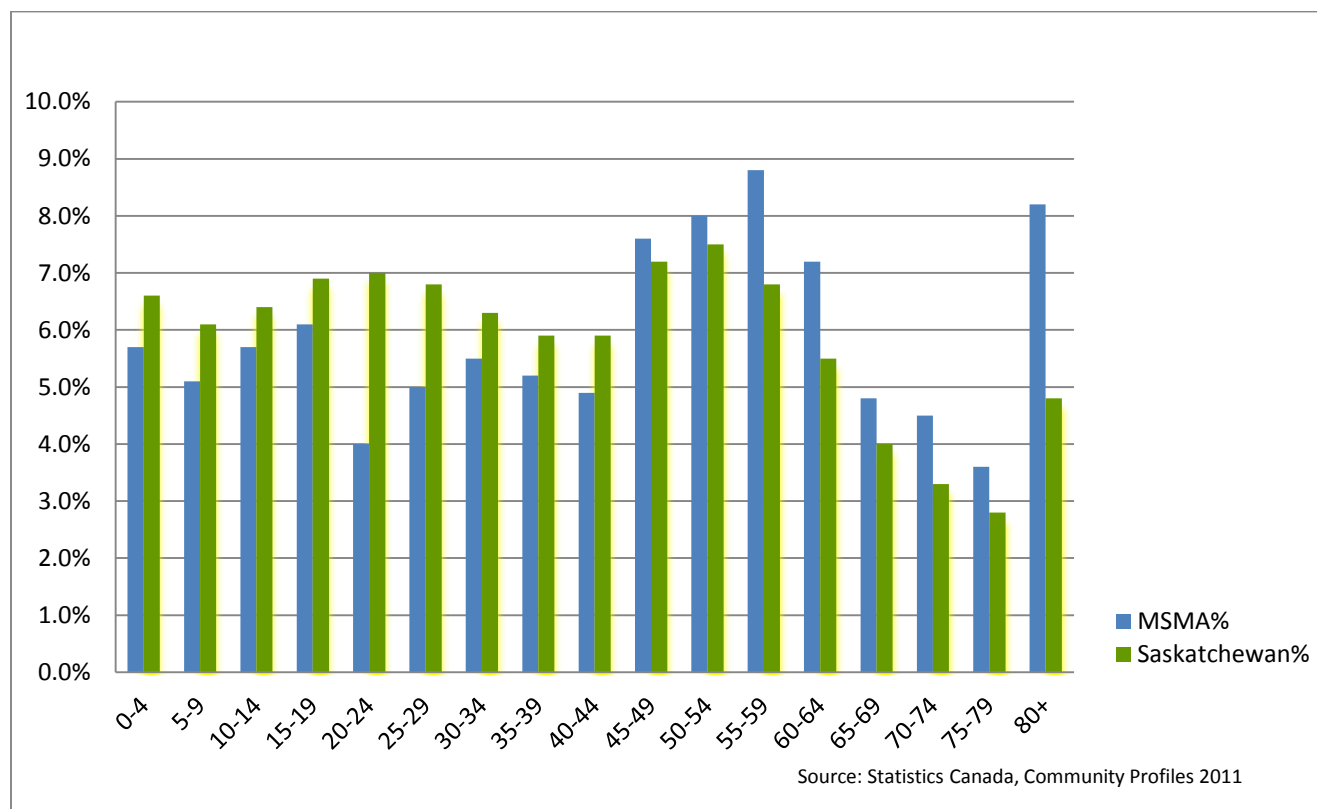
Age Groups 2011

Figure 2- MSMA and Saskatchewan Age Composition Comparison by Percentage–2011 offers a ‘point-in-time’ comparison of the MSMA District and the provincial population.

The largest population groups in the MSMA are in the mid 40 to late 50 age range, i.e. 45-49, 50-54 and 55-59. Another significant age grouping is the ‘80 plus’ cohort. While some general similarities exist between the MSMA and the provincial population age composition, two key differences are evident: One is in the younger age ranges, e.g. 20-24, 25-29. The relatively small group numbers in the MSMA District may suggest that this younger working age segment of the population is not remaining to live and work in their home communities. This underscores the need to explore ways of retaining this vital group of people.

A second difference between the province and the MSMA is in the 60+ age groups, but particularly in the 80+ category. The MSMA District generally has an older population than the province as a whole. Consideration to the needs of this aging population should be emphasized by the MSMA.

Figure 2 MSMA Regional Population – Age Composition 2011



Accommodation

As part of the review to determine the availability of lots, housing development projects and perceived housing issues, a questionnaire was circulated among the MSMA members in 2010. The responses to that questionnaire – some of which were received in 2010, and others more recently, in 2011 – are summarized in **Table 2 – MSMA Survey of Lot Availability, Residential Development, and Housing Issues**.

The results of the survey suggest that lot inventories and development activity varies from community to community. At the same time, a general picture emerges regarding the housing issues in the MSMA: more rental accommodation is needed and there is significant concern about meeting the needs of an aging population.

Table 2 MSMA Survey of Lot Availability, Residential Development, and Housing Issues

Community	Available Residential Lots	Residential Development	Housing Issues – Existing & Anticipated
Village of Drake	3	—	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Possibility of Village expansion if lagoon expands ● Possible pressure from BHP Billiton growth
Village of Jansen	13	10 lots can be developed by Village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Seniors living ● Rental need ● Assisted living ● Potential as a camp site for workers (BHP Billiton)
Town of Lanigan	20	22 lots to be developed by Town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lot size choice ● Health care for aging population ● Need for seniors housing complex
Town of LeRoy	6	34 lot subdivision underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Need for rental units ● Aging population needs, especially health care facilities
Town of Nokomis	50 (& 2 commercial)	—	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assisted living for seniors
Town of Watrous	8 (5-6 available)	Potential for 50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack of affordable single family units ● Need for rental units of various types ● Seniors housing ● Trouble keeping up with demand for lots
Town of Watson	53 (10 commercial)	—	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Day care ● Seniors condominium units
Resort Village of Manitou Beach	24	—	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack of rental units ● Need for affordable dwellings ● Lack of accessible units for elderly and physically handicapped
Rural Municipality of LeRoy	—	—	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● More rural subdivisions anticipated ● Need to consider ‘clustered’ approach ● Important to decide on development locations ● Compatibility of uses an important consideration
Rural Municipality of Morris	—	—	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack of housing ● Development exceeding 4 parcels per quarter section require Council approval




Choice and availability of housing types varies across the District. A survey of the MSMA's urban communities revealed that the predominant form of housing in the Region is single detached homes. At the same time there is a limited availability of rental housing (**Table 3 – Rental and Owned Housing in the MSMA Region 2006**). Ultimately the most important consideration will be to anticipate and predict growth scenarios and offer potential customers choice with respect to both pricing and accommodation type. Consideration may need to extend to offering other housing forms (e.g. acreages/country residential forms if this is warranted)

Table 3 Rental and Owned Housing in the MSMA Region 2006*

Municipality	Total Private Dwellings	Owned	Rented	Average Value of Owned Dwellings
RM of Leroy #339	205	190	20	\$ 73,824.00
RM of Prairie Rose #309	115	110	0	\$ 84,016.00
RM of Osborne #310	220	190	35	\$ 57,037.00
RM of Morris #312	135	115	20	\$ 100,225.00
Town of Lanigan	510	390	120	\$ 75,753.00
Town of Leroy	175	145	25	\$ 41,679.00
Town of Nokomis	200	160	35	\$ 55,340.00
Town of Watrous	760	620	140	\$ 85,498.00
Town of Watson	315	220	90	\$ 56,710.00
Resort Village of Manitou Beach	115	110	10	\$ 130,841.00
Village of Drake	100	80	25	\$ 41,429.00
Village of Jansen	75	65	0	\$ 28,621.00
TOTAL	2925	2395	520	-

Source: Statistics Canada Community Profiles, 2006 and 2001.

Value Range:

25,000 - 50,000	
51,000 - 80,000	
81,000 - 150,000	

*At the time of preparation of this report, the earliest available data for housing information was from the 2006 Census.

A sample survey of typical real estate listings in July 2011 suggests that there is a wide range of house prices available in the District. This is desirable in that it offers potential buyers significant choice in affordability (*Table 4 – Sample of Listed House Prices in the MSMA District*). Although no comparison of house prices over time has been made, it is assumed that there has been considerable appreciation of price over the past few years. This is anticipated to continue particularly if demand for housing occurs in concert with anticipated growth of the local economy. At the same time, when measured against similar prices in larger urban centres (e.g. Saskatoon,) the house prices in the District appear reasonable.

Table 4 Sample of Listed House Prices in the MSMA District

Location	Type	Year Built	Square Feet	Price
Town of Lanigan	Single Family	1913	1595	\$65,000.00
	Single Family	1910	1196	\$70,000.00
	Single Family	1923	1455	\$140,000.00
	Single Family	1977	1136	\$182,000.00
	Single Family	1965	1412	\$236,000.00
Town of Watrous	Single Family	N/A	800	\$47,500.00
	Single Family	1930	828	\$109,900.00
	Single Family	N/A	1200	\$144,500.00
	Single Family	1972	1036	\$227,000.00
	Single Family	N/A	2340	\$335,000.00
Town of Nokomis	Single Family	1955	972	\$73,000.00
	Single Family	1965	1056	\$90,000.00
Town of LeRoy	Single Family	1953	1152	\$79,000.00
	Single Family	1978	864	\$129,000.00
Village of Jansen	Single Family	1972	900	\$79,900.00
Resort Village of Manitou Beach	Single Family	N/A	N/A	\$87,500.00
	Cottage	N/A	N/A	\$99,900.00
	Cottage	N/A	N/A	\$118,900.00
	Single Family	N/A	N/A	\$159,900.00
	Single Family	2008	N/A	\$279,900.00

Source: MLS Listings, Watrous Realty (watrousreality.com), Royal LePage (www.royallepage.ca), Lanigan Real Estate, Homes Pointz (homespointz.com); Listings for June 30th, July 7th, 2011

C.2 A Changing Environment

Several trends are apparent in the MSMA District. In part, these mirror what is happening provincially or in different parts of the province.

A Changing Economy

The importance of minerals has had an impact on the District. Growth of the potash industry in the province has been robust due largely to the increase of that commodity's price. The value of potash sales in Saskatchewan has surged from \$2.6 Billion in 2005 to \$5.6 billion in 2010⁵. This has created a stimulus for new mining operations and the District will clearly be a beneficiary from an economic perspective, when the Jansen mine opens. At the same time, by offering more attractive wages and benefits, the opportunities offered by mining employment may be at the expense of the rural economy.

The Lanigan potash mine created opportunities for services. The impact of the mining economy expansion in the District should create additional opportunities. This includes opportunities for commercial, manufacturing and other services that are commensurate with a larger work force. The District's response should be to capture these opportunities as much as possible. There will also be a need to ensure that a variety of social services – health, education etc., are also sufficient to meet the anticipated needs of the workforce and their families.



Population Change

The MSMA District has experienced an overall population gain of 2.6% between 2006 and 2011. The growth has occurred almost entirely in the urban areas of the District. The rural municipalities have seen a corresponding population loss. In order to continue to attract more residents – particularly to the RMs – and retain existing ones in the District, there is a need to lay a foundation of services and opportunities. The policies that are presented in subsequent chapters will speak to this.

Taking Action and A Growing Sense of “Togetherness”

The decision to band together, to form the MSMA and to deal with the vagaries of an unknown future is an important action. Where municipalities have typically acted alone when confronted with major events affecting their communities, the MSMA has taken a dramatic and positive step forward by confronting its issues collectively.

⁵ “Economic Indicators, Saskatchewan”, Economic Review 2010 No. 64, Saskatchewan Bureau of Statistics”

D. DISTRICT ISSUES, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The issues challenges and opportunities of the MSMA region have been addressed in this section of the District Plan by reviewing the background information relating to the municipalities themselves, by incorporating the list of issues/challenges and opportunities noted by the MSMA membership in their Action Plan, and by including the commentary received through the public consultation process conducted in the summer of 2011. It is noteworthy to point out that while the suggested opportunities differed to some degree, the issues and challenges identified through these three approaches were remarkably similar.

D.1 MSMA Issues, Challenges and Opportunities

In 2010, working with the staff of the Municipal Capacity Development Program (MCDP), the members of the MSMA developed an Action Plan which included an identification of issues, challenges and opportunities within its region. These were noted as follows.

D.1.1 Issues and Challenges

Housing

- Availability of affordable housing in the district
- Assessment of housing needs required i.e. types of housing, amount, etc.
- Contractors/house builders needed

Infrastructure

- Improvements to and maintenance of infrastructure facilities needed i.e. sewer/water/roadways
- Need to harmonize approach to servicing agreements i.e. agreements with developers within the District
- Need to develop and harmonize transportation agreements within the District

Services

- Education: Potential school closures will affect the quality of education in the District; concern over early hour bussing of children
- Health: There is a need for adequate health facilities and the ability to retain same; Need for additional physicians in the District



Municipal Offices, Nokomis

Development Issues

- Need to have a more consistent and standardized approach to development, By-laws (Zoning, OCPs, Building), policies, incentives
- Need to anticipate and prepare for major developments AND be prepared if these do not materialize
- Need to hire a Building Inspector to enforce bylaws

Urbanization and Population Issues

- Need action to stem loss of population migrating to larger centres
- Need to retain younger segment of population people and attract new people into the communities of the District
- Need to meet the needs of an aging population e.g. seniors housing
- It's important for the member municipalities to act collaboratively rather than competitively

D.1.2 Opportunities

The MSMA district offers many excellent opportunities that can be used to develop this region to its fullest potential. Among those that have been identified by the MSMA members are:

Rural Community/Farming

- An excellent quality of life is offered by the rural and urban municipalities of the region
- There is a need to retain the best features of this quality of life in the region

Health Care Facilities

- Working with the Health Region offers an opportunity to expand and improve access to, and the availability of, health services as well as develop case for additional services.

Housing

- Offer housing in a range of prices in the communities of the District
- The MSMA region offers housing choices

Schools

- The region has an excellent school system providing elementary, K-12, high school and college education opportunities
- It is important to ensure that the school system remains viable and continues to meet the needs of the population



Fire Hall, Village of Jansen

Attractions

- The communities of the region offer a wide variety of outdoor recreational facilities including regional parks and campgrounds, golf courses, cross country skiing as well as indoor facilities including curling, hockey, swimming, etc.
- Opportunities in arts and culture are offered in many of the communities of the MSMA.

Business/Job Opportunities

- The MSMA region offers excellent opportunities for jobs in the important agriculture and potash economies. Manufacturing and “spinoff” jobs that are related to these sectors also offer both opportunities for employment and business startup.
- The region offers opportunities for entrepreneurship. Watrous has created a unique business model in its “Million Dollar Mile”, which includes the province’s largest GM Four Line dealership.

Dealership, Watrous



Tourism/Wildlife

- The region is blessed with excellent natural and man-made tourist and wildlife attractions. Opportunities for hunting game, bird watching, fishing and related activities are available in the region.
- The unique “healing waters” of Little Manitou Lake and the related spa and beach facilities of the Resort Village of Manitou Beach have proven themselves to be an excellent assets to the region and have the potential to offer even more experiences from a tourist point of view.

Infrastructure

- The municipalities of the region have the potential to provide road, water and sewer services to accommodate future growth in the region.

D.2 Public Consultation: Issues, Challenges and Opportunities

Three community engagement meetings were conducted in the region: in Lanigan on April 4th, in Watrous on April 5th and in Watson on April 6, 2011. These towns were selected since they were the largest and were dispersed throughout the MSMA region.

The Lanigan meeting was attended by 20 people, including several MSMA Advisory Council members, a number of municipal representatives, a representative from Sagehill, a representative from BHP Billiton and a member of the local media (Lanigan Advisor). On April 5th, a second community engagement process was conducted in Watrous. Twenty-seven people were in attendance, including some members of the MSMA Advisory Council, several municipal officials, representatives from the local business community and the RM of Morris. A sizable contingent from the Town of Nokomis was also present.

A third and final public consultation process occurred in Watson on the 6th of April. This meeting had the largest attendance with 38 individuals. Attendance included representation from the

MSMA Advisory Council, a number of municipal officials, a representative from SaskWater and a relatively large representation from the LeRoy area.

The format for all 3 sessions entailed dividing the participants into small groups and discussing three main themes: a) *Creation of a vision statement and principles*, b) *Identification of regional issues* and c) *Creation of plan objectives and strategies*.

From these small group sessions and discussion of themes, a variety of issues, challenges and opportunities were derived. The principal ones are described in detail below:

D.2.1 Issues and Challenges

Population

- The population of the region is aging and its needs must be recognized.
- A declining population. How can the youth be persuaded to remain in the region? How to deal with migration into large urban areas and away from the region?
- How can people be attracted to live and work in the region?

Housing

- A need for more affordable housing in the region
- A need to consider housing for seniors
- A need to anticipate the region's housing needs

Economy

- Agriculture is vital to the economy of the region
- Potential overreliance of the economy on one sector only: potash industry
- Attracting a workforce to meet employment needs
- Availability of different services in the region's communities to attract people

Jansen Mine Site, RM of LeRoy



Health

- Healthcare services are seen as inadequate

Environment

- The environment (in general) must be adequately addressed
- Potential environmental issues around the future mine

Infrastructure

- Water quality is an issue that needs consideration
- Roadway system requires improvement and good maintenance
- Adequacy of infrastructure to support new community development

D.2.2 Opportunities

The public consultation process yielded a variety of positive suggestions for opportunities in the region. The following is a listing of these opportunities:

Population

- Exploring and finding ways and means of developing the viability of communities (will help attract immigration)
- Small town/rural lifestyle is attractive to many; active promotion of this can be a stimulus to drawing people to the district

Tourism

- Excellent and unique tourism opportunities are offered in the region –Manitou Beach, Zelma Reservoir, Quill Lakes, etc.
- Growth and expansion possibilities are available for these tourism uses
- Development opportunities related to natural environment
- Promotional efforts for tourism in the district can be enhanced

Housing

- Opportunity to create more affordable housing
- Variety in housing locations and house pricing can be pursued

Economy

- Opening of new potash mine creates significant economic impact
- Unmet opportunities to develop businesses related to agriculture, mining, tourism, education, etc.
- Emphasis on “buy local” with resultant business opportunities

Education

- Expansion of education programs at Carlton Trail Regional College, emphasizing courses and programs to meet local industry needs
- Strengthening the district school system by acting together on education issues

Sharing and Acting Co-operatively

- Opportunity for municipalities to co-operate on dealing with issues and challenges and common goals
- Utilizing a common approach to attracting businesses, seeking new residents and, retaining existing population, etc. offers greater chance of success
- Working as a unified group of communities together with the private sector (e.g. in seeking new and improved services, generates better ideas and hence greater chances of success)

E. GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES

Main Street, Watrous

This section of the Plan sets out the goals objectives and policies for the MSMA District. In addition to identifying and describing the district goals, a series of objectives and policies are presented to further define the ways and means of achieving these goals. These objectives and policies have been organized on the basis of recurring “themes” that evolved during the evaluation of the issues and challenges identified in the previous *Section D - “The District Issues, Challenges and Opportunities”*.



The principal themes that have significance to the communities and residents of the region are: Infrastructure, Housing, Health Care/Education, Development and the Economy, Population Growth, Quality of Life and Sustainability and the Environment. The objectives and policies relating to these are addressed later in this chapter.

E.1 District Goals

The following are the planning goals for the MSMA District:

- E.1.1 To develop an infrastructure system for the District communities that is cost efficient, financially prudent, and appropriate to the needs of present and future generations.
- E.1.2 To support innovation in all development projects in order to create choices in living style, affordable accommodation, opportunities for business and entrepreneurship and to strengthen and enhance the quality of life in the MSMA District.
- E.1.3 To direct growth in the region in a manner that supports the development of the economy and, at the same time, is both sustainable and respectful of the environment and the natural resources of the region.
- E.1.4 To work with appropriate public and private partners at the provincial, regional and local level to market the benefits of living, working and enjoying the recreational benefits of the region.
- E.1.5 To harmonize standards, regulations and policies across the region in order to create a common and enduring spirit of co-operation, to reduce land use conflicts between communities and to provide a regulatory environment that stimulates and supports growth.

E.2 Objectives and Policies

E.2.1 Infrastructure

E.2.1.1 Infrastructure Overview

1. The imminent development of a new potash mine by BHP Billiton and the ongoing development of other potash mines have the potential to stimulate unprecedented growth in the communities of the MSMA. This has created a need to examine the existing transportation and utility infrastructure capabilities of the District – water service, sewage disposal, landfill, and roadways. The ongoing growth of the potash industry has a timely perspective in that it provides a stimulus and opportunity for the MSMA to examine its infrastructure in unison with its partner members, not only at the same time, but from a region-wide perspective.
2. The District is served with a highway system that connects all of the municipalities of the region. Commentary received at the public consultation process and the MSMA membership indicated a need to review the overall needs of the roads in the District. The comments were related to road improvement, potential new roads and maintenance practices.
3. The rail systems of both the CPR and CNR serve the region. These include the mainline of CN, and CP's mainline and several of its branch lines. Potential expansion of the rail systems to serve the needs of the potash industry may have an impact on the roadway system or other parts of the region's infrastructure (e.g. rail crossings, drainage issues).
4. Future landfill needs may require assessment in light of potential accelerated growth in the region's communities. Emphasizing the *Reduce, Reuse, Recycle* concept in the communities is also important.
5. Water service in the communities is provided via wells and aquifers by the individual municipalities. Discussions have occurred about the possibilities of a regional water system. Cost savings through economies of scale suggest that there may be merit in pursuing this idea.
6. The ongoing costs of building, improving and maintaining roadways and utilities represent significant expenditure outlays for individual municipalities. Working as a unified group offers the MSMA greater chance for achieving success with funding agencies to meet these costs.



Financial Services, Town of Watson

E.2.1.2 Infrastructure Objectives

1. To work as a team to review and assess the infrastructure needs of the MSMA's municipalities, based on different growth assumptions, including
 - the transportation needs
 - landfill needs
 - sewer and water needs
2. To ensure that there is an infrastructure plan and implementation strategy addressing the needs of the district and its individual municipalities based on different growth assumptions.
3. To ensure that regional servicing possibilities are fully examined including regional water services and regional landfill services.
4. To keep costs of building, improving and maintaining infrastructure to a minimum and within the financial capabilities of the municipalities of the District.
5. To ensure that standards and agreements for roadways and roadway use are uniform across the District.
6. To work with appropriate partners in the provincial and federal government (and their agencies), and the private sector to seek and obtain funding and cost sharing arrangements to meet the costs associated with infrastructure construction, upgrades and maintenance.

E.2.1.3 Infrastructure Policies

1. The MSMA and its member municipalities will conduct a review of current and future infrastructure needs in anticipation of development of the BHP Billiton mine and the continuing growth of other potash mines in the area. Thereafter, the MSMA will carry out periodic reviews of the District's infrastructure needs at such intervals as deemed necessary.
2. The planning of future infrastructure will be done in concert with existing and future land use plans in order that the most efficient use is made of existing infrastructure with minimal need for extensions and new construction.
3. The MSMA and its member municipalities will examine opportunities to provide infrastructure services on a regional basis where this is determined to be both appropriate and cost efficient.
4. Where regional transportation and utility corridors are being considered, the advocating providers will be encouraged to consult with the MSMA. The MSMA will endeavour to protect the integrity of such corridors through its land use planning policies.
5. The MSMA and its member municipalities will review current standards and agreements for their respective roadway systems on a regular basis to ensure a harmonized approach to maintenance, standards and use. This policy will have most relevance to the four rural members of the MSMA.
6. The MSMA will work in partnership with relevant agencies, departments and organizations with a view to
 - a) finding the best implementation strategies and
 - b) finding cost sharing and cost saving opportunities for the upgrading and development of new infrastructure. An appropriate Transportation and Utilities

partnership team could consist of representation from MSMA, the potash industry, SaskWater, SaskPower, Saskatchewan Highways and Infrastructure, CN and CPR.

E.2.2 Housing

E.2.2.1 Housing Overview

1. Housing in the urban communities of the MSMA consists largely of single family units. Multi-family housing, while available in several of the communities, is in relatively short supply.
2. A housing survey developed and conducted through the Municipal Capacity Development Program carried out in the District communities revealed that most of the rental units were fully occupied. The creation of new employment in the District is anticipated to create a demand for rental accommodation, particularly to meet the needs of a young labour force that may initially be inclined to rent rather than buy.

Housing Facilities, Village of Drake

3. Housing needs in the District's communities will vary according to age, lifestyle, income, family size, etc. Both a growing and an aging population will therefore need to be provided with accommodation opportunities that offer choice in price, location, style, and lot size.



4. An aging population requires special housing needs. This may include affordable rental units, “aging in place” opportunities, seniors housing complexes with support facilities, proximity to amenities, etc. This important sector of the housing market needs to be addressed.
5. While there is a range of house prices, concern was raised at the public consultation process that there is a lack of affordable housing in the District.

E.2.2.2 Housing Objectives

1. To encourage and offer an assortment of housing accommodation to meet the needs of prospective buyers.
2. To meet the special needs of an aging population through the provision of appropriate and affordable housing and services.
3. To target the specific housing needs of the anticipated labour force from the potash mine expansions.
4. To encourage the development of affordable housing through municipal legislation, public/private partnerships and through programs and opportunities offered by senior governments.

5. To encourage a) the utilization of existing and unused servicing capacity, and b) the development of vacant parcels, prior to extending services for new housing development projects.
6. To encourage and widen the opportunities for creative housing and development forms as well as lifestyles in both the urban and rural communities.

E.2.2.3 Housing Policies


1. To meet the needs of existing and future residents, the OCPs and the Zoning Bylaws of the communities of the MSMA will be reviewed with a view to providing a wide variety of housing types and accommodation.
2. In order to create more opportunities for affordable housing, the standards of the Zoning Bylaws of the MSMA communities should be reviewed.
3. In addition to designating lands for such uses in their communities, the MSMA should ensure that affordable and appropriate seniors and special needs housing is provided by taking advantage of partnerships and available programs through the Saskatchewan Housing Authority and other existing municipal and provincial agencies. An example of the latter is found in the Saskatoon Health Region's Rural Health Strategy 2010 i.e. recommendation #3 *"That the Region promote the development of appropriate and affordable seniors housing options in rural municipalities including assisted living housing and personal care homes."*
4. Through its OCP and relevant municipal policies, the MSMA members will endeavour to ensure that an ongoing supply of rental units is available in their respective communities. The Rental Development Program available through the Saskatchewan Housing Authority should be included as part of this overall strategy.
5. The planning and servicing of new housing developments will take into account the locational needs of residents, particularly the need to be near shopping, health services, schools and other amenities.

6. Some of the Zoning Bylaws of the Rural Municipalities presently make provision for country residential development. To widen opportunities for housing types and lifestyles, the rural municipalities may consider designating potential areas for such uses provided:
 - i. satisfactory concept plans are first prepared for such areas
 - ii. the development projects are planned in clusters
 - iii. suitable access and servicing are available and expansion of servicing is minimal
 - iv. the locations are not on good agricultural land or on other lands that contain important resources, including wildlife habitats and environmentally sensitive areas
 - v. the sites do not compromise other existing and future land uses
 - vi. suitable distances are maintained from conflicting land uses
7. The MSMA will work with the potash industry to develop an understanding of the characteristics of future mine workforces, in order to respond with appropriate options for housing accommodation.
8. The highest priority for housing development should be assigned to those sites where services already exist and can be utilized and where housing infill is possible.

E.2.3 Health Care/Education

E.2.3.1 Health Care/Education Overview

Hospital Services, Lanigan

1. The Horizon School Division No. 205 operates elementary, K-12 and high schools in the region. Concern remains over declining enrolments and possible school closures. At the same time, there is anticipation that development and expansion of potash mining will create demand for more classrooms and retention of schools.
 
2. Educational opportunities and facilities to meet the needs of the very young are seen as limited. Inadequate daycare facilities and lack of a pre-kindergarten program have been noted as example of these limitations.
3. The regional campus of the Carlton Trail Regional College in Watrous is seen as a potential “beachhead” for expanding technical programs that could serve the needs of business and industry in the District and beyond.
4. The Saskatoon Health Region (SHR) has responsibility for providing health services to the district. Residents have expressed significant concerns about the availability of physician services in the MSMA District as well as the ability to attract and retain these professionals.

5. There is significant interest in ensuring that the District's emergency services – ambulance and fire – continue to provide a high level of service and readiness. This includes the availability of paramedics, updated equipment and-in the case of fire emergencies- a continued spirit of volunteerism.
6. The co-operation that has been exhibited in the formation of the MSMA has stimulated interest by residents in exploring possibilities of a regional approach to health, education and emergency services.



Carlton Trail Regional College, Watrous Regional Campus

E.2.3.2 Health Care/Education Objectives

1. To encourage the retention, augmentation and vitality of the schools in the MSMA District.
2. To encourage and support the development of daycare and pre-kindergarten facilities where there is demand for these, within the communities of the MSMA.
3. To explore the possibilities of expanding the curricula and programs offered by the Watrous campus of the Carlton Trail Regional College.
4. To take affirmative action and seek creative solutions in the pursuit and retention of physicians and other health related personnel to the MSMA District.
5. To take affirmative action and seek creative solutions to ensuring that appropriate and adequate health and health related facilities are provided to the residents of the MSMA.
6. To ensure that emergency services in the MSMA District are appropriately staffed and funded and that necessary equipment is available and maintained to a proper standard.
7. To explore whether a regional health, education and emergency service system may be more practical and cost efficient.

E.2.3.3 Health Care/Education Policies

1. The MSMA and its member municipalities will work with the Horizon School Division to develop an action plan to find ways of retaining the existing schools in the District. In developing its case for keeping and potentially enlarging its schools, the MSMA will endeavour to obtain supportive information on the school needs generated by the growing potash industry's workforce (see Housing Policy #7).
2. The MSMA municipalities will review appropriate municipal legislation (OCPs and Zoning Bylaws) to facilitate the development and operation of day care facilities. All such facilities will need to meet the licensing requirements of the Saskatchewan Day Care Regulations.
3. In partnership with the potash industry and local businesses, the MSMA will endeavour to determine if special skills are needed to meet the needs of local employers and whether training opportunities for such skills are available in the immediate area. The possibilities of offering training at the Watrous campus of the Carlton Trail Regional College to meet the demands of present and future employers will be explored and pursued with the College and the Ministry of Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration.

4. The MSMA will review opportunities to develop a creative program for recruiting and retaining physicians and health related personnel to the region in partnership with the Saskatoon Health Region and the Ministry of Health. As a basis for approaching these two institutions for assistance and recruitment help, the MSMA should make reference to a number of key recommendations of the SHR's Rural Health Strategy 2010:

Health Centre, Town of LeRoy



- Rec. 30: *“That the Region advocate for the Ministry of Health to develop a long term strategy to retain physicians in rural communities including targeted financial incentives for rural practice.”*
- Rec. 31: *“That the Region actively support the Ministry of Health in the development of its provincial Physician Recruitment Agency in order to recruit physicians to rural communities.”*

5. The MSMA will review partnership opportunities with the Saskatoon Health Region and the Ministry of Health to determine the health and health related facilities needs of the residents of the region, both present and future. An action plan to meet these needs will be developed. As a basis for approaching the SHR and the Ministry, the MSMA should address the anticipated population growth generated by the potash mine growth and the relevant recommendations of the SHR's Rural Health Strategy 2010 relating to "Physical Infrastructure," "Rural Facility-Based Services," "Rural Health Planning and Delivery."
6. In collaboration with appropriate partners the MSMA municipalities will endeavour to ensure that funding and resources are available to operate the District's emergency services effectively. The MSMA will work in partnership with the Saskatoon Health Region in seeking additional emergency medical services as needed, and offering the municipalities of the MSMA to be used for the pilot Mobile EMS Health Services project as contemplated in the recommendations of the Rural Health Strategy 2010.
7. In consultation with, and participation of the appropriate provincial and regional health, education, and emergency measures agencies, the MSMA should review and consider whether the provision of such services may be operated more efficiently and economically on a District basis.

E.2.4 Development and the Economy

Development and the economy generated the greatest number and widest variety of comments and suggestions during the public consultation process. The objectives and policies listed in this section speak to the diversity of ideas offered for this significant component of the Plan.

E.2.4.1 Development and the Economy Overview

Agriculture and Agribusiness: The agriculture industry – particularly grain and oilseed production - represents the single most important economic activity in the MSMA region. Although smaller in scale, cattle ranching and the operation of intensive livestock operations (ILOs) are also significant contributors to the overall agricultural "picture." In addition, there is growing potential for spinoff into agribusinesses, some of which already are flourishing in the MSMA area. All of these examples underscore the importance of keeping this industry viable and protecting the land that supports it.

Mining Resources: The presence of major potash deposits in this area of east central Saskatchewan has created an industry that has emerged as a key economic player in the region. It has not only been a significant creator of jobs, but it has helped to diversify the economy. One major potash mine – run by Potash Corp – already operates near Lanigan. BHP Billiton's Jansen project is anticipated to be in production in 2015 and have an estimated life span of 70 years. The company has estimated a workforce of nearly 2000 during the construction phase and approximately 1000 operational employees once full capacity is reached. If captured, the potential economic rewards to the District can be immense.

Sand and Gravel Quarries: Sand and gravel are resources that are particularly important to road building and road maintenance operations. The regulation of quarries – exploration permits, leases and reclamation efforts – is a provincial jurisdiction. However the operational impacts on municipalities can be significant especially where land use conflicts occur. Although deposits in the MSMA region appear to be small, policies to address such impacts are warranted.

Tourism and Recreation Resources: The district offers much in the way of recreation and tourism. The municipalities of the MSMA include facilities that serve campers, golfers as well as municipal recreation users. At the same time the natural and man-made environments of the district provide unique tourism and recreation opportunities. These have been cited earlier and include, among others, the attractions offered by the beaches and spa at the Resort Village of Manitou Beach, the Zelma reservoir, Quill Lakes and the many other locations utilized for hunting game, bird watching and fishing. The further development, enhancement and marketing of these resources can add significantly to the overall economy of the region.

Development Commercial / Industrial: Industries and business play an important role not only as providers of jobs but in offering services to the residents and visitors to the District. Businesses related to serving the needs of the agriculture and potash industry have developed in the communities of the MSMA. Opportunities to allow expansion of existing operations and to offer suitable locations for new industrial and commercial businesses through appropriate land use regulations, policies and capacity building are essential for such businesses to achieve success.

Development Construction: There is a shortage of contractors, builders and trades in the MSMA. Attractions to larger centres are contributing to this shortage. This should be seen as an opportunity for individuals seeking to open construction-related businesses and other services in the communities of the MSMA.

Development Harmonization: Many of the urban municipalities play an important role in servicing and providing lots for sale in the community. This provides opportunity for coordinating lot development as well as developing common approaches to regulations, servicing agreements, pricing and marketing.

Diversification: With the addition of the BHP Billiton mine and the continued expansion of other potash mines, the District will have added diversity to the economy of the region. At the same time reliance on resource-based industries – minerals and agriculture - has some element of risk given unpredictability of world economies. It is important therefore to continue to seek additional opportunities for economic diversification.

Touchwood Trail, RM of Prairie Rose



Promotion and Attraction: The business opportunities that will be created by the future growth of the MSMA District may not be fully understood or appreciated in other parts of the province and beyond. Marketing and promoting these opportunities can be an important factor in achieving the MSMA's economic objectives.

Partnerships: The relevance of partnerships has already been noted in a number of policies in this District Plan. The chances of developing the full economic potential of the region can be increased significantly by seeking partnership and cost sharing opportunities with businesses, private and public agencies and senior governments.

E.2.4.2 Development and the Economy Objectives

Canola Crop, RM of Morris

1. To encourage and support farming operations in the District.
2. To endeavour, to the extent possible, to protect lands that are used, and may be intended to be used for extensive and intensive agriculture.
3. To work closely with the potash industry in order to develop a positive and ongoing relationship that is mutually beneficial to the MSMA and potash companies.
4. To encourage and support projects that may enhance or add value to the operations of the potash industry and at the same time create benefit to the municipalities of the MSMA.
5. To ensure protection and appropriate utilization of sand and gravel resources.
6. To encourage the development and expansion of a diverse tourist industry that contributes to the economy and enjoyment of the region.
7. To ensure that municipal planning regulations and policy provide for existing industry and business to expand and for new business and industry to develop and locate within designated areas of the MSMA. Applicants for development should encounter regulations that are both positive and welcoming to business and industry.
8. To support and encourage creativity, innovation and diversity in the development of new business and industry in the MSMA, through municipal regulation and policy.
9. To co-ordinate MSMA efforts to target, attract and retain services of the building, development and contracting sector.
10. To attract building code personnel to meet the present and future enforcement needs of the municipalities of the MSMA.
11. To ensure that zoning and related bylaws, policies and approaches to development in the MSMA region are complementary to and coordinated with, one another.



12. To consider an approach to promoting and marketing the opportunities, possibilities and attractions of the MSMA region.
13. To consider establishing permanent and “ad hoc” partnerships with business, industry, the public and private sector and senior levels of government for the purpose of both stimulating and sharing the costs of growth.

E.2.4.3 Development and the Economy Policies

Agriculture Resources:

1. Official Community Plans and Zoning Bylaws of the MSMA shall encourage the continued operation of extensive and intensive agricultural operations in the District. Consideration will be given to permitting innovative and diverse agricultural-related activities and services including processing, marketing and the sale of such services and activities. Food processing, related home occupations and agritourism (i.e. attracting visitors and travellers to farms for educational and recreational purposes) are some examples.
2. Existing farming operations shall be protected from non-agricultural land uses that may undermine the viability and success of these operations. Where a proposed use or activity appears to infringe or have a negative impact on farming, the municipality may disallow such a use or activity.
3. Expansion of urban communities and proposals for non-agricultural uses on lands that are deemed to have good capability for agriculture use should generally be avoided. In circumstances where a municipality is surrounded entirely by lands with good agricultural capability, or where the municipality determines that there are extenuating circumstances, favourable consideration may be given for urban expansion and development proposals by the municipality.
4. The expansion of existing Intensive Livestock Operations and proposals for new operations shall be encouraged by the Official Community Plans and Zoning Bylaws of the rural municipalities of the MSMA provided
 - a. the locations are on lands designated by the Official Community Plans,
 - b. the sites are capable of supporting intensive livestock operations, including having sufficient land area and minimal environmental impact,
 - c. the development and ongoing operation of the Intensive Livestock Operations meet and conform to the applicable provincial regulations.
5. The Zoning Bylaws shall ensure that minimal distances and setbacks are maintained between intensive livestock operations and other uses that are deemed to be incompatible, particularly residential areas and areas intended for residential use. Minimum distances should take into account the possibility of expansion of existing operations.

Mineral Resources:

6. Through its Zoning Bylaws, the MSMA will ensure that mining and related resource operations are protected and are able to expand as needed, by not allowing inappropriate uses near such operations.
7. Infrastructure services, and related activities, including the location and installation of pipelines intended to serve the needs of mining and related resource operations shall be located and developed in a manner that causes minimal disruption and impact on the community.
8. The MSMA is encouraged to form a partnership and ongoing mutually beneficial relationship with the potash industry in order to
 - allow the MSMA to become aware of any relevant changes to, and requirements of, mining projects, as they occur.
 - develop an understanding of the needs and characteristics of the workforce of the potash mines operating, and intending to operate in the District, in order that the MSMA's municipalities may respond adequately and in a timely way to meet the appropriate needs of the employees and the company.
 - allow the potash companies to become aware of any significant planning decisions that the MSMA municipalities are considering and that may have an impact on the operations of the mines.

Sand and Gravel Quarries

9. Proposals for sand and gravel operations within the MSMA shall be required to meet all provincial regulations respecting exploration, operational activities, and reclamation. Additionally, the proponents for the development of quarry operations shall submit, to the affected municipality, an evaluation of the impacts that the operations are expected to have on surrounding land uses, roadways etc. and the steps that will be taken by the quarry operator to reduce such impacts.

Where new subdivision is proposed in any area that has the potential for sand and gravel extraction, Council will ensure that land uses do not preclude the development of, or restrict access to the potential for quarrying.

Tourism and Recreation Resources:

10. The MSMA will review the opportunities to develop and expand its tourist base. It will work with provincial authorities and public and private organizations to explore innovative possibilities (e.g. circle tours) for initiating, financing, enhancing and developing tourism for the MSMA District.
11. The MSMA will assess the potential for developing and/or enhancing regional recreation and tourism facilities services that will serve the residents and at the same time, attract visitors to the MSMA District.
12. The MSMA should ensure that the procedures for the acquisition of recreation lands are carried out in a consistent manner and that the distribution of future recreation areas meets the needs of the MSMA District as a whole.

Commercial/Industrial:

13. Commercial and industrial uses will be permitted in both urban and rural communities of the MSMA District. Although no specific areas are designated for commercial and industrial use in the rural areas, these land uses should be located in accord with criteria that include appropriate access, servicing and consideration to surrounding land uses. The range of uses could include processing, manufacturing, storage and related retail.
14. Industrial uses that are characterized as “nuisance industries” (i.e. industries that generate significant noise, smell, heavy traffic, etc.) shall be subject to uniform standards across the MSMA District including but not limited to parcel sizes, separation distances from non-compatible uses and compliance with hazardous waste regulations (where applicable) of the province and the federal government.
15. Zoning Bylaws should be reviewed to ensure that the development of commercial and industrial uses is generally attractive and of a good appearance. The standards for appearance should be uniform across the MSMA District.

Grain Elevators, Nokomis Area



Development Opportunities:

16. The MSMA is encouraged to work to attract builders and contractors to its communities through a collective marketing approach. It should cite the potential for significant business opportunity that will be generated as a result of the Jansen mine development.
17. The MSMA should review the need for additional building code personnel to meet the anticipated requirements for new regulatory and enforcement responsibilities in the region.
18. To the extent permitted by provincial legislation, the MSMA is encouraged to explore the possibility of a property tax sharing arrangement among its member municipalities. This would offset the revenue advantage that new development will create by locating

in one municipality at the perceived expense of another. Tax revenue sharing from potash mine assessments, as provided under the Municipal Tax Sharing (Potash) Act should also be pursued.

Development Harmonization and Co-ordination:

19. The OCPs, Zoning Bylaws and related regulations and policies of the MSMA municipalities will be reviewed to ensure that:
 - they complement one another
 - they are positive and encouraging in supporting community growth and development
 - there is general uniformity of standards within the MSMA District

Where proposals for growth and development (e.g. zoning changes, discretionary use applications, other growth/expansion projects, etc.) made in one municipality are adjacent or in close proximity to another municipality, the affected municipalities shall consult with one another to ensure that such proposals are compatible with the needs of each.

Diversification, Promotion and Attraction

20. The MSMA is encouraged to develop an economic development position that will serve the needs of the MSMA District by promoting it, marketing it and seeking out opportunities for more diversity in the economy.

Partnerships

21. The MSMA is encouraged to maintain its collaborative spirit among its members and review opportunities for coordinating municipal services, coordinating major equipment purchases, etc.
22. The MSMA is encouraged to work in partnership with the private and public sector whenever it is opportune to do so and where opportunity exists to strengthen the economy and add vitality to the District.

E.2.5 Population Growth

E.2.5.1 Population Growth Overview

1. The Statistics Canada Census data for 2011 indicates that the decline in population that occurred between 2001-2006 in the MSMA District has been reversed. At the same time the reversal has largely been experienced in the District's urban municipalities, not in the rural ones. The decline in rural population however, is not unique to the District. The shift from rural to urban has occurred and continues to occur across many parts of North American and indeed, the world.
2. Rural population decline is attributable to a number of factors including "brain drain" – students leaving for higher education and not returning – an aging population and economic distress i.e. lack of employment opportunity. While the MSMA has experienced these events, the possibility of reversing these "decline factors" has risen considerably given the imminent development of the Jansen mine.

3. Population forecasts are an important element in helping to determine the amount of land to be allocated for various uses in a community. In circumstances where populations are small and may be declining, traditional forecasting methods do not work well. In the case of the MSMA, the best forecast approach is deemed to be an estimate of population growth generated by the economic impact of the Jansen mine development.
4. While population figures are anticipated to turn positive for communities of the MSMA due to the BHP Billiton project, the importance of other components of the economy in attracting and retaining population have been noted earlier in this Plan. These include the ongoing growth and expansion of manufacturing, tourism and the potash mines operating in the District.
5. The Government of Saskatchewan has developed strategies to stimulate economic growth and immigration to the province. One of the key elements of the Strategies and Actions identified for 2011-12 by the Ministry of Advance Education, Employment and Immigration is its immigration strategy intended to attract and retain newcomers to the province. The strategy includes the Saskatchewan Immigrant Nominee Program (SINP) a joint effort by the provincial and federal governments and participating employers to attract "...skilled workers, employers and their families..." These programs are timely as the MSMA prepares its own policies and strategies for growth.



E.2.5.2 Population Growth Objectives

1. To explore creative ways and means of stemming population loss in the MSMA District, particularly the loss of the younger age segment.
2. To assess the resources and the unique assets of the region and the skills of its people with a view to utilizing these to attract residents to the communities of the MSMA.
3. To use the collective strength of the MSMA to explore and successfully pursue government programmes that promote immigration and provide assistance in retaining populations in smaller communities.

E.2.5.3 Population Growth Policies

1. The MSMA is encouraged to establish a committee the sole purpose of which would be to explore ways of attracting new residents and retaining existing ones to the District. Some successful approaches in other locales have included:

- Offering incentives, including low prices for town-developed residential lots
- Seeking financial assistance to invest in improving or developing the District's unique recreation opportunities
- Organizing specialized annual festivals or events that may initially draw tourists but potentially stimulate interest in residing in the District.



Welcome Sign, Manitou Beach

2. The MSMA will work collectively to pursue applicable funding and partner with senior levels of government to participate in pilot programmes that are intended to attract and sustain new immigration.

E.2.6 Quality of Life and Public Safety

E.2.6.1 Quality of Life and Public Safety Overview

1. The public process determined that the residents of the MSMA District have strong feelings about protecting the quality of life values of their communities: friendliness, a slower pace of life, a “small town” feel, a spirit of cooperation and volunteerism.
2. The community expressed the view that safety and security are important elements of life quality. It was suggested that these elements should be given greater consideration if significant growth occurs in the municipalities.



Park, Town of LeRoy

E.2.6.2 Quality of Life and Public Safety Objectives

1. To support those elements that contribute to the, social, educational, cultural and recreational needs and desires of the residents of the MSMA communities.
2. To support, to the extent possible, residents, volunteer organizations, community groups, and other organizations, both private and public, in the pursuit of proposals or ideas that may improve the quality of life of its citizens.
3. To support those elements that contribute to the health, safety and security of the residents of the MSMA communities.

E.2.6.3 Quality of Life and Public Safety Policies

1. The MSMA will endeavour to review its quality of life assets, and where appropriate, will pursue available grants and funding that contribute positively, both directly and indirectly, to the quality of life and well-being of its citizens, including grants for arts, culture, education and social programs.
2. The MSMA will be supportive of initiatives from the community that seek to enrich the overall well-being of the community, its neighbourhoods and its residents.
3. The MSMA will assess opportunities to collaborate with community and volunteer groups, public and private entities and other relevant organizations, to initiate and/or enhance projects and services that will contribute to the well-being of its residents and visitors.
4. The MSMA will consider - through its OCPs and Zoning Bylaws - requiring all proposed major developments and redevelopments to be assessed as to their impact on the quality of life of its citizens.
5. Through this policy and other relevant policies outlined in this District Plan, the MSMA will review its facilities and services as they apply to health, safety and security – policing, fire protection, ambulance service, building standards and inspection, emergency planning- and endeavour to improve these to the extent possible and reasonable. The MSMA will take advantage of such assistance as may be available from relevant government ministries and agencies in pursuing this objective.

E.2.7 Sustainability and the Environment

E.2.7.1 Sustainability and the Environment Overview

1. The MSMA District is possessed with important wildlife habitats, potentially important heritage sites, good agricultural soils, shore lands and water bodies that offer significant recreational, economic, conservation and interpretive opportunities. Areas of aspen woodland also occur in parts of the District, although the area is generally void of forested areas. The District also includes areas that are susceptible to flooding and unsuitable for certain types of development due to topographic and biophysical constraints. Sustainable practices and protection of the environment are important objectives that will need to address these issues.
2. Water is a precious resource for the residents of the MSMA. Policies to protect this important resource are essential.
3. Sustainability represents an important philosophy based on the wise use of limited resources in order that future generations will still have access to such resources. The public consultation process raised a concern that sustainability should not be overlooked at expense of the principal focus – the development of the Jansen mine. The imminent growth prospects of the MSMA District offer opportunities to consider growth from a sustainability perspective.

E.2.7.2 Sustainability and the Environment Objectives

1. To promote sustainability practices in the communities of the MSMA, including best management practices in agriculture, business and the public sector.
2. To promote sustainability practices in the planning and development of new areas, and in areas proposed for redevelopment.
3. To protect areas with significant wildlife habitats and heritage sites.
4. To protect areas with significant heritage sites.
5. To protect watersheds and aquifer areas, particularly those that are used for, or may potentially be used for, domestic water supply in the MSMA District.
6. To reduce risk from flooding.



7. To protect areas that may be environmentally sensitive or contain hazard lands, from inappropriate development.
8. To protect shore lands and water bodies.

E.2.7.3 Sustainability and Environment Policies

1. To encourage the residents, businesses, and organizations in the MSMA communities to adapt sustainable practices in their operations and lifestyles. The municipalities of the MSMA will provide leadership by ensuring that renovations to municipal buildings, new municipal structures and municipal services and operations take into account sustainability principles.
2. The MSMA will encourage and be supportive of new development and redevelopment projects that a) are consistent with the District OCP's and b) incorporate sustainability principles to the planning and development of these projects including, but not limited to lot orientation, mixed uses, "cluster" developments and building applications such as "LEED" (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design). These applications include the use of energy efficient materials and appliances, use of locally produced and recycled materials, landscaping appropriate to the local climate, reduced use of water, locally generated energy and heat, etc.
3. The MSMA will support the identification of significant wildlife habitats, heritage sites, hazard lands and environmentally sensitive areas. The MSMA will encourage member municipalities to seek the assistance of the appropriate provincial departments and relevant organizations (e.g. Ducks Unlimited) in carrying out these evaluations.

Sustainable Environment, RM of LeRoy

4. The OCPs and Zoning Bylaws of the MSMA municipalities will ensure that any developments proposed on or near wildlife habitats, heritage sites, hazard lands and environmentally sensitive areas shall include statements from the proponents to demonstrate why such developments should be considered favourably and the steps that will be taken to protect the respective resource. The MSMA municipalities may require the provision of appropriate tests, reports and other material from qualified experts in the evaluation of such proposals. Where "traditional development" may not be deemed appropriate, such lands may be considered for public open space.
5. The MSMA will ensure that land uses and activities do not jeopardize aquifers that are used for municipal water supplies. Any activities that may be deemed to be hazardous and have potential to infiltrate the aquifers shall not be permitted. Advice from appropriate professionals should accompany any proposals for development within a specified distance.



6. With appropriate assistance of the Water Security Agency of Saskatchewan, other relevant agencies, and/or consultants, the MSMA will endeavour to define the land areas that are susceptible to flood hazards and the measures that may be taken to reduce flooding impact in the MSMA District.
7. The OCP's and Zoning Bylaws of the District will recognize and respect the provincial 1:500 flood hazard level for development and ensure that the provincial safe building elevation for development is adhered to. The OCPs and Zoning Bylaws will also specify the limitations and standards for development on lands that are susceptible to flooding and/or deemed to be hazard lands. Lands deemed to be hazardous or flood prone may be dedicated as environmental reserve if subdivision occurs on such lands.
8. With appropriate assistance of the Water Security Agency of Saskatchewan, other relevant agencies and/or consultants, the MSMA may set policies with respect to development near shore lands and water bodies. The OCPs and Zoning Bylaws of the District municipalities may provide for more specific uses and limitations for these areas.

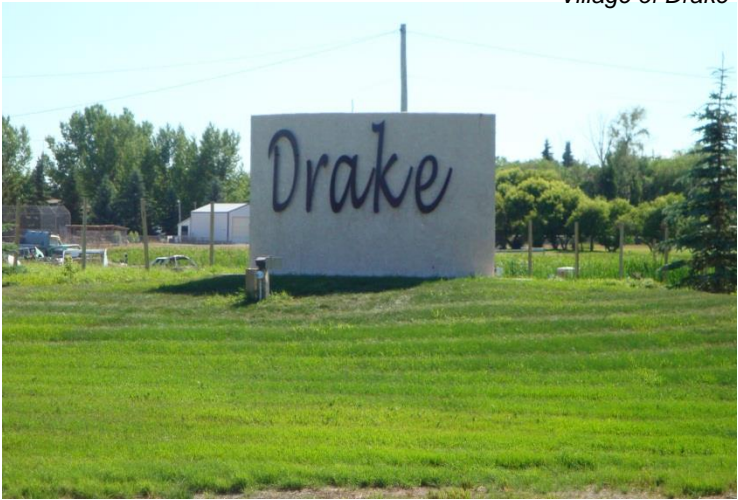
F. DISTRICT PLANNING STRATEGY

This section of the MSMA District Plan proposes strategies, actions and priorities for the future growth and development of the MSMA region over the next 20 years. The basis for these strategies lies with the objectives and policies that have been discussed and presented earlier. In defining a future pattern of generalized land uses and accompanying policies, the District Planning Strategy recognizes the MSMA District’s many opportunities offered to businesses, visitors and prospective residents and employees. These opportunities not only crisscross the entire District but can be found in the unique offerings of each MSMA municipality. The Plan’s strategies seek to develop these opportunities in the best manner possible by:

- the wise utilization and protection of the MSMA District’s resources
- enhancing and strengthening the economic opportunities where their full potential has yet to be realized
- recognizing the importance of the environment, the social wellbeing, education and health needs of the residents, both present and future, to create a better quality of life in the MSMA District.

F.1 Future Development Pattern

A key component of the District Planning Strategy is the future development pattern of the District i.e. a broad based policy approach that sets out the optimal growth direction for the lands under the jurisdiction of the MSMA. The future development pattern is based on the policies presented in Section E of this Plan and covers the key themes that have been discussed in that section of the report.



Village of Drake

In addition to the District or regional perspective, the future development pattern also proposes key strategies and actions for the rural and urban areas within the MSMA District. **Section F.1.2 Urban and Rural Strategy**, below, identifies the roles that the communities should play in implementing the District Plan.

In order to provide guidance on the relative importance of the strategies and actions that are included in this section of the District Plan, priorities have also been included. (See **Figure 3 - Recommended Key Strategies, Actions and Priorities for the Growth and Development of the MSMA District**).

The priorities assigned to each strategy are based on a three scale rating system: low, medium and high. Each strategy and subsequent priority rating was determined on the basis of the comments provided by the members of the MSMA and the input received during the public consultation process.

As the MSMA and its member municipalities proceed to implement the policies and strategies of this document, these rankings should be reviewed to ensure that they continue to reflect the MSMA's priorities.

F.1.1 District Plan Strategy

The proposed pattern of land uses depicted in *Map 5 Future Land Uses MSMA District* is based on the objectives and policies presented in *Section E* of this District Plan - *Goals Objectives and Policies*. The recommendations presented in this District Plan Strategy therefore complement these goals objectives and policies, and should be read in context with them. More specific strategies relating to the District Plan Strategy are presented in more detail in the Urban and Rural Strategy segment of this Plan.

Resources: Agriculture and Mineral

The MSMA District relies heavily on the agricultural economy. Protecting the soil resource base and ensuring that it is available for future production is therefore a fundamental tenet of this Plan. Mining is also an important factor in the District's economy. And, while the control of mining and other resource development is largely a provincial responsibility, the MSMA has an important role in ensuring that such activities are protected to ensure maximum benefit to the District and at the same time, making certain that such operations create minimal negative impacts on their municipalities.



Lands that are used or intended to be used for farming practice – both intensive and extensive- and lands that are identified as having high capability for agriculture are identified as Agriculture Use (*Map 5 Future Land Uses MSMA District*). The lands so designated include lands that have high capability rankings for agriculture (classes 1-3, Canada Land Inventory) and may contain intensive livestock operations. Agriculture Transition comprises lands of lower ranking agricultural ranking. A detailed list of uses and standards for the Agriculture and Agriculture Transition categories will be prescribed in the zoning bylaws of the RM's. The uses itemized below are intended to act as a guide to help define the general range of uses in each of these categories. The RM's should work together to agree on a final listing as well as establish those that should be permitted or discretionary.

Agriculture: This zone should provide for a wide range of agriculture –related uses including:

- a. farm operations e.g. dwellings and accessory buildings, extensive agriculture (field crops, pasture), related activities e.g. crop dusting, manure spreading, irrigation etc., extensive and intensive livestock operations in accord with prescribed operating standards
- b. Agritourism and agri-businesses

Nonagricultural uses that are deemed to be compatible with farming operations may also be considered. Some examples could include open spaces, recreation areas, wildlife habitat areas, etc.

Agriculture Transition : While this category includes lower quality areas of agricultural capability, many viable farms are in operation here. The uses for the Agriculture Transition zone could include:

- a. all those allowed in the Agriculture zone
- b. country residential uses in those circumstances where locational and other criteria are met (See Housing policies E.2.2.3) as defined in the Municipal OCP.

The comments relating to agricultural resources should be read in context with the Agricultural Resource Policies of this Plan (E.2.4.3).

Approval of resource extraction projects fall under the jurisdiction of senior levels of government. The location and timing of such projects can also vary across the District irrespective of land classifications, zonings etc. No specific areas have therefore been identified as suitable for resource mining. Indeed it is possible that any site in the District may become suitable given certain economic circumstances. More specific municipal strategies and actions to deal with resource mining are described in the Urban and Rural Strategy (Section F.1.2) and the Mineral Resources policies of this Plan (E.2.4.3)

The Environment

Environmental considerations embrace a variety of elements, ranging from the protection of heritage sites, wildlife habitats, and environmentally sensitive areas such as aquifer recharge areas and watersheds to defining the extent of flood and hazard land areas.

Wildlife Habitats

Known and existing wildlife habitats are identified in **Map 4 - Resources and the Environment**. Protection policies are included in Section E.2.7.3. Any new habitats that may be identified as a result of additional investigation (policy #3 in E.2.7.3) shall be added to this District Plan and shall be subject to the same policies.

Heritage Sites

No specific heritage sites are designated in this Plan. However heritage sites that may be identified as a result of investigation (Policy #3 in E.2.7.3) shall be added to the Municipal OCP and be subject to the same policies.

Crown Lands /Community Pastures

Crown lands and community pastures are identified in **Map 4 - Resources and the Environment**. Although intended primarily to support grazing needs of the livestock industry community pastures can be utilized for a multitude of uses including hunting, tourism, recreation mineral extraction, wildlife habitats, preservation of archeological and historical sites, etc. Crown lands also cover a significant portion of the MSMA region. These crown lands are administered by the Agriculture Ministry. Recently, the provincial government has initiated evaluating crown lands for their ecological value pursuant to the Wildlife Habitat Protection Act.

The land uses depicted in **Map 5 Future Land Uses MSMA District**, allocate the crown lands and community pastures as holding areas, - Provincial Agriculture/Resource Reserve Lands – with specific uses to be established after provincial ministries can provide information on more definitive uses.

Flooding, Hazard Lands, Environmentally Sensitive Areas

General areas of flood risk are identified in **Map 3 Water Drainage and Flood Risk**. These are shown as Hazard Lands in **Map 5 Future Land Uses MSMA District**. In accord with the Sustainability and Environment policies of this District Plan (E.2.7.3) more definitive investigation of areas prone to flooding, hazard lands and environmentally sensitive areas will be carried out and appropriate action taken to ensure their protection and/or exclusion from development.

Country Residential

Some areas of the District Plan may be suitable for country residential uses. The District Plan identifies a number of *potential* areas for such uses in Map 5. The Country Residential Potential areas should not necessarily be viewed as definitive sites suitable for this form of residential use. Minimally, potential country residential proposals would be required to meet the criteria that have been outlined in Section E.2.2.3 respecting housing in Rural Municipalities. Specific strategies and appropriate actions for country residential development are offered in more detail in the Urban and Rural Strategy described below and in the OCP's.

Town of Watson, Watson Museum



Town of Lanigan park



Other Elements of the District Plan Strategy

The remaining directives for growth of the District as a whole i.e. Economic Growth and Life Quality, Employment and Population Growth, Health Care/Education, Infrastructure, Housing and Infrastructure – are described in the policies of Section E, Goals, Objectives and Policies. Additionally, strategies and actions are described in more details in the next sections of the Plan.

F.1.2 Urban and Rural Strategy

This section focuses on the strategies and actions that will apply to the individual urban and rural municipalities of the MSMA as well as those that are common to both. The basis of these are the policies that have been presented earlier in this Plan and should be considered in tandem with the strategies and actions. The strategies and actions also generally follow “themes” that are present in Section E: Goals, Objectives and Policies.

Population Settlement Pattern

Section F.1.1 described the overall distribution of land uses in the District. The complementary half of the arrangement of land uses in the District is the distribution of population. Appendix ‘A’ *Employment Generation and Population Growth MSMA* provides an estimated population generation of 1365 (rounded to 1370). The potential distribution of population among the MSMA’s communities is difficult to predict. It is a function of distance to employment, availability of services, housing costs, lifestyle preferences, and a host of other factors. Therefore the District Plan has suggested four possibilities for a distribution of the estimated new population.

- a) A proportional distribution to each community. This distribution of population is based on the percentage of the MSMA population that resided in each RM, town, village or resort village in 2011. (See **Table 1 Population Change by Municipality: 2006-2011**).
- b) The second scenario is based on the assumption that a larger portion of the workforce will be drawn to the larger urban communities of the MSMA District (more explanation is provided in the section below, **Urban Strategy**.) In this example scenario, the population estimates for the RM’s were reduced by one half, and distributed equally to Lanigan and Watrous.
- c) A third scenario considers proximity to the future BHP Mine and assumes that travel distance to work will be a predominant factor in deciding on location of residence. The two closest urban municipalities to the mine are the Village of Jansen and the Town of LeRoy. The mine area also straddles the two RM’s of LeRoy and Prairie Rose. Under the “travel distance” assumption, the scenario would favour the two urban and two rural communities.
- d) Scenario four is a variant of the first scenario and assumes a proportional distribution of population to each community in the MSMA District. The principal difference is the assumption that a larger proportion of the workforce will elect to reside in communities outside of the MSMA District, i.e. up to 60 percent. The “low” estimate described in **Appendix A Employment Generation and Population Growth MSMA** has been applied in this instance, i.e. in this estimate 40% of the workers and their families will select an MSMA community in which to live.

The suggested distribution of population for the scenarios is depicted in **Table 5 Estimated Mine Population Generation for 2015 by MSMA Municipality**.

Urban Strategy

While a proportional population distribution pattern has been suggested in this District Plan, other scenarios remain possible. One of these could see the largest urban municipalities in the District benefitting most from the mine development. This may occur for a number of reasons: 1) by virtue of their size they are able to offer the largest number of services, and 2) they possess better health and school facilities. Each of the urban



areas offers advantages and possibilities for growth based on the proximity to the new mine development. Ultimately, the services that each municipality can offer will be a major determinant of where growth is likely to occur. A variety of growth scenarios are possible and two examples have been illustrated in **Table 5 Estimated Mine Population Generation for 2015 by MSMA Municipality**. Others are also clearly possible. Consequently these estimates should only be regarded as estimates.

While several specific strategies and actions are recommended for individual municipalities most are applicable to all of the urban areas. A key strategy concerns partnerships. In most instances partnership arrangements will require all of the municipalities – urban and rural- to work collaboratively to achieve success.

Rural Strategy

The rural municipalities of the MSMA are expected to benefit from additional population growth as a result of the Jansen mine development (Refer to **Table 5: Estimated Mine Population Distribution for 2015 By MSMA Municipality**). As in the case of the urban municipalities, the growth scenarios assumed for each of the RMs may ultimately differ than has been assumed. As an example, the RM's of Prairie Rose and LeRoy may be the main rural growth beneficiaries given their closer proximity to the new mine. Conversely, a case can be made that the RMs of Osborne and Morris may be the main beneficiaries given that the two largest urban communities: Lanigan and Watrous lie within their boundaries, and spillover growth will come to them.

RM of Osborne

While the growth of the mine will add to the diversity of the rural economy, agriculture will remain the principal component of that economy. The District Plan therefore places high importance on protecting this valuable resource. Indeed two of the proposed main land uses in the District (**Map 5 Future Land Uses MSMA District**) are designated as Agriculture and



Agriculture Transition both of which are intended to reasonably protect and enhance this land base and at the same time provide a wider range of opportunities to the owners and operators of farms.

Protection also is essential for the mineral resource base as well as from any adverse effects of the mining operation. Similar caution and sensible strategies and actions are essential to ensure that wildlife, heritage sites, flood hazard and environmentally sensitive areas are addressed properly.

As in the urban areas, the rural strategies and actions noted in *Figure 3 Recommended Key Strategies Actions and Priorities for the Growth and Development of the MSMA District* are generally applicable to all to the RM's and in some cases equally to both the urban and rural municipalities.

G. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION & MONITORING

The successful implementation of the District Plan will depend on several factors: legislative planning tools (discussed below), budgeting decisions, public acceptance of the District Plan, and the success of the collaborative efforts and “partnerships” (with the potash industry, provincial ministries and agencies, education and health authorities, the private sector, etc.) that are proposed in this Plan. Ultimately however, it will be the resolve of the MSMA and future Councils that will determine whether the policies and strategies are effective.

While the District Plan provides guidance for growth in the MSMA, changes in economic, social and political conditions over time, will require the Plan to respond to such changing conditions. Without such response the Plan will lose its relevance and authority. This Plan should therefore be reviewed from time to time to determine if amendments are needed, with a more comprehensive review occurring within five years. Occasionally amendments may also be initiated as a result of development proposals which will result in changes to the Plan. In all of these circumstances – amendments and comprehensive reviews - engaging the public for Plan comment and input will be mandatory.

G.1 Implementation Through Planning Legislation

Official Community Plans

The Official Community Plans provide general overarching policies to guide the growth of the individual municipalities of the MSMA. The OCPs must be consistent with the District Plan. In that these documents provide a more definitive set of policies that respond to the unique needs of every municipality, they represent an important first component of the implementation hierarchy.

Zoning Bylaws

The Zoning By-laws are the principal implementing tools for the OCPs. They divide the community into districts or zones and prescribe the uses of land in these districts, site sizes, setbacks, building locations, parking requirements, etc. Since a number of policies relate specifically to the uses of land in the MSMA, the zoning bylaws play a significant role in implementing the District Plan.

Subdivision

Applications to subdivide land, particularly in areas that have been designated for specific land uses e.g. Hazard Land, Country Residential Potential, etc. in the District Plan will need to be reviewed in light of the District Plan’s relevant policies. The subdivision process is therefore also an important part of the implementation function.

G.2 Implementation Through Budgeting

Councils use the budgeting process to review priorities and provide funding accordingly. The District Plan includes several policies that either imply or recommend a collective budgeting approach where there is deemed to be benefit to the District as a whole. The MSMA should therefore determine when and under what circumstances it is appropriate to conduct budget reviews collectively, in order to respond to the appropriate policy recommendations of the Plan.

G.3 Monitoring and Measuring Success

Monitoring and measuring the success of the District Plan is an important determinant of the relevance and importance of the Plan to the community. Two ways that the MSMA can carry out monitoring and success measurement are:

1. Through an annual review of the Policies, Strategies and Actions listed in the Plan to determine how many of these have been implemented. The Priorities listed in Figure 3 should be used to help focus on those areas of the Plan requiring the highest attention.
2. Through a public engagement process, as needed, to allow opportunity for comment and direction on the policies, strategies, actions and priorities listed in the District Plan.



MAPS

ADDITIONAL TABLES

ADDITIONAL FIGURES