

VILLAGE OF

NOBLEFORD

Industrial Growth Strategy

2002

Prepared by the



OLDMAN RIVER INTERMUNICIPAL SERVICE AGENCY

April 2002

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VILLAGE OF NOBLEFORD

Industrial Growth Strategy



INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide background information and to evaluate and recommend a course of action for the Village of Nobleford to proceed with managing future growth, in particular future industrial development. Council should review this report as it will give the council a basis for discussing growth issues with the County of Lethbridge and provide a route to accommodate future growth.

Municipal Background

Nobleford, a village of 615 persons, is located within the County of Lethbridge approximately 32 kms north of the City of Lethbridge (see Map 1). Approximately 1.54 km² in size, the Village covers portions of the SW and NW of Section 2, Township 11, Range 23 and all of the SE and NE of Section 3, Township 11, Range 23, west of the 4th Meridian.

Incorporated as a village in 1918, Nobleford has developed as a local service centre with an expanding residential, commercial and industrial base. A recent major change for the Village was the annexation and separation of lands on the east and west sides of the community. The proposal included the incorporation of approximately 60.6 ha (149.8 acres) into the Village and the separation of approximately 62.7 ha (154.9 acres) of land from the Village to be added to the jurisdiction of the County of Lethbridge.

Nobleford has traditionally close ties to the agriculture industry and much of its early development can be contributed to the development and expansion of a local farm implement industry, in particular the manufacturing of the Noble Blade.

ANALYSIS

1. Economic Activity

Overview

Canada's economy is expected to continue to grow with the Alberta economy a forerunner. As economic growth softens elsewhere in North America, Alberta's long-term economic prospects continue to be very bright as a result of the Province's many economic advantages including low taxes, an entrepreneurial business climate and fiscal strength. Presently, Canadian Chartered Banks named Alberta's economy the fastest growing economy in the country. As much of the Province has been experiencing population growth and economic expansion, the Village of Nobleford has been influenced by this economic strength. Nobleford has been experiencing one of the highest population growths in the Province and has recently seen growth in the industrial sector.

According to the Village's 2001 equalized tax assessment, approximately 80 percent is attributed to residential while 15 percent is non-residential (commercial and industrial) and 5 percent is other (machinery, equipment and linear). The structure of a municipality's tax assessment affects how they allocate the tax burden through the community. As commercial and industrial assessments generate higher taxes than residential, a community with a well-balanced assessment base equates to one with lower residential taxes.

Table 1 illustrates a comparison between the Village of Nobleford and other small communities within southern Alberta. From Table 1 it can be seen that Nobleford has a well-balanced assessment base.

Table 1
2001 Equalization Tax Assessment
Breakdown of Municipal Tax Assessment in Percentage
A Comparison of Southern Alberta Communities

Municipality	Residential	Non-residential	Other
Barnwell	89	8	3
Granum	75	9	16
Nobleford	80	15	5
Stavely	83	11	6
Stirling	94	2	4

Source: Alberta Municipal Affairs, 2001

Construction Activity

Table 2 illustrates the number and value of building permits for each year since 2000. Residential construction has been responsible for the largest amount of building permits being issued. Over 91 percent of the total number of permits issued was for some type of residential construction, including new homes, home improvements and garages. New residential home construction has accounted for approximately 57 percent of the total residential building permits. By the end of the first quarter in April 2002, the value of residential permits was the highest it has been in the last three years at \$646,000. Commercial and Industrial development combined has made up approximately 8.7 percent of the total number of permits issued.

Table 2
Village of Nobleford
Number and Value of Building Permits Issued 2000-2002

YEAR	Residential	Residential Improvement	Garage	Industrial	Commercial	Yearly Total	Yearly Total Value \$
2000	6	1*	3	1*	1	12	533,000
2001	2	0	3	0	0	5	237,000
2002 (to April)	4	1	1	0	0	6	686,000
Total Permits	12	2*	7	1*	1	23	1,456,000

* \$ Value not available for some building permits

2. Population Statistics

Studying past and future population data is an important component in ensuring an adequate land base for future growth. Population change within a community is related to many factors, such as:

- migration, both in and out;
- the size of the community and its internal, natural growth rate and structure;
- the size and composition of the local and surrounding economy;
- and the proximity to larger areas of settlement and economic activity.

Population growth due to natural increases has been less of a significant factor over the last decade, as birth rates have been declining. Recently, this trend may have stabilized, but fertility rates remain low on the national and provincial scale. The national fertility rate is 1.64 live births per woman, while Alberta's rate is 1.77.

Since the 1983 General Municipal Plan was adopted, the 1986, 1991 and 1996 Statistics Canada data has been released to assist in evaluating assumptions and developing projections regarding Nobleford's future population growth. Although the 2001 basic census population data has been released, the

comprehensive information regarding population structure, immigration, language, employment, income and housing have not been completed and released to this date. Therefore, 2001 population total for the Village of Nobleford will be included in the historical growth evaluation but not in the review of population structure or population projections.

Past Trends

This section reviews the historical growth of the population and provides a basis for population projections. The way in which the population has changed reveals some important trends. Table 3 demonstrates the Village of Nobleford's historic population situation between 1961 and 2001.

Table 3
NOBLEFORD'S HISTORIC POPULATION
1961-1996

YEAR	CENSUS POPULATION	FIVE YEAR RATE OF CHANGE (percent)	AVERAGE CHANGE PER ANNUM (percent)
1961	309		
1966	345	11.65	2.33
1971	400	15.94	3.19
1976	417	4.25	0.85
1981	534	28.06	5.61
1986	531	-0.56	-0.11
1991	517	-2.64	-0.53
1996	558	7.93	1.59
2001	615	10.22	2.04

Source: Statistics Canada

As shown in the table, the Village of Nobleford's population has fluctuated between 309 to 615 people over the last 40 years and illustrates the following:

- Nobleford experienced a healthy population growth up until the 1980s.
- In the early 1980s this positive growth condition ceased, and the population of Nobleford experienced negative growth throughout the 1980s. The decrease in population during the 1980s reflects the effects of the early to mid-1980s' recession and the changes in the agricultural industry, where the consolidation of farm parcels, together with an overall rural to urban movement and drop in the birth rate have all contributed to the fluctuations in small town populations.
- Over the last two census periods (1991-1996 and 1996-2001) Nobleford has experienced a positive growth condition. The 1991-1996 census period experienced a 7.93 percent increase, or a positive growth change of 1.59 percent per annum, while the 1996-2001 census period experienced a 10.22 percent increase, or a growth increase of 2.04 percent per annum.

Over the last 40 years the Village of Nobleford has experienced an average growth rate per annum of approximately 1.9 percent. The positive growth scenario (5-year rate of 10.22 percent or 2.04 percent per annum) during the last census period (1996-2001) reflects the provincial situation but surpasses the national growth rate. Alberta's growth rate during the last 5-year period was 10.3 percent, or 2.06 percent annually. By comparison, Canada's overall population grew by 4 percent during the last 5-year period, or at an annual average rate of 0.8 percent.

Age Structure

What is more significant than the growth in population numbers in the Village of Nobleford is the difference in their population characteristics. The simple numerical view of growth ignores the dramatic changes taking place within the population. The people within the community are rapidly changing, undermining presumed patterns of needs and shifting traditional expectations of impacts from growth. One of the most important significant differences in population characteristics is age composition.

Population pyramids for the Village of Nobleford illustrate the distribution between the various age groups as well as between the male and female segments of the population (see Charts 1-4). In examining the graphs and Table 4, a number of observations can be made regarding the population structure. (*Note Statistics Canada reports individual age cohorts to the nearest multiple of five; percentages have also been rounded.*)

- As Chart 1 illustrates the percentage of those aged 65 years and over make up 12.5 percent of the total population. In comparison to other southern Alberta communities, this is one of the lowest percentages of seniors present in a municipality (see Table 5). However, this may be expected in smaller communities without the necessary facilities for this age group such as a hospital, related health facilities or a nursing home.
- The percentage of persons classified as senior citizens has remained consistent since 1981, where they comprised 12.2 percent of the total.
- Table 4 shows the percentage of those persons between the ages of 40 and 64 has slowly increased each period from 22.5 percent of the total population in 1981, to almost 28 percent in 1996. This is an expected population trend in our society, reflecting the so-called aging of the 'baby-boom' generation.
- Table 4 indicates that the Village of Nobleford has a decreasing proportion of its population between the age of 15 and 24. In 1981 the proportion of those in this age group was 17.8 percent; by 1996 the proportion decreased to 14.3 percent. This aspect reflects a trend present in many rural and smaller communities, as many young adults leave an area for educational or employment opportunities elsewhere.
- The results from the 1996 census reveal that Nobleford has about 26 percent of its population under the age of 15. As Table 4 illustrates this age group has remained relatively consistent since 1981 where those under the age of 15 made up 27.1 percent of the total population.

- However, the percentage of the total population under the age of 4 has declined, from approximately 9.3 percent in 1981, to 6.3 percent in 1996. This is about the average when compared to other communities in southern Alberta (see Table 5).

Table 4
HISTORIC COMPARISON OF POPULATION STRUCTURE
1981 to 1996

(Shown as percentage of the total community)

Age Category	1996	1991	1986	1981
Under 4	6.3	8.7	7.5	9.3
Under 15	25.9	29.9	24.5	27.1
15-24	14.3	10.6	14.1	17.8
25-39	19.7	22.2	21.6	21.5
40-64	27.7	22.2	23.5	22.5
65 and Over	12.5	13.5	12.2	12.2

Source: Statistics Canada 1996 Census

The analysis of the population structure shows that the percentage of those over the age of 65 in the Village is notably low compared to other southern Alberta communities (see Table 5). A considerable large proportion of the population is observed to be under the age of 24 years (40.2 percent), with the bulk of those being between 5 and 24 years old (approximately 34 percent).

Table 5
Comparison of Selected Age Groups for Various Municipalities in Southern Alberta
(Shown as a Percentage of the Total for a Specific Community)

Age Category	Milk River	Nanton	Nobleford	Picture Butte
Under 4	6.9	4.2	6.3	8.4
Under 15	22.6	16.8	25.9	23.7
20-29	10.2	9.0	10.8	12.9
30-64	36.1	37.8	43.0	38.9
Seniors 65+	25.8	25.2	12.5	16.5

Source: Compiled from data acquired from Statistics Canada 1996 Census

Overall, the population analysis shows that the Village of Nobleford has a classic strong, fairly balanced population structure. However, the Village does have a very high proportion of youth present in the population.

Population Projections

Several different methods of population projections are used in calculating future growth in order to provide the broadest scenario possible. It should be noted that projections are conditional; they show what a population would be if the assumed trends actually were to occur. Since population projections are based on past trends, they must be looked at with some degree of caution. A sudden influx of population at a certain time would forecast a high growth rate in the future, whereas a decrease in population in the past would portray a reduction in growth in the future. As previously outlined, the Village of Nobleford has generally experienced positive growth except for a period of negative growth throughout the 1980s. Nevertheless in the last two census periods the Village has experienced between approximately 1.5 to 2.0 percent growth per year.

Chart 5 illustrates the range of results obtained from the various methods of population projections. Several different methods of population projections were used such as the arithmetic, logarithmic, share of region, the cohort survival methods as well as annual growth rates of 1.0, 1.5 and 2.0 percent. The results indicate that a number of the projections fall within a fairly close range of each other. The most probable projections may be the cohort survival 5-year, or the 2.0 percent growth rate. These projections were chosen based on the Village of Nobleford's past growth tendencies, and given the past growth throughout the Province as well as the expected economic activity that will most likely occur.

The selected population projections using 1996 census data indicate that in 2001 the probable population could be between 610 and 616 persons. Since the 2001 census shows the population for the Village of Nobleford as 615 people, then the 1996 population projections are right on target.

By the year 2021, the population could reach between a low of 809 persons and a high of 915 persons. An important element that may affect Nobleford's future population is the fact that a large portion of the population is under the age of 24. As many of these are reaching the age of work force participation, many may migrate out to seek educational and employment opportunities.

CHART 1 - Village of Nobleford

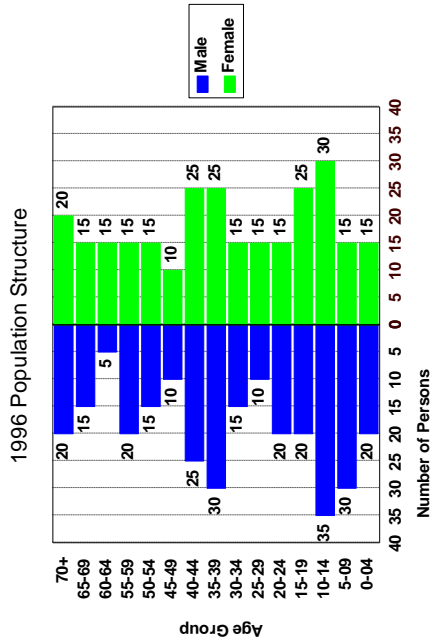


CHART 2 - Village of Nobleford

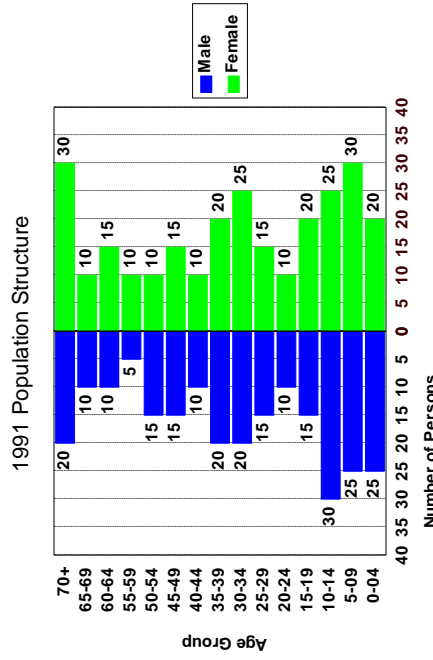


CHART 3 - Village of Nobleford

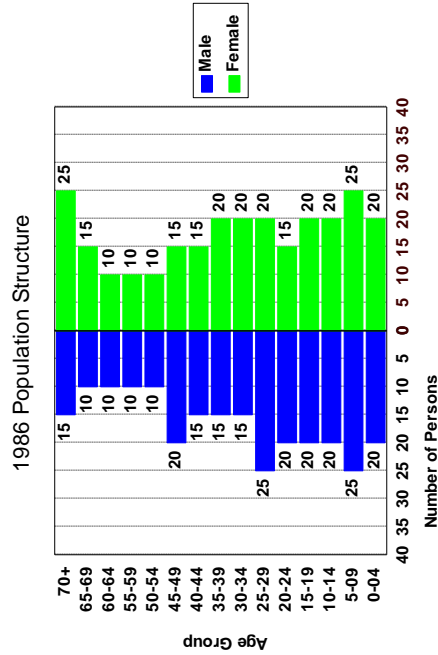


CHART 4 - Village of Nobleford

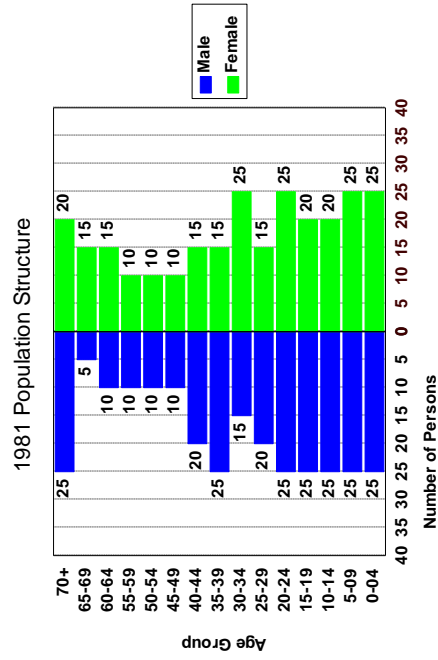
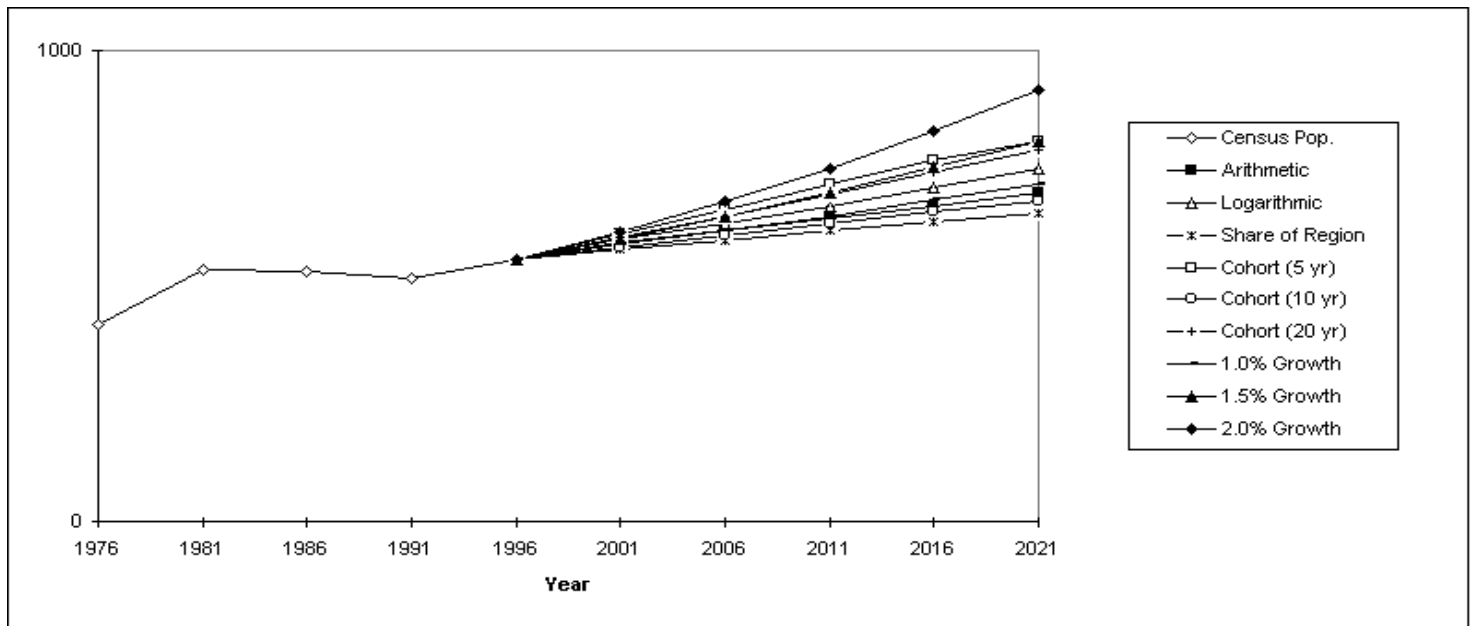


Chart 5 - NOBLEFORD POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Year	Census Pop.	Arithmetic	Logarithmic	Share of Region	Cohort (5 yr)	Cohort (10 yr)	Cohort (20 yr)	1.0% Growth	1.5% Growth	2.0% Growth
1976	417									
1981	534									
1986	531									
1991	517									
1996	558	558	558	558	558	558	558	558	558	558
2001		591	600	580	610	583	603	588	601	616
2006		617	634	598	662	606	647	618	647	679
2011		644	670	617	717	632	695	648	697	750
2016		670	708	636	768	658	743	682	751	828
2021		697	748	655	809	679	789	717	809	915



3. Land Use

The shape and character of a community is directly related to the quality, quantity and location of land use within its boundary. Patterns of land use start to emerge as a municipality grows. Within Nobleford development has taken place along the east side of the railway. There is a well-established commercial area along King Street and industrial development has remained in the northern portion of the Village. For the most part, the majority of residential development has taken place south of King Street.

Overview of Existing Development

Presently, the Village of Nobleford's boundaries extend over an area of 1.54 km² (0.96 square miles). This area results in the Village occupying approximately two and one-third quarter sections of land, for a total of approximately 153.79 ha (380 acres). Table 6 below illustrates the existing land uses for the Village, their area in acres and hectares and the percentage of developable land accounted for by each use.

Table 6
VILLAGE OF NOBLEFORD
EXISTING LAND USES – MARCH 2000

USE	AREA (± acres)	AREA (± hectares)	PERCENTAGE OF DEVELOPABLE LAND
Residential – Single Family	44.08	17.84	11.75
Residential – 2 Family	1.61	0.65	0.43
Residential – Mobile Home	0.39	0.16	0.11
Residential – Senior Residence	0.32	0.13	0.08
Commercial	11.54	4.67	3.08
Industrial	26.66	10.79	7.11
Public Institutional	9.32	3.77	2.48
Transport/Utilities	42.11	17.04	11.22
Recreation and Open Space	24.29	9.83	6.48
Agriculture	155.82	63.06	41.54
Roads/Lanes	47.74	19.32	12.73
Vacant	11.24	4.55	2.99
Total	375.12	151.81	100.0

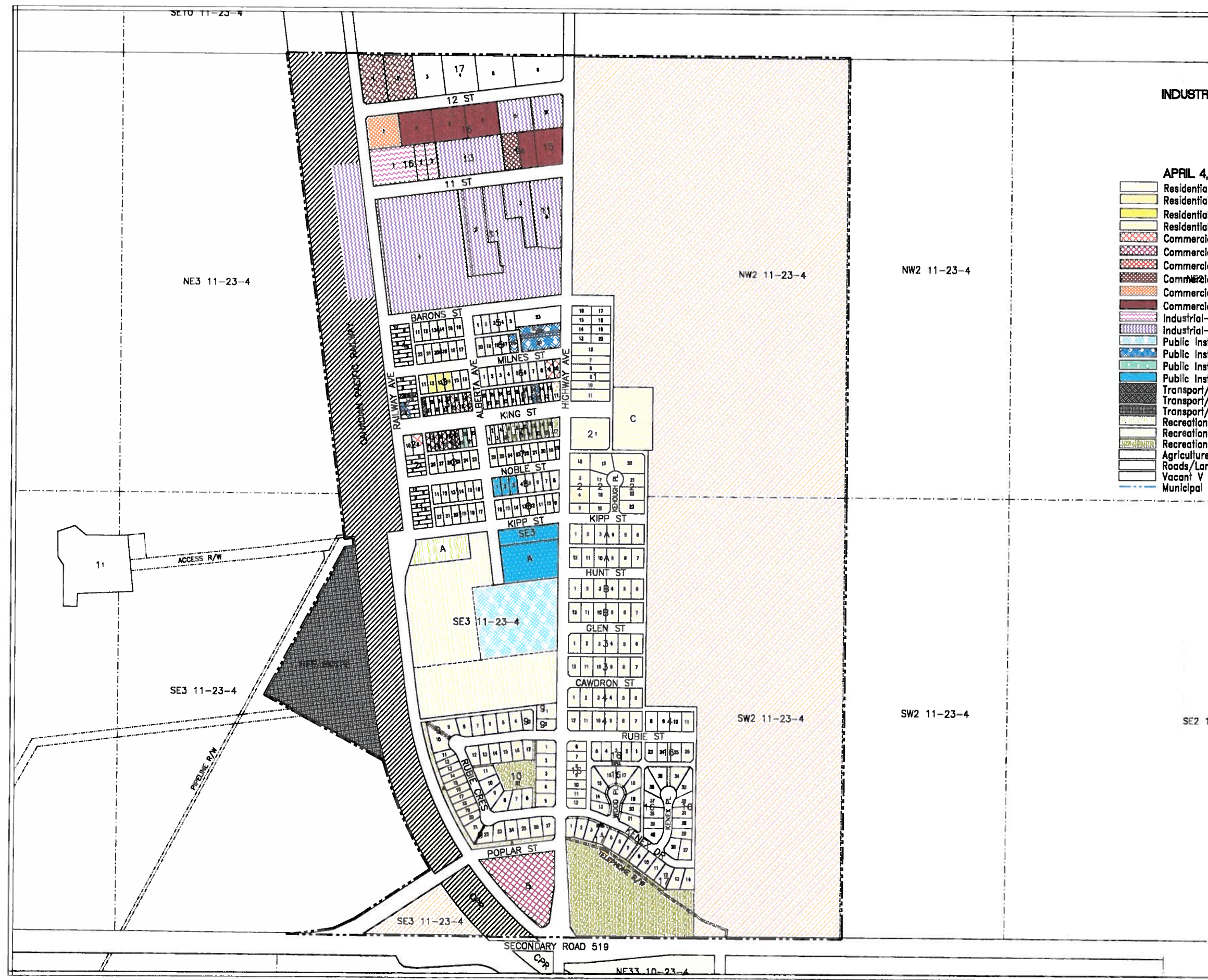
Source: Data acquired from ORISA Existing Land Use, 2002

As shown in Table 6 agricultural land use makes up the greatest percentage of developable land in the Village of Nobleford, comprising approximately 42 percent of the total developable land. The next main land use activity is residential (12.37 percent) followed by industrial (7.11 percent), commercial (3.08 percent) and public and institutional uses (2.48 percent).

As illustrated in Map 2, the Existing Land Use Map, the existing pattern of development shows most industrial uses (10.79 ha / 26.66 acres) clustered in the north end and east of the railway. The existing residential development is also east of the tracks but concentrated in the south end, located away from the industrial. The majority of existing commercial land use is concentrated in the centre of the Village along King Street and Highway Avenue. In May of 2001 agricultural land within the Village boundary and west of

VILLAGE OF NOBLEFORD
 Ptn of SW 2, NW 2 + All Of
 SE 3, NE 3 in Twp 11, Rge 23, W 4 M
 INDUSTRIAL GROWTH STRATEGY - APRIL 2002
 EXISTING LAND USE
 MAP 2

- APRIL 4, 2002**
- Residential-Single Family 1100 (17.84ha)
 - Residential-2 Family 1200 (0.65ha)
 - Residential-Mobile Home 1600 (0.16ha)
 - Residential-Senior Residence 1700 (0.13ha)
 - Commercial-Retail 2100 (0.19ha)
 - Commercial-Wholesale 2200 (1.31ha)
 - Commercial-Service 2300 (0.05ha)
 - Commercial-Transportation 2400 (1.10ha)
 - Commercial-Contracting 2500 (0.37ha)
 - Commercial-Warehouse 2700 (1.65ha)
 - Industrial-Extractive 3400 (0.82ha)
 - Industrial-Agricultural-Processing 3500 (9.97ha)
 - Public Institutional-Educational 4100 (2.00ha)
 - Public Institutional-Government 4200 (0.50ha)
 - Public Institutional-Community 4300 (0.05ha)
 - Public Institutional-Religious 4700 (1.22ha)
 - Transport/Railway 5300 (12.85ha)
 - Transport/Telecom/Util-Telecommunications 5400 (0.05ha)
 - Transport/Telecom/Util-Utilities 5500 (4.14ha)
 - Recreation & Open Space-Indoor Recreation 6300 (0.48ha)
 - Recreation & Open Space-Outdoor Recreation 6400 (5.11ha)
 - Recreation & Open Space-Parks 6500 (4.24ha)
 - Agriculture 7000 (63.06ha)
 - Roads/Lanes (19.32ha)
 - Vacant V (4.55ha)
 - Municipal Boundary (152.31ha)



UTM ZONE-12, DATUM-NAD27

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the train tracks was returned to the County of Lethbridge and agricultural land to the east of the Village was annexed from the County into the Village of Nobleford. Therefore there is a large tract of agricultural developable land located directly east of the Village. The proposed land use for this annexed land is primarily residential. The residential lot layout is consistent with that shown in the 1983 General Municipal Plan Guide Map for phases 1, 2 and 3, with a possibility for country residential type development for the northern-most Phase 4.

Existing Industrial Development

Industrial activity in any community is essential for the growth and prosperity of that community. Industries supply employment opportunities for residents as well as much needed tax revenue to help provide the services residents have come to expect.

The industrial activity in Nobleford reflects the Village's role as a service centre for the surrounding agricultural community. Established in 1930 and located just north of Barons Street, a farm implement manufacturing company the "Noble Blade" soon became the largest employer in the community. As the company grew, so did the Village population. Local facilities and amenities grew to meet the needs of the company and its growing employees. Until its closure in the fall of 1998, the New Noble was the main industrial enterprise in the Village. The building is currently occupied by two vibrant businesses: Keho Industries and Agri- Tech Manufacturing.

Further north of the old Noble Blade industrial property, north of 11th Street is the Robert Todd Industrial Park. The 1983 General Municipal Plan identified the need to continue to develop Stage 1 of the Robert Todd Industrial Park. Stage 2 provided for future industrial expansion to the east of the present Robert Todd Industrial Park. However, in the 2001 Annexation the land east of the Robert Todd Industrial Park was designated as possible country residential.

The Existing Land Use Table 6 shows that the Village has about 11 ha (27 acres) used for industrial purposes. The Existing Land Use Map 2 indicates that there are a number of commercial and public land use activities present in the designated industrial land use district. At present the Robert Todd Industrial Park has six vacant parcels (a total 2.55 ha / 6.29 acres) in Block 17, the northern-most block. The Village is anticipating the future development of a commercial trucking land use on two of the lots. This leaves a total of four available vacant parcels, of approximately one acre each in size (1.7 ha / 4.2 acres), for future industrial development in the Village of Nobleford (see Map 3 Industrial Area).

Designated Industrial Land

There appears to be an inadequate amount of land designated for industrial use. At present there is a total of approximately 27.6 ha (68 acres) of land designated for industrial use. Approximately 12.5 ha (31 acres) of the total industrial land is utilized for the railway, this leaves approximately 15.1 ha (37 acres) for other industrial activities. As the Existing Land Use Map 2 illustrates, there is very little vacant industrial land available to accommodate additional industrial land use activities (1.7 ha / 4.2 acres). In other words approximately 6 percent of the designated industrial land is vacant and available for future industrial development.

0 11-23-4

SE10 11-23-4

SW11 11-23-4

VILLAGE OF NOBLEFORD
Ptn of SW 2, NW 2 + All Of
SE 3, NE 3 In Twp 11, Rge 23, W 4 M
INDUSTRIAL GROWTH STRATEGY - APRIL 2002
EXISTING INDUSTRIAL LAND USE
MAP 3

EXISTING INDUSTRIAL LANDS

EXISTING INDUSTRIAL LANDS

NE3 11-23-4

NW2 11-

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY

RAILWAY AVE
ALBERTA AVE
HIGHWAY AVE
BARONS ST
MILNES ST
KING ST

16 17
15 18
14 19
13 20
12
7
8
9 1
10
11
21
18 19 20

UTM ZONE-12, DATUM-NAD27

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PILOT SCALE 1:400
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April 18, 2002
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The analysis indicates that there is sufficient urban reserve land available as a result of the recent annexation, which has been dedicated for future residential and commercial land use activities. As well, it can be concluded that there may not be enough land designated or available for future industrial activities.

Fringe Area

The 1983 General Municipal Plan recognized the need for inter-municipal cooperation between the County of Lethbridge and the Village of Nobleford in controlling development around the Village, which could have a detrimental impact upon the community in terms of its orderly and necessary expansion. The Village of Nobleford has been following the guidelines and policies established in the Plan. In particular, the Plan set forth policies and guidelines for future Village expansion to the east. In 2001 the Village completed the annexation and separation of lands on the east and west sides of the community and the land to the east is designated for future residential development.

The land use in the fringe area around the Village of Nobleford is for the most part, mainly undeveloped. Overall, the main type of land use activity in the fringe can be classified as agricultural. However, the future development of a hay plant is expected south of the Village within the fringe area. Also located above the north boundary of the Village are the sewage lagoons and disposal site, which will somewhat limit future development in this area (see Map 4).

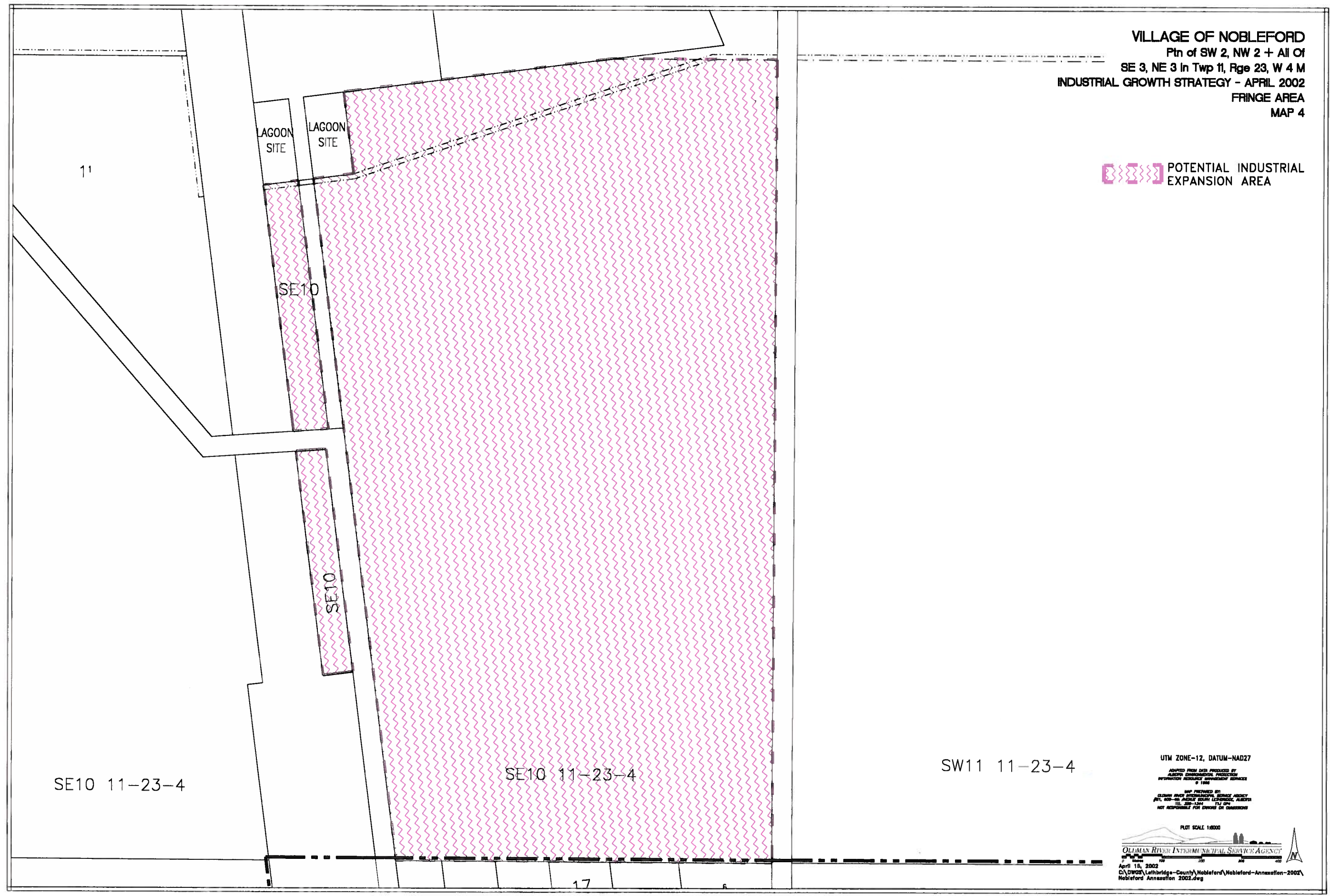
The County of Lethbridge Land Use By-Law No. 1211 and the County of Lethbridge Municipal Development Plan Bylaw No. 1190 reflect mutually acceptable intentions to prevent land use conflicts in the urban fringe district. Both indicate that an urban municipality will be consulted with by the County for any issue that may be determined to have an effect on that municipality including:

- development permit applications,
- redesignation,
- other projects.

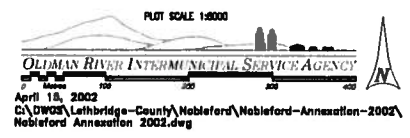
The fringe area around the Village of Nobleford has historically been unaffected by conflicting land use development; nevertheless, the Village Council should continue to work in cooperation with the surrounding County to ensure orderly and harmonious development in this area.

VILLAGE OF NOBLEFORD
Ptn of SW 2, NW 2 + All Of
SE 3, NE 3 In Twp 11, Rge 23, W 4 M
INDUSTRIAL GROWTH STRATEGY - APRIL 2002
FRINGE AREA
MAP 4

 POTENTIAL INDUSTRIAL
EXPANSION AREA



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4. Transportation

Road systems that link communities are extremely important for the movement of people, goods and services. The Village of Nobleford is located near the intersection of Highways 23 and 519. Due to the short commuting distance on Highways 23, 3 and 519, the Village has become an attractive location for new residents working in Lethbridge and Picture Butte.

The Canadian Pacific Railway mainline is also located near Nobleford. The mainline joins Lethbridge and Calgary and runs north south parallel to the Village.

Local Roads

The efficient flow of traffic within a community, from industry use to tourism, all sectors of the economy will benefit from a good road system. The road pattern within Nobleford is characterized by the traditional grid system. The grid was laid out east of the railway and parallel to it, with the largest portion of the streets being part of the grid. In the south end of Nobleford, the street pattern has been designed with curvilinear characteristics featuring crescents and cul-de-sacs.

Two major streets run north-south through Nobleford, Highway Avenue and Railway Avenue. These two major routes give access to the industrial area located in the northern portion of the Village. As a result of the existing road pattern, no further infrastructure requirements would be minimal when considering future development.

The 1983 General Municipal Plan and the Annexation report indicate a need for a truck bypass route,, however, both specify that the location of the truck bypass needs to be studied in more detail. Future industrial expansion to the north will continue to allow easy access to the major transportation routes.



5. Analysis Summary

The preceding analysis identified a number of points that have some implications for growth prospects for the Village. It also identified a number of issues that will help determine if additional land is required for future industrial development.

- The Village has experienced one of the highest population growths for the southern Alberta region at 10.2 percent in the last census period (2.04 percent per annum). It is projected to continue to experience growth in the immediate future.
- The Village has historically shown a consistent population growth; over the last 40 years the Village of Nobleford has experienced an average growth rate per annum of approximately 1.9 percent.
- Southern Alberta has recently experienced strong economic growth; the Village of Nobleford can expect to be influenced by it.
- Using the Cohort survival 5-year and a 2.0 percent growth rate for population projection methods, the population of Nobleford by the year 2021 may be between 809 to 915 persons.
- The recent annexation and separation of land in 2001 has identified the land to the east of the Village boundaries for potential residential use.
- The existing industrial land use acreage shows that, compared to other southern Alberta communities, there is below average amount of designated industrial land use. Only four vacant parcels are available to accommodate additional future industrial growth.
- Approximately 6 percent of the designated industrial land is vacant and available for future industrial development.
- Located north of the Village boundary are the sewage lagoons and the waste disposal site, which will limit future residential or commercial development in this area.

FUTURE LAND REQUIREMENTS

1. Residential Land Requirements

The following residential land analysis is used to determine the amount of possible additional undeveloped land that may be required. The Village of Nobleford housing requirement analysis is based on the following calculations:

- population projections,
- average household size,
- density of housing/acre.

The population projection data from the earlier section identified a probable population of between 809 and 915 persons by the year 2021. The 1996 census information indicated that Nobleford's average household size was approximately 2.5 persons per household. This information was combined with two other 'persons per household' scenarios, to indicate a possible range of the housing required in the future. Table 7 presents the calculations for future residential land requirements. In the Village of Nobleford housing is primarily of the single-family detached type.

Using the assumptions established in the residential land requirement analysis, it appears that Nobleford could develop an additional 11.7 ha (29 acres) of residential land to accommodate 915 people by the year 2021. This translates into an additional 138 dwelling units that would be required by the year 2021. This estimate is based on the 2.0 percent growth rate population projection and 2.5 persons per dwelling unit.

The land to the east of the Village of Nobleford, recently annexed into the Village boundaries, will supply sufficient residential land for any future growth the Village may experience. According to the Annexation Report of May 2001, the proposed land use for the annexed lands is primarily residential, with a lot layout consistent with that shown in the 1983 General Municipal Plan (GMP). There is one exception to the GMP; the land directly east of the industrial area in the north end of the Village has been targeted for country residential land use rather than industrial expansion.

2. Commercial Land Requirements

Developed commercial land use accounts for 4.67 ha (11.54 acres) of the Village of Nobleford's land use. The observed North American commercial land use standard averages 3.23 percent of the total developed land use. The commercial land area in Nobleford presently occupies 3.08 percent of the developed land. Table 8 demonstrates that Nobleford's commercial land use area is slightly lower than other small communities in Southern Alberta.

Because of Nobleford's close proximity to Lethbridge, it would appear unlikely that the Village would require any more than the usual standard of land needed for the purpose of commercial development. The Existing Land Use Map 2 shows approximately 25 vacant lots within the designated commercial village core along both sides of King Street. Infill commercial development should be encouraged to locate within the underdeveloped downtown.

Table 7
VILLAGE OF NOBLEFORD
RESIDENTIAL LAND CONSUMPTION RANGE

YEAR	POPULATION		ASSUMED PERSONS/ D.U.	TOTAL REQUIRED D.U.s		EXISTING D.U.s	NEW D.U.s NEEDED		LAND ACREAGE REQUIREMENT	
	HIGH	LOW		HIGH	LOW		HIGH	LOW	HIGH	LOW
1996	558					228				
2001	616	601	2.3	268	261	228	40	33	9	7
			2.5	246	240	228	18	12	4	0.6
			2.7	228	223	228	0	-5	0	-1.0
2006	679	647	2.3	295	281	228	67	53	14	11
			2.5	272	259	228	44	31	9	7
			2.7	251	240	228	23	12	5	3
2011	750	697	2.3	326	303	228	98	75	21	16
			2.5	300	279	228	72	51	15	11
			2.7	278	258	228	50	30	11	6
2016	828	751	2.3	360	327	228	132	99	28	21
			2.5	331	300	228	103	72	22	4
			2.7	307	278	228	79	50	17	3
2021	915	809	2.3	398	352	228	170	124	36	26
			2.5	366	324	228	138	96	29	20
			2.7	339	300	228	111	72	23	15

Note: This future land need analysis was done for projections over a 25-year period of additional land acreage required to accommodate new dwelling units. It does not take into consideration such factors as the existing vacant land acreage; land available for infill development, etc. The low population level was based upon a 1.5 percent growth rate, while the high-end population level was projected on a Cohort 5-year growth rate per annum.

D.U. = dwelling unit

Acreage based on 4.7 units per acre

1996 Census persons per dwelling unit for the Village of Nobleford was 2.5

Analysis done using three different calculations of 'persons per dwelling unit'

Table 8
Comparison of Commercial Land Use Acreage For Selected Southern Alberta Municipalities
(Based on Existing Land Use Activity Studies)

Municipality	Area in Acres ±	Area in Hectares ±	Acres Per 1000 (pop.)	% Developable Land
Coalhurst	4.70	1.92	3.27	1.38
Nobleford	11.54	4.67	20.68	3.08
Vauxhall	13.24	5.36	13.10	2.20
Granum	16.35	6.62	48.5	3.70
Warner	23.54	9.53	55.9	8.40
Average	13.87	5.62	28.29	3.75

3. Industrial Land Requirements

It is often difficult to determine the future land requirements for industrial use. By the nature of the different utilization of the land by different industries, some require a larger land base than others. Table 9 illustrates that, when compared to other southern Alberta communities, the Village of Nobleford has less than the average for industrial land use (10.79 ha / 26.66 acres) and developable land (7.11 percent). Nobleford has approximately 14.57 ha (36 acres) per 1000 people devoted to industrial use; this is lower than the average for selected municipalities in southern Alberta. It is important to note that Nobleford's industrial activities are based on extractive resources, agricultural processing and the manufacture of durable goods and these require a larger land base than other types of urban industrial activities which can be confined to a building or yard.

Nobleford currently has four vacant industrial parcels available for development and it would appear that the Village is deficient in the amount of existing acreage for industrial development.

Table 9
Comparison of Industrial Land Use Acreage for Selected Municipalities in Southern Alberta
(Based on Existing Land Use Activity Studies)

Municipality	Industrial Area Acres ±	Area Hectares ±	Acres Per 1000 (pop.)	% Developable Land
Coalhurst	49.20	19.93	34.19	17.7
Nobleford	26.66	10.79	36.43	7.1
Vauxhall	51.42	20.81	50.86	9.8
Granum	16.35	6.62	48.50	3.7
Warner	23.54	9.53	55.90	8.4
Average	33.43	13.54	45.18	9.3

Table 10
**Comparison of Designated and Existing Industrial Land Use Acreage
for Selected Municipalities in Southern Alberta**

Municipality	Designated Industrial in Land Use Bylaw Area in Acres ±	Existing Industrial Area in Acres ±	Non-developed Land in Acres ±	% of Land Available
Milk River	60.5	19.2	41.3	68.27
Nobleford	37.31	26.6	10.71	28.70
Picture Butte	63.28	4.0	59.28	93.68

Table 9 indicates that the Village of Nobleford has less than the average amount of industrial land use compared to other southern Alberta communities. Table 10 compares the designated amount of industrial land to the existing developed industrial land for several southern Alberta communities. The Village of Nobleford has the lowest percentage (approximately 28.7 percent) of industrial land available for development.

The Existing Land Use Map 2 indicates that there are a number of commercial and public land use activities present in the designated industrial land use district. Consequently, there are only four vacant lots (1.7 ha / 4.2 acres) available for further industrial development. Therefore, approximately 94 percent of the designated industrial land is currently occupied by either industrial or commercial uses, leaving only approximately 6 percent of the total designated industrial land available for development.

4. Future Land Requirements Summary

Future land requirements for residential, commercial, public and open space and parks can be satisfied through the urban reserve annexed into the Village boundaries in 2001, as well as through infill of the underdeveloped downtown core.

However, additional land may be needed to satisfy future industrial land requirements. Factors that may affect the consumption of land for industrial development include:

- There may be an increase in the demand for industrial lots caused by new economic opportunities in the area. A hay plant development is proposed south of the Village and this may lead to economic spin-offs for Nobleford.
- At present there is reduced availability of industrial lots because of recent interest in industrial activities in the area.
- The price of land is significantly less than a larger urban centre such as the City of Lethbridge and with access to a major transportation route, such as Highway 519 and close proximity to Highway 23, Nobleford should become a more attractive option to establish an industrial operation. The tax levy for industrial land in the Village is also less than what is experienced in the City.

IDENTIFIED ISSUES AND CONSTRAINTS

- Nobleford's population has a history of strong growth and has experienced dramatic growth since 1991. Over the most recent census period (1996-2001), the Village's population grew by over 2 percent. Population pyramids for Nobleford indicate that the Village has a very young population structure.
- Nobleford will continue to be affected by its close proximity to Lethbridge and Picture Butte and their economic prosperity.
- The Village presently has only four vacant lots available of approximately 0.4 ha (1 acre) each in size to accommodate any future industrial growth. This works out to approximately 6 percent of the designated industrial land that is vacant and available for future industrial development.
- A truck route bypass alternative to Highway Avenue is needed. The 1983 GMP and the Annexation Report of 2001 indicated a bypass route to the east of the Village within the annexed land.
- There are no vacant larger land parcels available to accommodate a larger-sized industrial operation.
- Due to the existing layout and land use activities in the Village, further designation of industrial land use to existing vacant land within Village boundaries has compatibility limitations.
- The north area of Nobleford (north of the existing Robert Todd Industrial Park) is the logical extension of expanding industrial development and will most likely have the least impact on future servicing.
- It may be in the best interests of Nobleford to control land north of the present Village boundary where the sewage lagoons are located. According to the *MGA Subdivision and Development Regulation Part 2(12)*, any school, hospital, food establishment and residential development must be located a minimum of 300 meters (984.25 feet) from a wastewater treatment facility.

FUTURE INDUSTRIAL LAND DEVELOPMENT AREAS

In identifying lands to accommodate future industrial growth for the Village of Nobleford, there are a number of aspects to take into account:

- Future development should be a logical extension of current land uses and development, along with being compatible with adjacent land uses.
- Possible sites for development should also be easily serviced, so as to prevent additional costs to the Village regarding provision of services.
- The proposed site should have proper access to limit transportation conflicts.
- The proposed site should be large enough to accommodate future growth.
- The sewage lagoons located in portions of the NE 10-11-23-4 and the SE 10-11-23-4 to the north of Nobleford, will mean that residential, hospital, school, or food establishment development will be restricted for 300 meters in any direction from its boundary (**see Map 4**).
- Finally, the proposed site should be suitable for the intended purpose.



1. Lands Within Present Boundaries

There are at present four vacant industrial lots, all located to the north side of 12 Street and west of Highway Avenue. Once these have been developed, there are no other appropriate sites within the present Village boundary to accommodate industrial expansion. This is due to the fact that south of the industrial area is designated residential, commercial, and other uses not compatible with industrial development. While west of the industrial area are the railway tracks and east of the industrial area is designated as possible country residential.



2. Lands Outside Present Boundaries

SE¼ of Section 10, Township 11, Range 23, West of the 4th Meridian

The Village of Nobleford has expressed interest in a parcel of land located immediately north of the existing Robert Todd Industrial Park for future industrial growth and development. This land is contiguous with the present Village boundary and is located in the County of Lethbridge. Map 4 illustrates the potential area in relation to the present Village boundary.

The land is currently privately owned and the owner has expressed interest in developing the land for industrial purposes and to be located within the Village boundary. The topography of the land is relatively flat and the site is approximately 35.21 ha (87 acres) in size and could accommodate large parcels for large industrial operations. The land is presently undeveloped and can be classified as agricultural land.

This parcel of land is desirable to the Village to annex into its boundaries and develop as industrial land for a number of reasons:

- This area lies north and adjacent to the existing industrial area and is a logical extension for industrial expansion.
- The land lies adjacent to the railway tracks with access to parallel service roads encompassing the proposed area. Thus, it could provide suitable transportation links for industry and would not provide conflicts with adjacent land uses.
- It is well separated from other types of development, especially residential housing.
- In addition, this parcel is adjacent to the Village's sewage lagoons, located in portions of SE¼ 10-11-23-4 and NE¼ 10-11-23-4. The *Alberta Subdivision and Development Regulations* stipulate that certain types of development may not occur within 300 meters of the lagoons (i.e. residences, hospitals, schools etc.). The land, however, may be suitable to accommodate certain types of industrial land use.
- The area is located in close proximity to existing municipal services, as sewer and water services could logically be extended north down Highway Avenue, making it a feasible area to develop.



POLICY AND PROCEDURAL ASPECTS

1. Existing Statutory Plans

If the Village of Nobleford feels that a strategy to manage future industrial growth includes the annexation of land from the County of Lethbridge, a number of policy and procedural aspects must be addressed. The Village Council must consider any statutory plan policies when considering an annexation of land. While the municipality does have an adopted General Municipal Plan (1983) it does not have a statutory intermunicipal agreement with the adjacent municipality, the County of Lethbridge. Therefore, Nobleford must consider any references or policies concerning the fringe area in its neighbouring municipality's statutory plans.

2. Steps to Initiate an Annexation Application

A council of a municipality may only submit annexation applications, with the request being made to the Municipal Government Board. The basic initial steps in proceeding with an annexation application shall consist of the following:

- The municipality initiating annexation gives a notification letter to the Municipal Government Board stating the municipality's intent to prepare for annexation.
- In the letter, it should be stated whom the municipality is applying for the annexation, and from whom and where the intended annexation of land is located. It should also include a description of how much land is proposed to be annexed. It may help to include a map showing the Village and the area of the proposed land to be annexed.
- In the actual official annexation application, state at what date the municipality wants the annexation to be effective, or if the municipality wants it retroactive to the end of the last year.
- The application includes the report stating the unconditional consent, objections, or conditional consent of the municipality from which it is proposed to withdraw the subject lands; or from each registered landowner.
- Every application for annexation of lands has a minimum fee of \$300 for the first quarter section and thereafter, \$50 per each quarter section or portion thereof (this fee should be confirmed with the Municipal Government Board prior to submitting an application).

Upon receipt of the application, the Board may ask for supplementary data it may feel it requires. This could include information of the following type:

- photocopies of certificates of title,
- tax assessments of affected landowners,
- engineering feasibility reports,
- municipal financial data,
- copies of registered plans of survey within the proposed annexation area.

3. Annexation Procedure

The procedures a municipality must follow when initiating an annexation application, are outlined in the Municipal Government Act, Statutes of Alberta, 1994, Chapter M-26.1. The specific legislation is found in Part 4, Division 6 Sections 113 to 128 of the Act and is described in Appendix 1. The following briefly outlines the procedures in the legislation:

- A municipality is only allowed to annex land that is contiguous or abutting its municipal boundaries.
- Once a municipality has decided to annex land, it must give written notice of the proposed annexation to the municipality in which the land is located, the Municipal Government Board and any local authority that may be affected by the annexation.
- The written notice must describe the land to be annexed, give reasons for the proposed annexation, and include proposals for consulting with the public and meeting with the affected landowners to keep them informed of the annexation negotiations.
- The two municipal jurisdictions, the Village of Nobleford and the County of Lethbridge, meet to discuss the proposal. A series of negotiations results, with a summary report outlining what has and has not been agreed to, and includes any comments and feedback from public meetings. (The Village must include a process of public participation.)
- The concluding report is signed by both municipalities and forwarded to the Municipal Government Board.
- Depending on the type of general agreement reached on the proposed annexation, and the relative satisfaction of those municipalities and the public involved, the Municipal Government Board may make a recommendation to the Minister without a public hearing, or may hold one or more advertised public hearings to determine further facts.
- This is followed by the Municipal Government Board sending a report to the Minister with a recommendation on whether or not the land should be annexed. If it does recommend approval, the report must include a description of the lands involved.
- If favourable, the Lieutenant Governor in Council orders the annexation of lands from one municipality to another, which may include the payment of compensation.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the Village of Nobleford has experienced one of the highest population growths in the region. This growth results in spin-off economic activity that produces residential growth, commercial growth and industrial growth. For example, new residents have moved into the community for job opportunities or to create new commercial or industrial activities. These people purchase or rent housing, enrol children in schools, participate in community organizations and consume goods and services from local businesses. All of this will enhance the viability and stability of the community and can contribute to its long-term existence.

Future land requirements for residential, commercial, public and open space can be satisfied through the urban reserve annexed into the Village boundaries in 2001, as well as through infill of the underdeveloped downtown core. However, additional land will likely be needed to satisfy future industrial land requirements.

Recommendations

1. Council should encourage the infill development of vacant industrial land within the existing Robert Todd Industrial Park.
2. Based on the background analysis presented in this report, the land directly north of the existing industrial area identified as the SE¼ of Section 10, Township 11, Range 23, west of the 4th Meridian has been described as appropriate and a logical expansion area to accommodate future industrial growth for the Village of Nobleford.
3. Prior to development occurring in the proposed area, more detailed concept plans will need to be designed.

Implementation Strategy

If the Village of Nobleford feels that a strategy to manage future growth includes the annexation of land from the County of Lethbridge, the following procedures should be considered:

1. Council and administration should take into consideration this report and its findings.
2. The Council should contact the assessor for the County of Lethbridge to determine the property tax implications of the affected landowner.
3. Council should contact and meet with the Council and administration of the County of Lethbridge to discuss the proposal and explain the reasons for the annexation request.
4. The Council and administration will need to meet with the affected landowner. As well, the Village will need some forum to allow public input on any annexation proposal.

5. An agreement to annex any land should be negotiated in good faith between the respective Councils of Nobleford and the County of Lethbridge.
6. An application for annexation should be made pursuant to Part 4, Division 6 Sections 113 to 128 of the Municipal Government Act, Statutes of Alberta 1994, Chapter M-26.1.

APPENDIX 1

SECTIONS 113 - 128 OF THE MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT ACT

SECTIONS 113 - 128 OF THE MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT ACT

Division 6 Annexation

Application	<p>113 This Division does not apply to the annexation of land</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) from an improvement district to another improvement district, or (b) from a special area to another special area.
Restriction on Annexation	<p>114 No order that annexes land to a municipal authority may be made if the land to be annexed is not contiguous with the boundaries of the municipal authority.</p>
Annexations of same land	<p>115(1) A municipal authority may not initiate or proceed with more than one proposed annexation at any one time concerning the same land.</p> <p>(2) A municipal authority may not initiate or proceed with a proposed annexation when the municipal authority is proceeding with an amalgamation, unless the annexation is of the type referred to in section 103(2).</p>
Initiation of Annexation	<p>116(1) A municipal authority initiates the annexation of land by giving written notice of the proposed annexation to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the one or more municipal authorities from which the land is to be annexed, (b) the Municipal Government Board, and (c) any local authority that the initiating municipal authority considers would be affected by the proposed annexation. <p>(2) The notice for an annexation must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) describe the land proposed to be annexed, (b) set out the reasons for the proposed annexation, and (c) include proposals for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) consulting with the public about the proposed annexation, and (ii) meeting with the owners of the land to be annexed, and keeping them informed about the progress of the negotiations.
Direct Negotiations	<p>117 The municipal authorities from which the land is to be annexed must, on receipt of the notice under section 116, meet with the initiating municipal authority to discuss the proposals included in the notice and negotiate the proposals in good faith.</p>

Report on
Negotiations

- 118(1)** On conclusion of the negotiations, the initiating municipal authority must prepare a report that describes the results of the negotiations and that includes
- (a) a list of the matters agreed on and those on which there is no agreement between the municipal authorities,
 - (b) a description of the public consultation processes involved in the negotiation, and
 - (c) a summary of the views expressed during the public consultation processes.
- (2)** The report must be signed by the initiating municipal authority and by the municipal authorities from which the land is to be annexed that are prepared to sign and must include a certificate by the initiating municipal authority stating that the report accurately reflects the results of the negotiations.
- (3)** A municipal authority that does not sign the report may include in the report its reasons for not signing.

Disposition of
Report

- 119(1)** The initiating municipal authority must submit the completed report to the Municipal Government Board and send a copy of it to the municipal authorities from which the land is to be annexed and any other local authority the initiating municipal authority considers would be affected.
- (2)** If the initiating municipal authority indicates in the report that it wishes to proceed with the annexation, the report becomes the initiating municipal authority's application for the annexation.

General
Agreement on
proposed
annexation

- 120(1)** If the initiating municipal authority wishes the annexation to proceed and the Municipal Government Board is satisfied that the affected municipal authorities and the public are generally in agreement with the annexation, the Board must notify the Minister and all the local authorities that it considers would be affected by the annexation and anyone else the Board considers should be notified that
- (a) there appears to be general agreement with the proposed annexation, and
 - (b) unless objections to the annexation are filed with the Board by a specified date, the Board will make its recommendation to the Minister without holding a public hearing.
- (2)** If no objections are filed with the Board by the specified date, the Board must
- (a) consider the principles, standards and criteria on annexation established under section 76, and
 - (b) prepare a written report with its recommendations and send it to the Minister.
- (3)** If no objections are filed with the Board by the specified date, the Board
- (a) may investigate, analyze and make findings of fact about the annexation, including the probable effect on local authorities and on the residents of an area, and
 - (b) must conduct one or more hearings in respect of the annexation and allow any affected person to appear before the Board at a hearing.

No general Agreement on proposed annexation	<p>121 If the initiating municipal authority wishes the annexation to proceed and the Municipal Government Board is not satisfied that the affected municipal authorities or the public are in general agreement with the annexation, the Board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) must notify the Minister and all the local authorities that it considers would be affected by the annexation, and anyone else the Board considers should be notified, that there is not general agreement with the proposed annexation, (b) may investigate, analyze and make findings of fact about the annexation, including the probable effect on local authorities and on the residents of an area, and (c) must conduct one or more hearings in respect of the annexation and allow any affected person to appear before the Board at a hearing.
Notice of Hearing and costs	<p>122(1) The Municipal Government Board must publish a notice of a hearing under section 120(3) or 121 at least once a week for 2 consecutive weeks in a newspaper or other publication circulating in the affected area, the 2nd notice being not less than 6 days before the hearing.</p> <p>(2) The Municipal Government Board may determine the costs of and incidental to a hearing and decide by whom and to whom the costs are to be paid.</p> <p>(3) Section 502 applies to a decision of the Board relating to costs under this section.</p>
Board's report	<p>123 After one or more hearings under section 120(3) or 121 have been held and after considering the reports and representations made to it and the principles, standards and criteria on annexation established under section 76, the Board must prepare a written report of its findings and recommendations and send it to the Minister.</p>
Contents of Report	<p>124(1) A report by the Municipal Government Board to the Minister under this Division must set out</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) a recommendation on whether or not land should be annexed to the initiating municipal authority or other municipal authority; (b) if it is recommending annexation, a description of the land, whether there should be revenue sharing and any terms, conditions and other things the Board considers necessary or desirable to implement the annexation. <p>(2) If the Board does not recommend that land be annexed in its report, the Board must provide the report to all local authorities that it considers would be affected by the annexation.</p>
Annexation Order	<p>125 If an application for the annexation of land has been referred to the Board, the Lieutenant Governor in Council, after considering the report of the Board, may by order annex land from a municipal authority to another municipal authority.</p>
Minor Annexation	<p>126 Despite sections 116 to 124, the Lieutenant Governor in Council may by order annex land to a municipal authority if the Minister believes that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the proposed annexation is of a minor nature, and (b) there is no dispute about the proposed annexation.

Contents of
Order

127 An order to annex land to a municipal authority may

- (a) require a municipal authority to pay compensation to another municipal authority in an amount set out in the order or to be determined by means specified in the order, including arbitration under the *Arbitration Act*,
- (b) dissolve a municipal authority as a result of the annexation, and
- (c) deal with any of the matters referred to in section 89.

Public utilities

127.1(1) In this section, "utility agreement" means an agreement approved by the Public Utilities Board in which a municipality grants a right to a person to provide a public utility in all or part of the municipality.

(2) An annexation of land does not affect any right under a utility agreement to provide a public utility on the annexed land unless the annexation order provides otherwise.

(3) This section does not apply to a right to provide a natural gas service if the right is subject to section 22 of the *Rural Gas Act*.

Annexation
Refused

128 If an application for an annexation of land is refused, the Minister must notify the initiating municipal authority of the refusal and the initiating municipal authority may not make another annexation application concerning the same land for a period of one year after it receives notice of the refusal.