



INTERMUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN



Woodlands County and Town of Whitecourt

Intermunicipal Development Plan

Open House #1 Feedback Report



May 2009

Prepared by:
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On May 7, 2009, Stantec Consulting Ltd. held an Open House at the Woodlands County Municipal Office to describe and discuss the Woodlands County and Town of Whitecourt Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP) review. Attendance was estimated at approximately thirty five (35) interested persons from the community of which nineteen (19) signing the attendance sheet.

In effort to gather more detailed comments and opinions of the community, all attendees were invited to complete a Feedback Form and return it to Stantec Consulting Ltd. Within two week's time, a total of eight (8) completed Feedback Forms were received (Appendix A). Of the Feedback Forms received, the main questions were about servicing and development.

The Open House consisted of two separate parts, an informational session and a workshop session. The information session of the Open House was the first opportunity for the public to hear and be informed on the IDP review process. Items discussed included; what is an IDP, Why a review is needed, what topics may be included in the review, public participation process and steps moving forward. The following are the display boards used during the Open House.

WHAT IS AN IDP??

The Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP) is a land use planning tool prepared jointly by Woodlands County and Town of Whitecourt. This statutory plan requires adoption by the Councils of both municipalities.

The Intermunicipal Development Plan will provide Woodlands County and Town of Whitecourt, with a comprehensive policy framework regarding land use and future development within the urban fringe. The Plan will include communication protocols and procedures for resolving conflicts as well as administering the Plan amongst the municipalities.

According to the Municipal Government Act (MGA)

Intermunicipal Development Plan

631 (1) two or more councils may, by each passing a bylaw in accordance with this Part or in accordance with sections 12 and 692, adopting Intermunicipal Development Plan to include those areas of land lying within the boundaries of the municipalities as they consider necessary.

(2) an Intermunicipal Development Plan



(a) may provide for

- (i) the future land use within the area
- (ii) the manner of and use within the area,
- (iii) any other matter relating to the physical, social or economic development of the area that the councils considers necessary.

And

(b) must include

- (i) a procedure to be used to resolve or attempt to resolve any conflict between the municipalities that have adopted the plan.
- (ii) a procedure to be used, by one or more municipalities, to amend or repeal the plan, and
- (iii) provisions relating to the administration of the plan.

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Board #1: What is an IDP.

WHY DO WE NEED THE UPDATE?

The existing Woodlands County and the Town of Whitecourt Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP) was adopted in 1998. The IDP includes policy requiring periodic review of the Plan.

With the tremendous growth of both municipalities in the last few years, it is essential to complete a review and update of the current document to ensure the general philosophies of the existing documents are still appropriate with the municipalities. This review will ensure that the visions and objectives of the municipalities are being met.

There are also options of joint initiatives between the municipalities that will be explored throughout this IDP review process. The County and Town may find opportunities for joint economic projects in development, infrastructure and transportation.

This IDP may include the following topics.

Agriculture

Residential Development

Commercial Development

Industrial Development

Future Growth Directions

Transportation

Natural Environment

Recreation Opportunities

**Cooperative initiatives between
the Municipalities**



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Board #2: Why do we need the Update.

WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF THIS IDP REVIEW?

- To provide more certainty for planning and development decisions among the municipalities.
- To coordinate among adjacent municipalities in dealing with planning, development, infrastructures and transportation matters in the rural-urban fringe.
- To establish an area within which planning and development decisions are coordinated to ensure that land use compatibility and long term planning objectives are protected.
- To establish growth corridors within the Plan area
- To establish a process as the preferred means to address planning issues among the municipalities.
- To examine and evaluate the options that may exist for regional servicing opportunities.
- To align with existing and anticipated policies of the County and Town to ensure relevancy.



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Board #3: What are the Goals of this IDP Review.

YOUR INVOLVEMENT WITH THE CREATION OF THIS IDP DP

We hope you take the time to stay aware of what is going on with this process. Only through awareness can landowners and the public understand what is possible and what is not in planning the future for the IDP area. In return, the County and the Town are committed to sincerely listening to landowners and the public. .

For more information and progress of the review, please visit:

www.woodlands.ab.ca
www.whitecourt.ca


Email: gordon.lau@stantec.com

NEXT STEPS

Feedback – End of May 2009
The feedback from this Open House will be summarized and reviewed. A Feedback Summary will be created to ensure that the opinions and comments from the public is accurately recorded and examined through out the review process.

Draft Intermunicipal Development Plan – End of July 2009
A Draft Intermunicipal Development Plan will be created based upon the goals of the municipalities and public feedback. This Plan may include the topics of agriculture, development, future growth directions, transportation, the natural environment, recreation opportunities and cooperative initiatives between the municipalities

Public Open House and Review – September 2009
A second Open House will be held during September to present the Draft Intermunicipal Development Plan to the public. This will be the second opportunity for the public to be involved with the review process. Based upon the feedback from the public, the IDP may be ready for the approval and adoption by the municipalities.



Board #4: Your Involvement with the creation of this IDP and Next Steps.

During the question and answer portion, it was explained that due to the early stage and timing of the project, not every question would have an answer. Part of the IDP review is finding the answers and solutions to the questions that may be asked. The following questions were asked during the Open House.

Q: Is the municipality open to new opinions and ideas?

A: Though it may seem that not everyones wishes will be met, we believe in a “fair-fair” scenario. The Town and County also seem to have a great working relationship, which is one of the main factors behind this IDP review. Another factor is the willingness of the Town and County to review joint initiatives that may be beneficial.

Q: Will servicing and infrastructure be included in this Plan?

A: Servicing and Infrastructure may be included in an IDP but it is not mandatory. It was discussed that the elements required to be part of the IDP would include; procedures in resolving any conflict between the municipalities, amend or repeal process and administration of the plan. An IDP may also include; future land use, the manner of use within the area, matters relating to physical, social or economic development of the area that the councils considers necessary.

Workshop

The second session of the Open House was organized as a workshop. Participants were encouraged to participate in several discussions relating to the Town and County and the important issues that should be addressed within the review of this IDP.

A. Keyword Vision Exercise

After a brief introduction, the group quickly moved into a preliminary keyword vision exercise, “What is Woodlands County/Town of Whitecourt?”

While some of the participants expressed ideas of the physical characteristics, others discussed the reason why they live in the area. The following key words/phrases were used to describe “What is Woodlands County/Town of Whitecourt” by the workshop participants.

- Multi Use (Work and Recreation)
- Diversified land use (Residential, Commercial, Industrial)
- Young families
- Work opportunities (Small Business Opportunities)
- Rural area with urban lifestyle
- General lifestyles
- Support for industries
- Roadways
- Connection to Edmonton and Grand Prairie
- Control of recreation activities

Of the issues discussed, lifestyle was the most important. Individuals in the area discussed that the enjoyment of living in a location that is diversified in work opportunities while having the recreation opportunities of open space, trails, and ATV use.

B. “A Day in the Life Of”

Following the keyword vision exercise, a second exercise was started, “A day in life.” This exercise was to encourage discussions on the activities and lifestyles of the residents in the area. This exercise created discussions about recreation, work and lifestyles of the residents in the area.

- Recreation (Horse Riding, ATV’s)
- Noisy Activities
- Walking Trails
- Lakes and Rivers activities
- Family activities
- Sense of community
- Pets and animals
- Nature and Wildlife
- Privacy
- Appropriate business
- Commuting
- Road conditions
- Tourism from recreation activities
- Bring in services
- Snowmobile and Rodeo Events

Recreational opportunities are a main activity for those in the area. Individuals were involved with many activities which ranged from walking to boating. Though the recreational activities were mostly positive, there were also negative set backs created from the noise and destruction to trails from ATV’s.

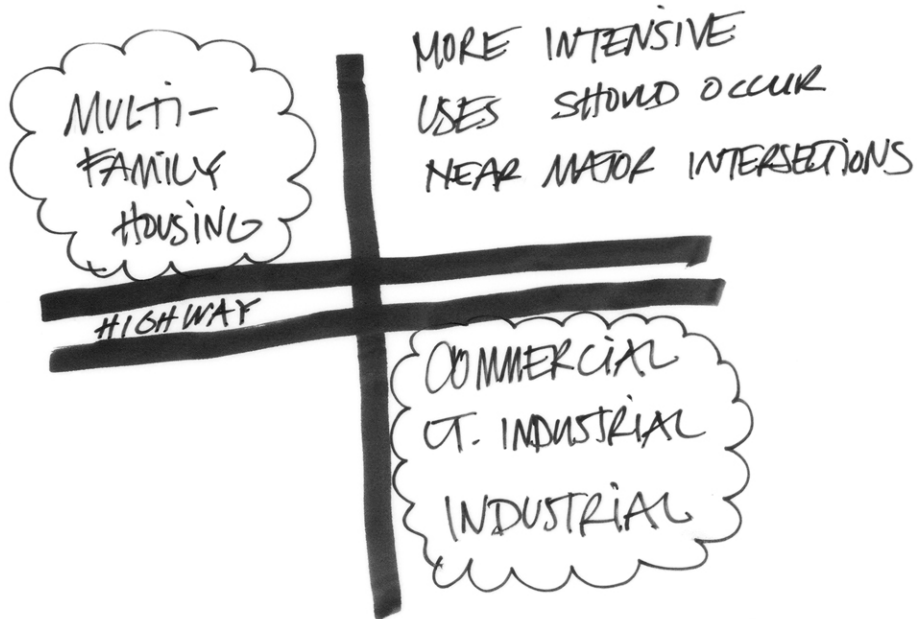
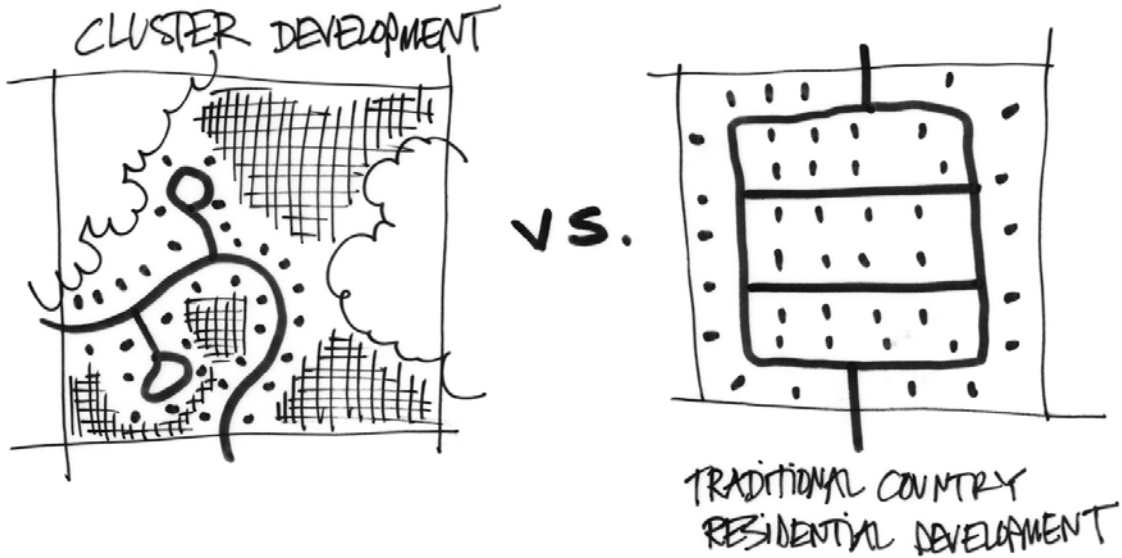
C. Existing Conditions/Opportunity Mapping

A final exercise for the workshop was to review the specific topics of; Development and Land use, Transportation, Open Space and Recreation and Boundary. The participants were asked to provide input on the specific topics as well as mention any additional information.

Development and Land Use – Participants were encouraged to discuss areas of development, Town expansion and type of location. Participants discussed the potential opportunities in the area in relation to residential and industrial development, while agreeing that commercial development is adequate at the moment. The following are the main topics discussed.

- Areas for Town expansion
- Water table issues in the east
- Commercial has no issues at the current time
- Location for industrial use

- Additional light industrial uses
- Areas for acreage (2.5 acres +) lots
- Environmental preservation
- Traditional vs Cluster vs Urban Developments

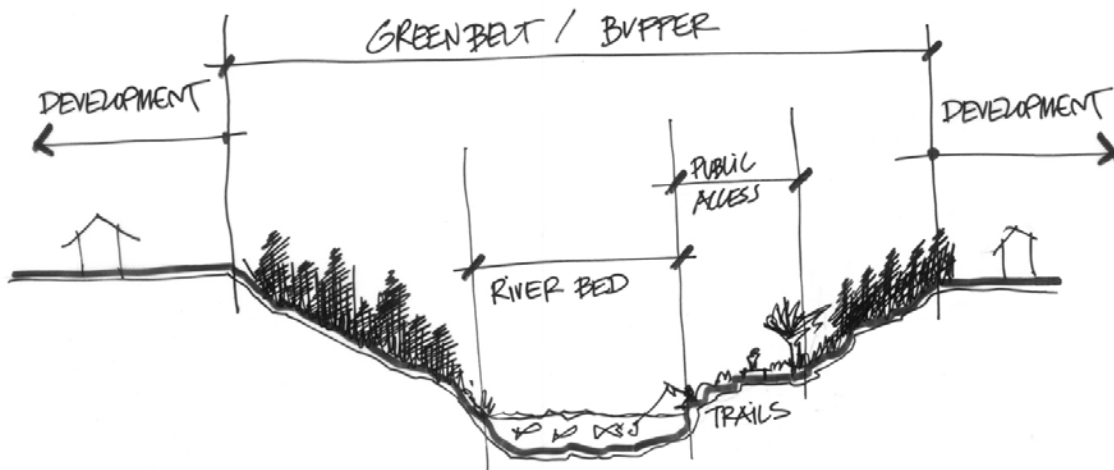


Transportation - No Issues or concerns

Open Space and Recreation – Due the tremendous recreational opportunities in and around the area, this would be the main topic for the public. Woodlands County and the Town of Whitecourt has been a centre for snowmobiles and ATV use, while this has been positive in many ways, there have also been many concerns associated with it. Many trails and open space areas have been damaged due to the use of ATVs and reckless users.

Other topics that the group discussed included the addition of recreation areas such as camp grounds, trails and lake related activities. The following are the main topics discussed.

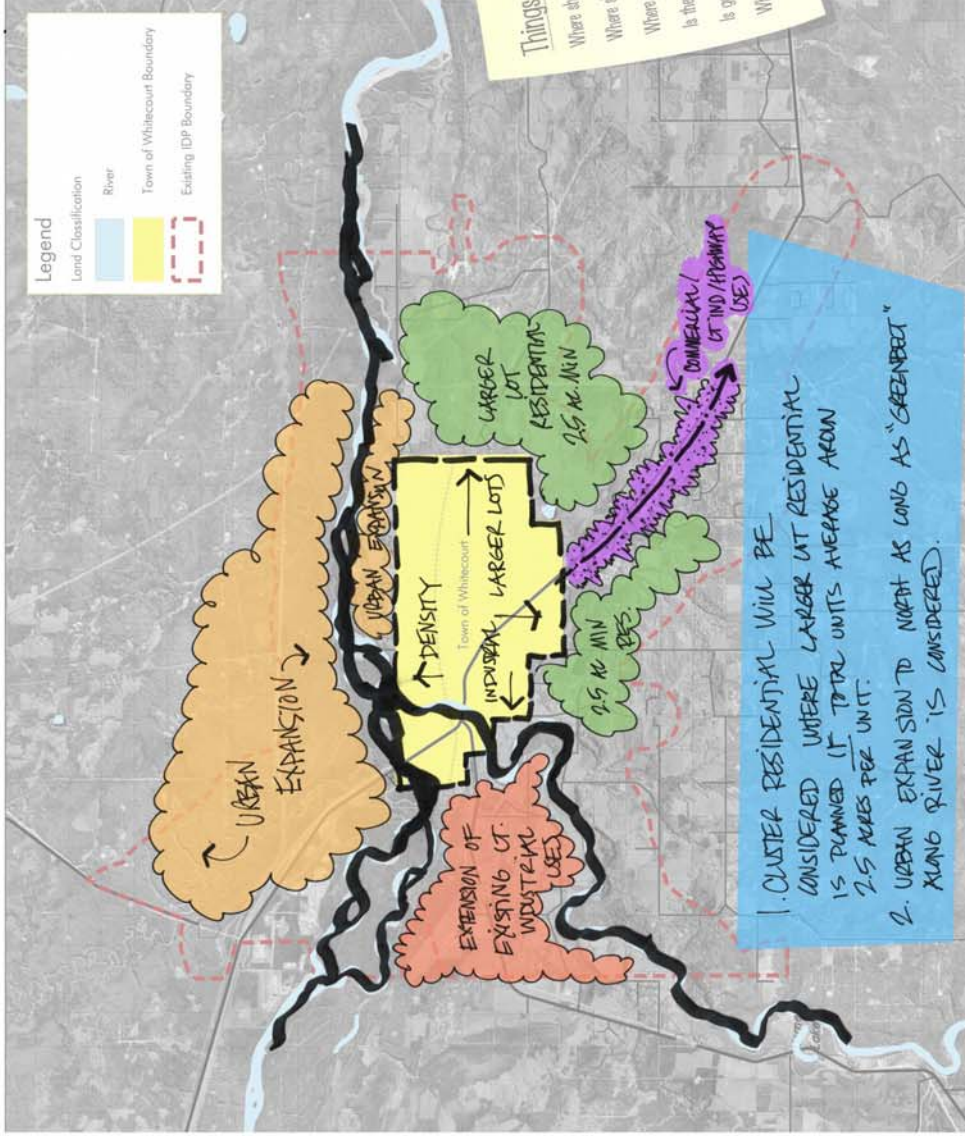
- areas for fishing, biking, hiking, trails
- Agriculture society
- Cross County Club
- Rodeo Arena Riding
- Camp Ground
- Erosion Potential
- Designated Trails
- Areas for specified activities.
- Greenbelt



Boundary – One of the main focuses of the boundary was the explanation of the existing IDP boundary. It was explained that the original boundary was based upon several factors including transportation, the environment, growth direction etc. The use and vastness of the Crown Lands in the Plan area was also discussed in detail. The following are the main topics discussed.

- Crown Lands were identified
- Reason for existing IDP boundary was identified
- Reserve was identified
- Native Burial Ground was identified

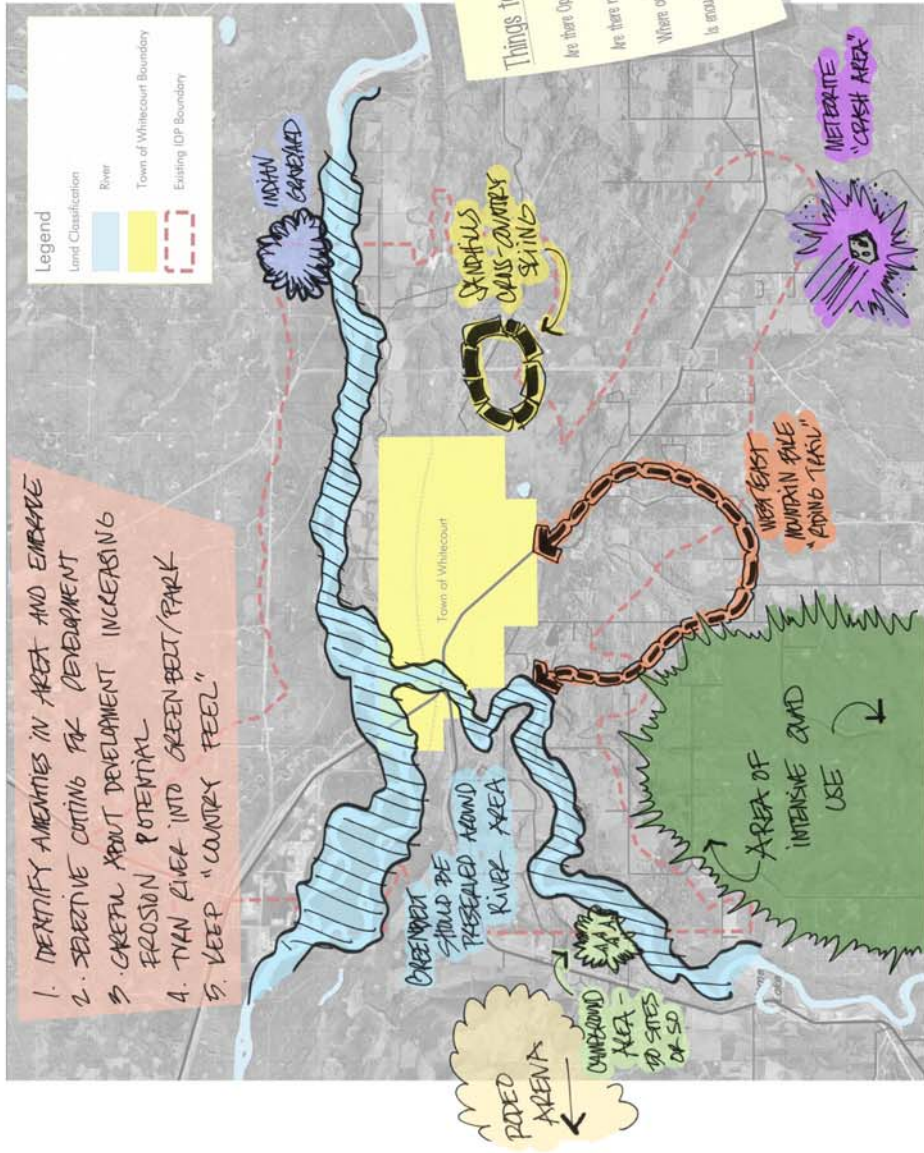
DEVELOPMENT AND LAND USE



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OPEN SPACE AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES



Appendix A: Feedback Form



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FEEDBACK FORM

Woodlands County/Town of Whitecourt Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP)

May 7, 2009 • 6:00 pm-8:30pm • Woodlands County Municipal Office

This is an Open House to share information and gather feedback on Woodlands County/Town of Whitecourt Intermunicipal Development Plan.

Your input is important. Please take time to review the presentation boards, talk to the Consultants and Municipal Staff, and complete this Feedback Form.

1. Please check the response that best describes your situation:

- I live on or have ownership interest in lands that lie within the existing IDP boundary **4**
- I live on or have ownership interest in lands that are within 2 to 3 km of the current IDP boundary. **2**
- I do not live or have ownership interest in lands within or in the vicinity of the current IDP boundary. **2**

2. I heard about this Open House from:

- Newspaper advertisement. **2**
- County and/or Town Website **3**
- Word of mouth. **2**
- Other: **2 Radio**

3. Was the Open House helpful in understanding the planning process of the Intermunicipal Development Plan?

- Yes. **4**
- No.
- Somewhat. **1**

4. Please rank the following topics in order of importance for this area. 1 being most important. **(Average)**

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 6 Agriculture | 4 Industrial Development | 1 Natural Environment |
| 2 Residential Development | 3 Future Growth Directions | 4 Recreation |
| 7 Commercial Development | 5 Transportation | ___ Other: _____ |



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5. What other issues and areas of concern need to be addressed in this review of the Intermunicipal Development Plan?
- Need for impact studies on land.
 - Additional servicing
 - Better recreation, tourism planning between County, Town and GOA
 - Need for all levels of Government to share cost, decisions with clear roads and responsibilities.
 - Need to create a common data base accessible to all.
 - Crown lands and planning needs to be lined to Government of Alberta
6. Other comments to be considered in this review of the Intermunicipal Development Plan?
- How do we get more public involvement?
 - How does the province Land Use Framework affect his Plan?
 - How do we ensure public involvement occurs?
 - How often do we review the Plan to ensure objective being achieved?
 - Need to adjust the boundaries of the IDP that is more inclusive
 - Access
 - Weather conditions such as low land Ice on River
 - Town servicing down Flats Road
 - Area SE1/4 21 59 12 W5 should be zoned for Country Residential due to its close proximity to the Town Boundary.

If you would like, please complete the following information (OPTIONAL).

The personal information contained on this form is collected under the authority of the Municipal Government Act Section 3 and will solely be used for the purpose(s) of identifying issues from the public for the Woodlands County/Town of Whitecourt IDP.

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Thank you for attending the Open House and for providing us with your valuable feedback.

Please deposit your completed form in the Feedback Box provided tonight, or return via mail or fax by no later than Friday, May 22, 2009 to:

Attention: Gordon Lau
Stantec Consulting Ltd.
600, 4808 Ross St
Red Deer, AB T4N 1X5
Tel: (403) 341-3320 Fax: (403) 342-0969

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