



Rural Municipality of The Gap No. 39 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 7/2020



Prepared by Prairie Wild Consulting Co.
www.prairiewildconsulting.ca

The Rural Municipality of The Gap No. 39

Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 7/2020

1. Pursuant to Sections 29 and 32 of *The Planning and Development Act, 2007*, the Council of the RM of The Gap No. 39 hereby adopts the Official Community Plan, identified as Schedule "A" to this Bylaw.
2. The Reeve and Administrator are hereby authorized to sign and seal Schedule "A" which is attached to and forms part of this Bylaw.
3. This Bylaw shall come into force on the date of final approval by the Minister of Government Relations.

Read a first time this DAY day of MONTH 20 YEAR

Read a second time this DAY day of MONTH 20 YEAR

Read a third time and passed this DAY day of MONTH 20 YEAR

SIGNATURE OF REEVE
REEVE

SEAL

SIGNATURE OF ADMINISTRATOR
ADMINISTRATOR

The Rural Municipality of The Gap No. 39
Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 7/2020
Schedule “A” to Bylaw 7/2020

SIGNATURE OF REEVE

REEVE

SEAL

SIGNATURE OF ADMINISTRATOR

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Acknowledgements

Developing a vision forward for a community, takes a community. The Rural Municipality of The Gap's comprehensive Official Community Plan highlights the RM's unique attributes and captures the goals and values of where and how the community wants to grow and develop into the future. A special thanks goes out to the many residents, landowners, business owners, community leaders, and regional partners for contributing to this Plan.

We would also like to thank our professional planning team, Prairie Wild Consulting Co., for providing the technical and facilitative guidance through this process.

The RM of The Gap looks forward to continuing to work with the community through implementation of the Plan.



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Plan at a Glance

The Rural Municipality of The Gap No. 39 (RM) is committed to planning for the future. There have been changes in the community since its establishment in 1911. These changes have prompted the community to think about what they envision for the future. This includes considerations around the community's agriculture and natural resource sectors, population growth, environmental sensitivities, and partnerships with neighbouring communities.

This is the first ever Official Community Plan (OCP) for the RM of The Gap. Through the planning process, residents, business owners, landowners, community leadership and administration, and other key stakeholders became educated about what comprehensive community planning is and why it is important. The community has identified a vision and path forward for the RM over the next 25+ years.

The Zoning Bylaw No. 8/2020 is the implementation tool of the OCP. Both bylaws, adopted by the RM, are written in accordance with *The Planning and Development Act, 2007* and *The Statements of Provincial Interest Regulations*. Beyond the legislative framework, these planning tools are reflective of the community's voice.

The **vision** for the RM is:

In 2045...

Our community is known for all of its possibilities. We are agricultural and natural resource innovators embracing new technologies and industry that supports our local and regional economy. This is complemented by conscious environmental considerations of the RM's natural landscape.

Through these opportunities, we provide quality and enhanced services related to health, recreation, transportation, and infrastructure. We work together as a community and with our neighbours to make this region thrive.

The **Mission** for the RM is:

To maintain and enhance the economic, cultural, and social well-being of our ratepayers. We accomplish our mission by providing services to the public which cannot be feasibly achieved individually such as transportation, protective, environmental, public health, welfare, economic development, recreational, and cultural services for the benefit of the public as a whole.

A number of planning themes were discussed and identified through the process. These are reflected as the community's overarching goals. The goals include:

Agricultural Enhancement:	Encourage agricultural production, processing, and value-added activities.
Economic Diversification and Expansion:	Promote the RM as a place for economic opportunities including small businesses, services, and large industries.
Community Growth and Wellbeing:	Support a family-oriented community where residents have access to a variety of services.



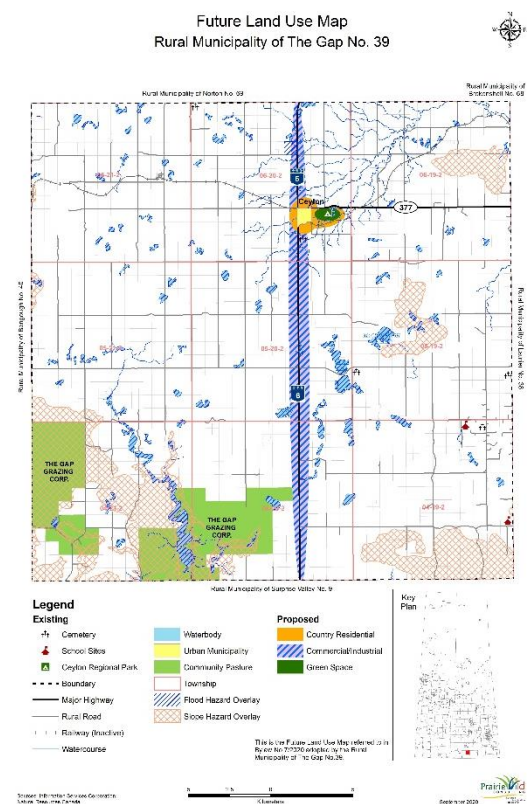
Sporting and Supporting our Parks and Recreation	Enhance and expand parks, recreation, and tourism within the community and region.
Honouring our Heritage and Culture:	Recognize, honour, and incorporate the past in future opportunities.
Regional Partnerships and Services:	Collaborate with neighbouring communities and partners to deliver services to residents and visitors.
Environmental Preservation:	Advocate for the respect and preservation of the RM's landscape, natural features, community pasturelands, sensitive lands, and species.
Staying Connected: Infrastructure and Transportation Networks	Develop and maintain infrastructure associated with roadway transportation networks to facilitate the safe and reliable movement of people, goods, and services.

Each goal area has their own section within the OCP. The goal area section includes an overview of the current lay of the land in the RM, the overarching goal, objectives, and a number of policies to help the RM achieve the vision.

In addition to the goals, objectives, and policies, a Future Land Use Map (as shown to the right) is included to provide a conceptual illustration identifying potential land uses within the RM over the next 25+ years. This includes potential areas for country residential, commercial, industrial, and green space.

The following reference maps have also been included to help inform and guide decisions related to proposed development.

- Agricultural Crown Lands
- Soil Capability for Agriculture
- Oil and Gas Wells
- Pipelines and Utility Right-of-Ways
- Mineral Resources
- Heritage and Cultural Assets
- Heritage Sensitive Lands
- Natural Constraints
- Special Areas
- Rare and Endangered Species
- Water Wells and Aquifers
- Existing Transportation Network



Anyone proposing development is required to fill out a development permit application prior to starting development. Proposed developments will complement and adhere to the OCP, maps, Zoning Bylaw, and other related tools. These bylaws and tools help to provide consistency and clarity for all. They are living, breathing documents; as changes arise, amendments may be considered and undertaken in accordance with the process outlined in *The Planning and Development Act, 2007*.

To obtain a copy of the Official Community Plan, Zoning Bylaw, maps, and other tools, contact the RM office.



1. Our Community Story (Planning Context)

The Rural Municipality of The Gap No. 39 (RM) is committed to planning for the future. There have been changes in the community since its establishment in 1911. These changes have prompted the community to think about what they envision for the future. This includes considerations around the community's agriculture and natural resource sectors, population growth, environmental sensitivities, and partnerships with neighbouring communities.

This is the first ever Official Community Plan (OCP) for the RM of the Gap. Through the planning process, residents, business owners, landowners, community leadership and administration, and other key stakeholders became educated about what comprehensive community planning is and why it is important. The community has identified a vision and path forward for the RM over the next 25+ years. Through implementation of the OCP, the community hopes to provide consistency, clarity, and flexibility when considering growth and development in the RM.

1.1 Purpose

What is an Official Community Plan?

Community planning is a comprehensive approach to identifying and addressing the unique needs of the community in relation to its future sustainability. An Official Community Plan (OCP) is a policy framework to guide the physical, environmental, economic, social, and cultural development of the community. OCPs are prepared to address compatibility of land uses, management of green space and preservation of natural resources, identification and preservation of historic and cultural assets, ensure adequate infrastructure needs, and identify opportunities related to community services, transportation, housing, and more.

Planning Authority

The Planning and Development Act, 2007 (Act) is the provincial legislation that specifies what must be included in the OCP. Figure 1.1 outlines the policy requirements of the Act to be included in the OCP.

In addition to Act, in 2011, the Province of Saskatchewan adopted *The Statements of Provincial Interest Regulations*. These regulations include 14 areas that also must be considered, where applicable, when a community is developing an OCP. Figure 1.2 on the following page outlines the 14 Statements of Provincial Interest.

Figure 1.1 Policy Requirements of an OCP

The Planning and Development Act, 2007

Contents of plan (32)

- (1) *An official community plan must incorporate, insofar as is practical, any applicable provincial land use policies and statements of provincial interest.*
- (2) *An official community plan must contain statements of policy with respect to:*
 - a) *Sustainable current and future land use and development in the municipality;*
 - b) *Current and future economic development;*
 - c) *The general provision of public works;*
 - d) *The management of lands that are subject to natural hazards, including flooding, slumping and slope instability;*
 - e) *The management of environmentally sensitive lands;*
 - f) *Source water protection;*
 - g) *The means of implementing the official community plan*
 - h) *The co-ordination of land use, future growth patterns and public works with adjacent municipalities;*
 - i) *If the municipality has entered into an intermunicipal development agreement pursuant to section 32.1, the implementation of the intermunicipal development agreement;*
 - j) *The provision of municipal reserve for school purposes;*
 - k) *The management of lands that are in proximity to existing or proposed railway operations.*



Through the legislative requirements, communities who are creating an OCP must retain a Registered Professional Planner. The Minister of Government Relations is the approving authority on OCPs.

Use of This Plan

The policies and guiding principles included in the OCP are intended to provide guidance and direction in the evaluation of applications. In addition to this Plan, a Zoning Bylaw No. 8/2020 has been adopted. It is important to distinguish the difference between the Plan and Zoning Bylaw. The Zoning Bylaw is the implementation tool of the OCP and controls the use of land for providing the amenity of the area within the Council's jurisdiction, and for the health, safety, and general welfare of residents of the community.

A Future Land Use Map is included as Appendix A that illustrates where potential land uses may locate within the RM. A number of Reference Maps have been included to provide local context and considerations when the RM is making land use decisions.

The OCP is a living, breathing document. As the Plan is implemented and changes arise, there is flexibility to amend the document through the process outlined in Section 39 of *The Planning and Development Act*.

Interpretation

The RM of the Gap's Official Community Plan is also referred to as the 'OCP', 'the Plan', or 'this Plan'. The OCP should be read in its entirety and all relevant text, tables, and appendices are applied together in the context of each individual section.

The vision contained within the Plan captures the hopes of the community. This includes how it wants to grow into the future in a balanced and efficient manner, while still maintaining the unique sense of place of the RM. The policies within this Plan are written using a specific planning terminology to ensure the intentions are clear and are to be interpreted as follows:

- "Shall" is an operative word which means the action is obligatory.
- "Should" is an operative word which means that in order to achieve plan objectives, it is strongly advised that the action be taken.
- "May" is an operative word meaning a choice is available, with no particular direction or guidance intended.

Figure 1.2 Statements of Provincial Interest

The Statements of Provincial Interest

- *Agriculture and Value-Added Agribusiness*
- *Biodiversity and Natural Ecosystems*
- *First Nations and Metis Engagement*
- *Heritage and Culture*
- *Inter-municipal Cooperation*
- *Mineral Resource Exploration and Development*
- *Public Safety*
- *Public Works*
- *Recreation and Tourism*
- *Residential Development*
- *Sand and Gravel*
- *Shore Lands and Water Bodies*
- *Source Water Protection*
- *Transportation*



1.2 Plan Organization

Planning Area

The geographic scope of the RM of The Gap's OCP includes the municipal boundaries of the RM. The RM includes an area of 830.92 square kilometers located in South East Saskatchewan. The largest urban centre located in the RM is the Village of Ceylon. Neighbouring communities include:

- Rural Municipality of Lake Alma No. 8 (South East)
- Rural Municipality of Surprise Valley No. 9 (South)
- Village of Minton
- Rural Municipality of Happy Valley No. 10 (South West)
- Rural Municipality of Laurier No. 38 (East)
- Town of Radville
- Rural Municipality of Bengough No. 40 (West)
- Town of Bengough
- Rural Municipality of Brokenshell No. 68 (North East)
- Rural Municipality of Norton No. 69 (North)
- Village of Pangman
- Rural Municipality of Key West No. 70 (North West)
- Town of Ogema

Figure 1.3 RM of The Gap No. 39 Baseline Map

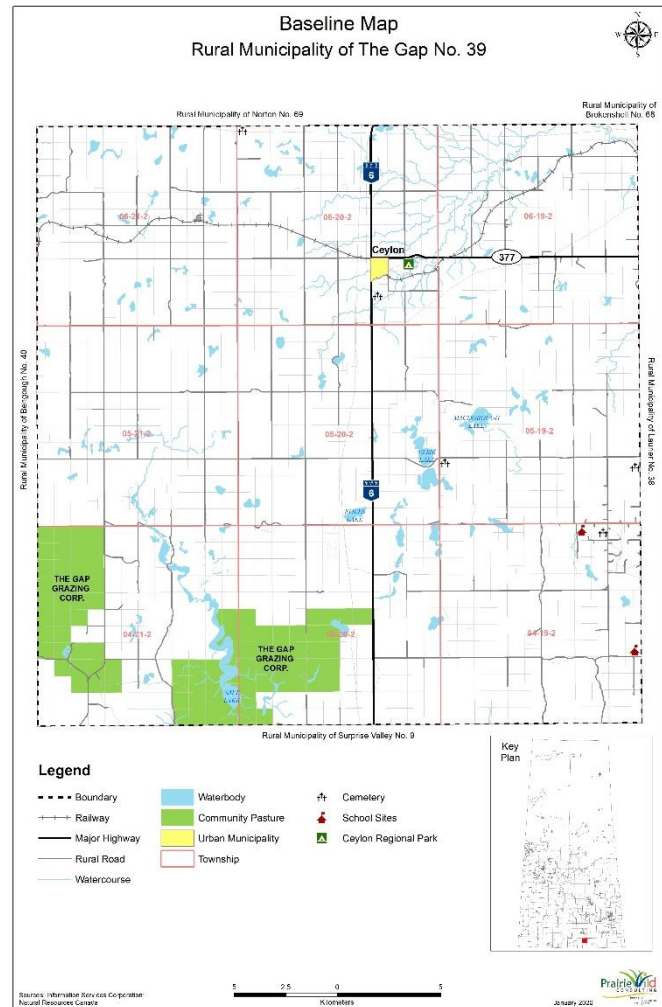


Figure 1.3 illustrates the boundaries of the RM of The Gap.



2. RM of The Gap Past and Present

In order to plan for the future, it is important to reflect and understand the communities past and present. Below summarizes key highlights of the RM's past and present. A more detailed community profile is included in Appendix D.

2.1 History

The RM of The Gap is located on Treaty 4 Territory, which spans across a large portion of southern Saskatchewan. Initial settlements of the land were by the Cree, Saulteaux, Ojibwa, and Assiniboine people.¹ Treaty 4 was signed in 1874 at Fort Qu'Appelle Saskatchewan.² Prior to settlement, the area now known as the RM of The Gap, was characterized by rolling prairie land covered by native grasses. Buffalo herds used to roam the lands and it is known that the area was frequently traveled by Indigenous peoples, though no permanent camps have been confirmed to have been established in the area.³

European settlers first arrived in the region by following along the Willow Bunch Trail, which is a narrow valley winding from the hilly southern Saskatchewan to Winnipeg, Manitoba. The break between the hills was referred to as "Gap Country" by the early settlers, which is the origin of the RM's name today. Southern Saskatchewan's rich agricultural soil provided homesteaders a reason to settle in the area, while Willow Bunch Trail provided a favourable route to the area from the east.⁴

The homesteaders came to the Gap country during the summer and fall of 1905. Many of the initial settlers in the region arrived in the area prior to the surveying of the land as part of *The Dominion Land Act* of 1872. These settlers established squatters' rights to the lands they desired and were later permitted to file on homesteads at the time of surveying.⁵ The Dominion survey established nine townships within the current borders of what is now the RM of The Gap. After the survey, a second wave of settlers came in the spring and summer of 1916. The newcomers to Gap Country faced numerous challenges such as isolation, poor housing conditions, limited diet, limited supplies, and more importantly, the harsh winter.

The Local Improvement District #519 was formed in 1910 to act as the governance unit for the communities within Gap Country. The Local Improvement District #519 quickly changed to the Rural Municipality of the Gap #39. Ceylon was the first village within the Rural Municipality, when it was established in 1911.⁶

As the population grew, the residents of the RM of The Gap pursued services and facilities that would sustain community and economic development. Schools, churches, post offices, and a train station brought opportunities for new settlers, and provided a reason to stay for the current residents. Improvements with transportation and telecommunications followed soon after. New recreational facilities, better agricultural technologies, and the start of the oil industry sustained the RM for the latter half of the 20th century.

¹ Historica Canada. The Canadian Encyclopedia. 2019. *Treaty 4*.

² Ibid.

³ History Committee of RM of the Gap #39. 1980. *Builders of a Great Land*.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.



2.2 Present Day

Today, the RM of The Gap has a population of 199.⁷ The community is characterized primarily by its agricultural industry. Throughout the RM, farms can be found that produce a variety of crops and raise livestock. There is an Intensive Livestock Operation located in the RM along Highway #6, south of the Village of Ceylon. There are also community pasture lands present in the southwestern portion of The Gap.

The oil and gas industry remains a major economic driver for the municipality. There are two pipelines that run through the community. One of these is the Wascana Pipeline, which was established in 1973 to transport crude oil to the United States. In the 1950s dozens of oil rigs were dug in the RM of The Gap, and many can still be found today.

The Ceylon Regional Park Authority, established in 1965, acts as an important recreational amenity for the community. The well-treed campground is open between May and September and includes 34 full services sites and non-electrical sites. Presently, Ceylon Regional Park boasts a lagoon-style pool with a change house, concession booth, picnic areas with tables, boat launch, playground, a baseball diamond, and more.⁸

⁷ Census of Canada. (2016). Community Profile. [2016 Data Products]. Retrieved from E-STAT <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=4702026&Geo2=CD&Code2=4702&SearchText=The%20Gap&SearchType=Begin&SearchPR=01&B1=All&TABID=1&type=0>

⁸ History Committee of RM of the Gap #39. 2001. *Builders of a Great Land Continues*.



3. The Planning Process

The RM's planning process included four phases as outlined in Figure 3.1. The process was grounded in an Appreciative Inquiry (AI) framework. AI focuses on strengths and seeks out the positives to bring people, communities, organizations, and groups together to create and implement their shared vision, goals, policies, and actions.

The process began in June 2019 and was completed in October 2020. During the final stages of the planning process, Saskatchewan declared a state of emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic had impacts on the planning process due to the Provincial regulations and protocols in place.

Prior to the pandemic, the RM Council, Administration, and community were engaged in the process to inform the development of this Plan and the corresponding Zoning Bylaw. The following sub-sections summarize the engagement approach.

3.1 Information Gathering Meeting Administration and Council

On July 4, 2019, the professional planning team met with the RM Administrator and Council. The purpose of this meeting was to provide an overview of the planning process, the planning legislation and tools to be developed, and gather input and information about the RM.

Key questions during the meeting included:

- What are some positives in the area?
- What keeps you up at night?
- What else?

The discussion included a mapping exercise to identify current and potential future land uses.

3.2 Community Survey

A community survey was developed and distributed to community members through a mail out. Neighbouring communities were also invited to share input through the community survey and were invited to the community-wide engagement session. The survey was open from July-August 2019.

Figure 3.1 RM of The Gap's Planning Phases





3.3 Community-Wide Engagement Session

Community and regional residents and stakeholders were invited to participate in a community-wide engagement session on August 8, 2019. Prairie Wild Consulting Co. facilitated the session. There were approximately 40 people in attendance.

The agenda for the meeting included:

- Welcome and Introductions
- Revisiting our Foundations for Success
- Community Planning Overview
- Exploring our Future
- Thank You and Next Steps

Participants were provided with an overview of the planning process and engaged in participatory exercises. The first exercise included identifying key aspects of the RM's history, identifying what is happening in the RM today, and what are some key considerations for the future. The second exercise included identifying hopes for the future for a number of planning themes. Participants were also provided with draft Reference Maps for review and input.



3.4 Review of Draft Planning Tools with RM Administration and Council

On March 18, 2020, members of the planning team and RM Administration and Council met to review the draft OCP, Zoning Bylaw, and maps. The RM Administration and Council provided input and feedback into the drafts. This was an iterative process in order to finalize the planning tools and prepare them for adoption.



4. A Vision Forward for the RM of The Gap

4.1 Vision

In 2045...

Our community is known for all of its possibilities. We are agricultural and natural resource innovators embracing new technologies and industry that supports our local and regional economy. This is complemented by conscious environmental considerations of the RM's natural landscape.

Through these opportunities, we provide quality and enhanced services related to health, recreation, transportation, and infrastructure. We work together as a community and with our neighbours to make this region thrive.

4.2 Mission

To maintain and enhance the economic, cultural, and social well-being of our ratepayers. We accomplish our mission by providing services to the public which cannot be feasibly achieved individually such as transportation, protective, environmental, public health, welfare, economic development, recreational, and cultural services for the benefit of the public as a whole.

4.3 Community Goals

The following planning themes and goals were identified through the community planning process. These are overarching goals for the community and are used to guide decisions to work towards achieving the vision.

Agricultural Enhancement:	Encourage agricultural production, processing, and value-added activities.
Economic Diversification and Expansion:	Promote the RM as a place for economic opportunities including small businesses, services, and large industries.
Community Growth and Wellbeing:	Support a family-oriented community where residents have access to a variety of services.
Sporting and Supporting our Parks and Recreation	Enhance and expand parks, recreation, and tourism within the community and region.
Honouring our Heritage and Culture:	Recognize, honour, and incorporate the past in future opportunities.
Regional Partnerships and Services:	Collaborate with neighbouring communities and partners to deliver services to residents and visitors.
Environmental Preservation:	Advocate for the respect and preservation of the RM's landscape, natural features, community pasturelands, sensitive lands, and species.
Staying Connected: Infrastructure and Transportation Networks	Develop and maintain infrastructure associated with roadway transportation networks to facilitate the safe and reliable movement of people, goods, and services.



5. Agricultural Enhancement

Overview	<p>Agriculture is the main industry within the RM of The Gap. There are a number of farms that raise livestock and/or produce crops of various varieties such as canola, flax, wheat, and pulses.</p> <p>Reference Map B1 Agricultural Crown Lands identifies all Crown Lands within the RM of The Gap. Some of these lands are leased out to local farmers while others include native lands, environmental sensitivities, and/or have heritage value.</p> <p>As illustrated in the Reference Map in Appendix B2, Soil Capability for Agriculture, a majority of the RM falls within classes 3 – Moderately Severe Limitations and 5 – Perennial Forage Production. The highest producing lands with a class 1 – No Significant Limitations are located west of Ceylon and in the north west corner of the RM.</p> <p>There is also an Intensive Livestock Operation located along Highway #6. It is recognized that this industry contributes to the community's economy though there are sensitivities with respect to compatibility of surrounding land uses and the environment.</p> <p>The RM prides itself on its agricultural roots and wants to sustain and expand this sector into the future.</p>
Overarching Goal	Encourage agricultural production, processing, and value-added activities in the RM.

Objectives

- To preserve and encourage local agricultural activities.
- To attract agriculture and value-added businesses.
- To explore agri-tourism opportunities in the RM.
- To support innovative agricultural related technologies.
- To provide for waste management and environmental sustainability.

5.1 Agricultural Preservation Policies

- 5.1.1 The RM of The Gap shall encourage preservation of agricultural lands and activities particularly in areas where there is a high soil classification as identified on the Reference Map B2.
- 5.1.2 Agricultural production and activities that enhance the availability and access food in the community and region are supported. This includes, though is not limited to, crop production, raising of livestock, gardens and greenhouses, and farmer's markets.
- 5.1.3 Crown Lands, as illustrated on Reference Map B1, shall be protected from incompatible uses.



- 5.1.4 The RM shall engage with the Province of Saskatchewan and lessees of any Agricultural Crown Lands when development is being proposed in proximity to such lands.
- 5.1.5 The RM shall encourage a diverse agricultural landscape. Support for local family farms are a priority.
- 5.1.6 Agricultural related activities shall consider impacts on the lands and surrounding uses.
- 5.1.7 The RM shall promote environmentally conscious practices including agricultural waste management and land drainage.
- 5.1.8 Road use or road maintenance agreements may be required for proposed intensive developments that may have impacts on local infrastructure.

5.2 Agriculture Value-Added and Tourism Policies

- 5.2.1 Value-added agriculture related to production, manufacturing, and processing shall be encouraged in the RM.
- 5.2.2 Value-added agriculture activities shall be located in areas where:
 - a. Existing infrastructure and transportation networks are in place to accommodate the use;
 - b. There are no environmental sensitivities or hazardous lands as identified in Reference Map B8;
 - c. Other surrounding land uses are not negatively affected;
 - d. There is community support for the activity; and
 - e. The use complies with the objectives and policies in the OCP, regulations in the Zoning Bylaw, and any other related and relevant provincial and federal legislation.
- 5.2.3 Agricultural investment shall be promoted in the community to educate residents, visitors, and other stakeholders about its value.
- 5.2.4 The use and development of new agricultural technologies shall be encouraged in the RM.
- 5.2.5 Cannabis production facilities may be considered by the RM. Any proposed facilities will comply with the regulations in the Zoning Bylaw, and provincial and federal legislation.
- 5.2.6 The RM may explore opportunities for tourism initiatives related to agriculture and the agriculture industry to attract visitors and boost the community's economy.
- 5.2.7 The RM may work with Saskatchewan Tourism and others as identified to promote the assets such as the Ceylon Regional Park, heritage sites, and cultural events in the community and region.

5.3 Intensive Livestock Operations (ILO) Policies

- 5.3.1 Council will monitor the livestock industry in the RM of The Gap by undertaking periodic reviews of the existing livestock operation, the available land base, land use conflict issues and areas, and changes in technology and environmental regulations.



- 5.3.2 Intensive Livestock Operations will be limited to areas within the community where surrounding land uses are the least impacted.
- 5.3.3 Areas protected from ILOs shall include the Village of Ceylon, environmentally sensitive lands, and major waterways as identified in Reference Map B8.
- 5.3.4 Expansion and proposal of new ILOs shall be in conformity with this Plan and any provincial regulations. The Zoning Bylaw will outline setbacks, separation distances, siting requirements, and manure disposal for ILOs within the Agricultural Resource District.
- 5.3.5 Livestock operations will be characterized by the total number of animal units and animal type. ILOs will be required to locate where they provide an appropriate land base size to support their operation and where they have a sufficient land base for manure application.
- 5.3.6 The development, application, and environmental monitoring of livestock operations shall be undertaken in consultation with Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture to ensure the land use decisions and agricultural operating practices regulated by the Province are coordinated with the RM.
- 5.3.7 When reviewing applications for new ILOs, Council will consider the following:
 - a. Type and size of operation;
 - b. The number and type of animals units;
 - c. Potential capacity of operation and plans for future expansion;
 - d. Method of operation;
 - e. Compatibility and impact on neighbouring land uses;
 - f. Compliance with the Zoning Bylaw;
 - g. Other information and approvals as required by the Ministry of Agriculture;
 - h. Community support; and
 - i. Servicing requirements.
- 5.3.8 Building setback standards shall be applied to new intensive livestock development along municipal roads, in order to provide a measure of safety for the traveling public, to provide a measure of buffering of buildings from roadway nuisances, such as noise and dust, and to reduce snow drifting problems along rural roads.



6. Economic Diversification and Expansion

Overview	<p>In addition to agricultural activities, the RM of The Gap also has natural resource activity including oil and gas resource exploration and development and aggregate resource extraction. Since the 1950's, there have been a number of oil wells drilled in the RM and there continues to be number of active wells.</p> <p>Many pipelines have been constructed in the RM to facilitate the transfer of oil, water, and emulsion. One of the major pipelines is the Wascana Pipeline which was established in 1973 to transport crude oil to the United States. Oil and gas wells, and pipeline and utility right-of-ways are shown on Reference Maps in Appendices B3 and B4.</p> <p>The RM has access to gravel from two quarry lease pits. Gravel is primarily used by the RM for road maintenance. There are a number of private gravel pits within the RM boundaries and the RM has a road maintenance agreement in place with some owners. Gravel pits are identified on the Reference Map in Appendix B5.</p> <p>Other features that highlight the RM include: the local transportation networks; the RM's close proximity to the cities of Weyburn and Regina, and the United States; and available services in the region.</p>
Overarching Goal	Promote the RM as a place for economic opportunities including small business and services, and large industry.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote economic investment in the community. • To support existing businesses. • To identify economic opportunities. • To provide transparent and timely development review processes. • To market the RM as a place to locate. • To promote the RM's locational advantages. • To encourage safe and environmentally conscious mineral and resource extraction.

6.1 General

- 6.1.1 The RM shall encourage development and competitive markets by supporting a mix of commercial and industrial uses. The Future Land Use Map found in Appendix A illustrates potential opportunities to accommodate new commercial and industrial development.
- 6.1.2 Commercial and industrial activities shall include the development of structures, buildings, and landscaped areas that are compatible with adjacent uses and ensure a high level of visual and aesthetic quality.
- 6.1.3 The RM shall encourage economic development opportunities that complement and support a healthy community design. Core commercial developments will be encouraged to locate in the



Village of Ceylon or other neighbouring urban community. Commercial developments with extensive site requirements, such as outdoor storage, displays, and parking requirements (e.g. large trucks) will be encouraged to locate in the RM.

- 6.1.4 Resources to assist with economic development opportunities within the RM may be explored. This may include incentives, abatements, promotions, and advertising.
- 6.1.5 The RM shall market and promote its diverse landscape and locational advantage.
- 6.1.6 The RM shall work with the wider region to explore business strategies and initiatives including the promotion of community amenities, existing businesses, and attracting new business ventures to the area.
- 6.1.7 When reviewing development permit applications, the RM will be transparent and provide a timely response to applicants. The review of development applications will follow the required process as outlined in the Zoning Bylaw.
- 6.1.8 Highway commercial and industrial development will be evaluated based on the following factors:
 - a. Consistency with the Future Land Use Map and other relevant reference maps;
 - b. Site planning and land use compatibility with existing development;
 - c. The capacity of the RM to provide efficient and economical municipal services, at a cost that can be borne by the development;
 - d. Provision for safe movement and integration of vehicular traffic on local streets and with controlled access to highways;
 - e. The site shall have direct and approved access to a major public road system; and
 - f. The development shall not have adverse impacts on the groundwater.
- 6.1.9 Highway commercial and industrial areas shall be provisioned with adequate infrastructure that can accommodate these developments in a timely, economical, and environmentally sustainable manner.
- 6.1.10 The RM will assist the appropriate agencies to identify potentially contaminated sites that may exist in the community and cooperate in the development of appropriate mitigation or remediation plans for those sites.
- 6.1.11 Incentives may be considered for the development of brownfield sites, so long as the development includes undertaking appropriate environmental assessments and measures.
- 6.1.12 Care shall be taken in situating of industrial uses that normally create very significant land use conflicts with regard to noise, vibration, smoke, dust, odour, or potential environmental contamination. Such uses shall be encouraged to find a location that maximizes separation from residential areas and shall be visually screened or otherwise buffered to protect adjacent land uses.



6.2 Mineral and Resource Extraction Policies

- 6.2.1 As per *The Statements of Provincial Interest*, mineral resource exploration and development shall be a permitted use through the RM to allow access to such mineral resources.
- 6.2.2 Natural resource development that benefits the RM and surrounding area will be encouraged throughout the municipality according to their respective locational requirements, separated from incompatible activities, with minimal community and environmental disruption. Potential for mineral resources including oil and potash is identified on the Reference Map in Appendix B5.
- 6.2.3 The RM shall ensure that the exploration, development, production, and termination of all petroleum, gas, mineral, and aggregate resources development is undertaken in an environmentally sustainable and safe manner that is complementary to adjoining lands. Proposals for these activities shall be referred to the appropriate government agencies for their review.
- 6.2.4 Proposals for mineral and aggregate resource related uses may be required to enter into agreements that include provisions for servicing, road use, road maintenance, heavy haul allowances, and reclamation with the RM to ensure the maintenance of local road networks and as part of the continued direction towards more sustainable management of the resource.
- 6.2.5 The RM may promote industrial development in areas that either occupy or adjoin natural resource extraction activities that are also compatible with surrounding agricultural uses.
- 6.2.6 Any exploration and development proposals in Environmentally Sensitive Areas of the RM will be subject to prior review through the review process of the Saskatchewan Environment. Any proposal which satisfies any of the criteria of a development as defined under *The Environmental Assessment Act* will be required to undergo an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and to obtain Ministerial Approval to proceed.
- 6.2.7 When mineral and resource extraction is proposed, the proponent will share the types of technologies used to extract the resources. Preference will be given to technologies that are the least invasive on the land and infrastructure.
- 6.2.8 Disturbance related to mineral resource extraction shall be minimized by using the best available techniques and practices to reduce the overall footprint of activity during all phases of construction, operation, reclamation, and abandonment. Consideration shall be given to the ability of natural landscapes to sustainably support reclamation efforts. This includes:
 - a. Drainage, erosion, contour, stability, gravel and rocks, and debris;
 - b. Surface soil quantity, distribution, and quality;
 - c. Plant and weed species, health, and density, and bare areas; and
 - d. Any others as identified.
- 6.2.9 Extraction operations including petroleum resource operations shall be protected from incompatible and potentially incompatible development and activities that would restrict exploration, hinder their expansion or continued use, or which would be incompatible for reasons of public health, public safety, or environmental impact.



- 6.2.10 Buffer strips should be established around existing and potential aggregate resource sites in order to protect the aggregate deposits from incompatible adjacent land uses. The buffer strip should be determined in consultation with the Saskatchewan Ministry of Energy and Resources.

6.3 Sand and Gravel Policies

- 6.3.1 The RM shall ensure there is an adequate amount of gravel resources for the needs of the municipality. The RM shall explore gravel resource options and opportunities together including agreements to share and haul sand and gravel in and out of neighbouring municipalities.
- 6.3.2 Sand and gravel development should be compatible with existing and planned land uses, and such developments are operated with minimal disturbance to the environment and aquifers. Current gravel pits are identified on the Reference Map in Appendix B5. Sensitive environmental areas are included in Reference Maps Appendices B8-B10, and water wells and aquifers are included in Appendix B11.
- 6.3.3 Where aggregate development or extraction is being proposed, the municipality will give consideration to:
- a. Any conservation easements, heritage, environmental sensitivities, and wildlife habitat on the site and in the surrounding area;
 - b. The health and safety of residents and the environment;
 - c. The proposal's waste management plan. Spills shall be immediately reported to the municipality and the Saskatchewan Environment Spill Control Centre;
 - d. The distance and impacts of the development on residences, municipal water wells, and groundwater;
 - e. Dust and noise impacts;
 - f. Impacts and setbacks from developed and undeveloped road allowances;
 - g. Conformance to the regulations outlined in the Zoning Bylaw No. 8/2020; and
 - h. Any other provisions identified by the RM.
- 6.3.4 A disturbed area shall be reclaimed in accordance with Saskatchewan Environment Reclamation Guidelines for Sand and Gravel Operators, and any agreements, or policies in place for the RM.



7. Community Growth and Well-being

Overview	<p>Since the RM's establishment in 1911, its population has increased and decreased over the years. In recent years, the RM has seen many young people move back to the family farm. The 2016 Census population of the RM is 199 and the average age is 45. The community is hopeful that by attracting and investing in the economy; the RM's population will grow.</p> <p>The RM understands that proximity to health and emergency services is important when considering locating to a community. The closest health centre is in the Town of Radville, approximately 24 kilometers from the Village of Ceylon. The Radville Marian Health Centre is an Emergency Treatment Centre and Long-Term Care Facility. The closest hospital is located in the City of Weyburn. The RM is also a member and supporter of the Missouri Coteau Ambulance Committee which provides honorariums and lodging to Emergency Medical Services personnel in an effort to provide efficient and high-quality local care services.</p> <p>Safety is a priority to the RM. The closest RCMP detachments are located in the Town of Radville, the Town of Bengough, and the City of Weyburn. The RM is also a member of the Radville Area Crime Watch group. The Village of Ceylon and RM of The Gap are active members and supporters of the Ceylon & District Fire Protection Board.</p> <p>The RM has a number of formal agreements in place with the surrounding communities related to fire services and emergency measures organization, including: the RMs of Souris Valley No. 7, Lake Alma No. 8, Surprise Valley No. 9, Hart Butte No. 11, Laurier No. 38, Lomond No. 37, Bengough No. 40, Willow Bunch No. 42, Brokenshell No. 68, Norton No. 69, and Key West No. 70; Towns of Radville, Bengough, Coronach, Willow Bunch, Ogema; Villages of Ceylong, Lake Alma, Goodwater, Minton, and Pangman; and the Radville Laurier Regional Park and Recreational Authority and Ceylon Regional Park Authority.</p>
Overarching Goal	<p>Support a family-oriented community where residents have access to a variety of services.</p>

Objectives

- To retain and attract people of all ages and abilities.
- To consider and explore options to reduce accessibility barriers in the RM.
- To provide diverse housing options in the RM that complement the existing landscape and take advantage of current infrastructure.
- To maintain and expand community and regional services.
- To have reliable access to health services and facilities.
- To retain the Home in Radville.



7.1 General

- 7.1.1 The RM shall have a sustainable form, mix of uses, and densities that allow for efficient use of land, infrastructure, and public facilities.
- 7.1.2 When reviewing applications for development, considerations shall be given to the proposal's conformity with this Plan. Major deviations to the OCP design and policies shall require an amendment. A proposal shall be denied when it is detrimental to the health, safety, and general welfare of persons residing or working in the area, or incompatible with existing or proposed land uses in the vicinity.
- 7.1.3 The RM will consider accessibility as part of every development application to create a more inclusive community and reduce barriers.
- 7.1.4 Development proposals are encouraged to be guided by concept plans and should indicate:
 - a. Future major roads;
 - b. Public works and easements;
 - c. Drainage systems and improvements;
 - d. Major open space (including physical areas);
 - e. Cultural and archeological significant areas;
 - f. Areas requiring protection through buffering or other means;
 - g. Major hazards such as flooding, areas of high water table and slope lands; and
 - h. Phasing of development of future development or expansion into adjacent land.
- 7.1.5 Cumulative effects, land fragmentation, best management practices, innovative procedures, development phasing, route modification, alternative construction techniques, and impacts on municipal servicing shall be considered when reviewing all developments as to ensure compliance with this Plan.

7.2 Residential Policies

- 7.2.1 A variety of housing options shall be encouraged within the community to retain current residents and attract new ones.
- 7.2.2 New residential development will be considered where existing infrastructure and services are in place or can be expanded in a fiscally responsible manner.
- 7.2.3 Where servicing and infrastructure are proposed or are in place, developers will be required to obtain applicable provincial and local permits prior to starting any development.
- 7.2.4 Vacant lots within the Hamlet of Hardy and existing farmyards will be promoted as viable residential options to utilize infrastructure and services that are in place. Subdivision of farmyards for non-farm related properties are subject to the regulations outlined in the Zoning Bylaw.
- 7.2.5 Further subdivision of a quarter section greater than 3 parcels will require a zoning amendment to the appropriate Country Residential District.



- 7.2.6 The Future Land Use Map in Appendix A identifies areas for multi-parcel country residential. When multi-parcel country residential is proposed, the following will be considered:
- Compatibility of surrounding land uses;
 - Overall design;
 - Accessibility;
 - Existing and planned infrastructure;
 - Sustainable characteristics and technology;
 - Services such as school bussing, snow removal, and protection services can be provided with reasonable efficiency and without undue cost to the RM;
 - Increased assessments associated with development are confined and upward pressure on taxation and limitation of uses of agricultural resource land is minimized; and
 - Normal agricultural activities will minimally affect the quiet enjoyment of the non-farm area.
- 7.2.7 Where a subdivision for country residential is proposed, the developer may be required to enter into a servicing agreement with the RM of The Gap, where the developer is responsible for costs associated with the subdivision.
- 7.2.8 The subdivision of land for country residential purposes shall meet all requisite government department requirements including, though not limited to, Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment, the Health Authority, and Saskatchewan Water Security Agency.
- 7.2.9 Country residential subdivisions shall have access to an existing all-weather road and the proponent may be responsible to enter into an agreement with the municipality to upgrade the existing road or develop a new road access to the municipal standard. The proponent shall be responsible for all costs of the new or upgraded roadway construction which will be addressed through a Servicing Agreement.
- 7.2.10 Country residential subdivisions shall comply with all minimum separation distances as defined by the Zoning Bylaw and any other provincial or federal jurisdictions. This includes, but is not limited to, restricting country residential development by considering its proximity to:
- Hazardous industry or rural industrial sites;
 - Lagoon sites and solid waste disposal sites;
 - Petroleum, gas, and/or mineral resource facilities;
 - Energy generation facilities, such as wind farms;
 - Intensive Livestock Operations or other agricultural industries; or
 - In an area that has been identified as the 1:500 year floodway.
- 7.2.11 Where a subdivision is proposed adjacent to a watercourse, the municipality will identify and designate the channel, adjacent floodplain, and significant natural habitat as Environmental Reserve to protect sensitive areas and preserve the potential for public access. This will be done through consultation with relevant agencies and adjacent municipalities.
- 7.2.12 A comprehensive development proposal may be requested by the municipality to any person proposing to rezone land for multi-parcel (greater than 3) country residential development prior to consideration of an application by Council. The review shall be undertaken according to the standards provided in the Zoning Bylaw and shall address all matters of land use integration, potential conflict mitigation, and the provision of services to the development.



- 7.2.13 Working with the Ministry of Government Relations and other respective agencies, the Council may provide comments on the number and arrangement of approved lots within a subdivision application on a case-by-case basis upon review of a Comprehensive Development Review and having consideration for:
- a. The carrying capacity of the lands proposed for development and the surrounding area based on site conditions, environmental considerations and potential impacts, and other factors that may warrant consideration in the design of the proposal;
 - b. The suitability and availability of municipal and other services and infrastructure necessary to support the proposal; and
 - c. The compatibility of the proposed subdivision with that of the surrounding area.
- 7.2.14 Where a multi-parcel country residential subdivision is proposed on lands abutting the Village of Ceylon, the RM may require the proposed development to be designed to complement the existing development including measures such as visual buffering, lot site separation, complementary lot sizing, or any other measures necessary to achieve compatible land use and development.

7.3 Well-being Policies

- 7.3.1 The RM shall encourage physical accessibility improvements of public and private property including housing, transportation, places of employment, community amenities, and visitor-oriented sites.
- 7.3.2 The RM shall continue to support existing health facilities and services in the region including the Radville Marian Health Centre, the fire departments, RCMP, and Emergency Measures Organization.
- 7.3.3 The RM shall participate in agreements with neighbouring communities related to regional health and emergency services. Regular review and updates to the agreements shall be undertaken.
- 7.3.4 The RM together with the region shall advocate for the maintenance and enhancement of existing health facilities and services. Partnerships include the Saskatchewan Health Authority, private business and industry, and others.
- 7.3.5 Housing that supports aging in place shall be encouraged. This includes sustaining the care home for the elderly in the Radville Marian Health Centre and identifying other regional opportunities.
- 7.3.6 The RM will work with the respective government ministries, agencies, community members, and stakeholders to accommodate and identify the most suitable locations for proposed group homes, custody facilities, senior care homes, child care facilities, or other related facilities in the community or region.
- 7.3.7 The RM shall work with neighbouring communities and the Saskatchewan Health Authority to determine opportunities to provide mental health supports and services for the region.



8. Sporting and Supporting our Parks and Recreation

Overview	<p>Recreation is a large part of the community's culture. The RM works with neighbouring communities to provide recreational opportunities to residents and visitors. This includes active and passive recreation such as camping, fishing, hockey, swimming, hunting, walking, biking, ski-dooing, and other activities in every season.</p> <p>The RM supports and participates in the Ceylon Regional Park. This is an important amenity in the region. The Park was built near a dam and reservoir and has 34 campsites, an outdoor swimming pool, a playground, ball diamonds, horseshoe pit, picnic tables, firepits, boat launch, and a concession booth with washrooms and showers. The Regional Park is located approximately 3 kilometers east of the Village of Ceylon.</p> <p>There are a number of scenic driving trails in the area including the Willow Bunch – Big Muddy Trail, Regina Yellowstone (RY) trail, and others. The RM also has a number of Crown Lands that may be used for passive recreation as indicated in Appendix B1.</p> <p>The RM's natural landscape and recreational amenities attract visitors to the region.</p>
Overarching Goal	<p>Enhance and expand parks, recreation, and tourism within the community and region.</p>
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To maintain parks, open space, and recreational amenities and programs. • To encourage safe and sustainable hunting practices. • To provide a variety of recreational opportunities for all ages. • To identify multi-use trails. • To enhance and provide new recreational activities. • To continue to support and participate in the Ceylon Regional Park.

8.1 Parks and Open Space Policies

- 8.1.1 The RM encourages the use of parks and open space for the enjoyment of residents and visitors.
- 8.1.2 The RM of The Gap shall continue to support and promote the Ceylon Regional Park.
- 8.1.3 Together with the Ceylon Regional Park Board, the RM shall explore opportunities to maintain and enhance park amenities and programs. There is community support for targeted programming for youth.
- 8.1.4 Safety shall be considered in the enhancement and development of parks and recreational amenities.



- 8.1.5 Parks and open spaces within the RM and region shall be promoted to enhance the region's tourism.
- 8.1.6 The RM encourages the enjoyment of the natural landscape through tourism and recreation development that is sensitive to its environmental context.
- 8.1.7 The Crown Lands within the RM shall be encouraged for the use of passive recreation such as walking trails, birdwatching, and other low impact activities.

8.2 Recreational Amenities and Program Policies

- 8.2.1 The RM supports recreational opportunities for all ages and abilities.
- 8.2.2 The RM shall work with neighbouring communities to maintain, enhance, and expand recreational amenities and programs.
- 8.2.3 The RM shall have consideration for providing new recreational opportunities and will work with partners to organize and offer them to residents. This may include pickleball and skeet shooting
- 8.2.4 On-going support and participation in recreation boards such as the Rink Board and Swim Club shall be maintained.
- 8.2.5 The RM and community partners may explore innovative opportunities to use existing recreation facilities and attract sports events to the region.
- 8.2.6 The RM will coordinate recreation and tourism development planning with provincial agencies and organizations, identifying any protected areas to ensure compatibility of land uses, protection of environmental areas, and minimization of impacts from traffic, noise, and other nuisances.
- 8.2.7 Opportunities for public/private funding may be supported for recreation and tourism development.

8.3 Trail Policies

- 8.3.1 The RM shall promote the existing trails within the community and surrounding region.
- 8.3.2 Working with partners including the Ceylon Regional Park, the Village of Ceylon, and others the RM may explore the development of a walking trail from the Village of Ceylon to the Regional Park.
- 8.3.3 The RM encourages safe, multi-use trails for hiking, biking, wheeling, snowmobiling, and ATV-ing.
- 8.3.4 The RM may explore opportunities to enhance the trail networks through the creation of signage, accessibility enhancements, lighting, and other elements.
- 8.3.5 The existing rail line may be considered for a 'rails to trails' conversion to reuse and adapt the infrastructure that is in place.



9. Honouring Our Heritage and Culture

Overview	<p>The RM of The Gap is over 100 years old. There are many stories, places, and assets that capture the community's history. There are currently no designated heritage properties in the RM though there are assets of significance including the Ceylon Hotel, a number of churches, and the Stonehouse. Heritage and cultural assets in the RM are identified in the Reference Map in Appendix B6. There are also a number of areas identified within the RM that have the potential for heritage sensitivity. These areas, illustrated on the Reference Map in Appendix B7, require further screening by the Heritage Conservation Branch prior to development.</p> <p>Prior to the establishment of the RM, the region was part of trading routes for Indigenous peoples. This is an important part of the history of the municipality. There is an abundance of intangible history and culture in the region as shared in the legends and folklore that exist about the area.</p> <p>Throughout time to present day, the RM prides itself on the community pulling together to organize events, maintain clubs and organizations, provide community services and recreational opportunities, and more.</p>
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Overarching Goal	Recognize, honour, and incorporate the past in future opportunities.
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Objectives

- To identify and protect heritage and cultural assets.
- To support and implement historic preservation efforts in the community.
- To develop a Municipal Heritage Designation Bylaw.
- To support facilities related to heritage and culture.

9.1 Heritage and Culture Policies

- 9.1.1 The RM shall work with the community, region, Provincial Heritage Resources Branch, and other agencies to identify and create a local catalogue of assets that have historic and cultural significance. Heritage and cultural assets will be protected from incompatible uses.
- 9.1.2 The RM shall support the ongoing publishing of local and regional history books to capture information about the people and places both preceding and following settlement. The RM will actively engage and participate with communities in the region to identify and document these stories and history.
- 9.1.3 The RM may consider adopting a Municipal Heritage Designation Bylaw to ensure the protection of local heritage assets.
- 9.1.4 Highly sensitive environmental areas or sites with potential for significant heritage resources shall be identified to ensure the protection of these resources. When development is proposed in these areas, an assessment of the potential impact on natural and human heritage resources shall be prepared by qualified environmental professionals as part of the development proposal.



- 9.1.5 Opportunities to educate about the RM's history and culture is encouraged. This may include promoting resources such as the Southeast Regional Library, the cemetery, and the creation of historic tours.
- 9.1.6 The RM shall celebrate and promote local and regional heritage and cultural venues as a place to gather.
- 9.1.7 The Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport, Heritage Branch will be consulted where development is proposed in an area that may have a high degree of heritage sensitivity. The Reference Map in Appendix B7 illustrates areas where there is heritage sensitivity.
- 9.1.8 Council shall work with community stakeholders to identify and assess the importance of built and natural, heritage sites and areas within the RM. At the request of owners and in accordance with *The Heritage Property Act*, significant historic sites and architectural features shall be designated and suitably recognized.
- 9.1.9 The RM may consider the adaptive reuse of historic properties for development. The RM will encourage development to complement the Parks Canada Historic Guidelines and Standards to guide conservation projects on historic properties. Proposed development will also comply with the regulations in the Zoning Bylaw.



10. Regional Partnerships and Services

Overview	<p>The RM of The Gap recognizes it is a joint effort to provide, maintain, and expand services. The RM collaborates with surrounding municipalities to provide protective, health, and recreation services.</p> <p>The closest available services are located in the Village of Ceylon and in the Town of Radville. Ceylon offers a community hall, hotel, post office, and the Ceylon Regional Park. The Town of Radville has a number of businesses, services, and community clubs and organizations including: health centre, library, hockey rink, ball diamonds, swimming pool, golf course, Radville-Laurier Regional Park, and a museum and tourism centre. The community also hosts various entrainment, recreational, and fundraising events.</p> <p>Other partners the RM collaborates with include: the RMs of Souris Valley No. 7, Lake Alma No. 8, Surprise Valley No. 9, Hart Butte No. 11, Laurier No. 38, Lomond No. 37, Bengough No. 40, Willow Bunch No. 42, Brokenshell No. 68, Norton No. 69, and Key West No. 70; Towns of Radville, Bengough, Coronach, Willow Bunch, Ogema; Villages of Ceylong, Lake Alma, Goodwater, Minton, and Pangman; and the Radville Laurier Regional Park and Recreational Authority and Ceylon Regional Park Authority.</p> <p>The RM resides on Treaty 4 Territory and the traditional lands of the Métis. There are currently no First Nation Reserves located in the RM of The Gap. The closest neighbouring First Nation is the Piapot Cree First Nation. The RM is located in the Métis Nation Western Region III.</p>
Overarching Goal	Collaborate with neighbouring communities and partners to deliver services to residents and visitors.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To sustain existing clubs, committees, and boards. • To encourage regional collaboration to provide services. • To pool community resources to provide access to multiple services. • To be innovative in collaborative efforts and how we provide services.

10.1 Regional Partnership Policies

- 10.1.1 The RM shall continue to work with neighbouring communities and partners including the Village of Ceylon, the RM of Laurier, the Town of Radville, and others as mentioned above and identified on regional initiatives related to planning, economic development, tourism, health, recreation, housing, transportation, public works, dedicated lands, and delivery of services. This includes an invitation to and engagement with Indigenous communities in the region.



- 10.1.2 The RM together with regional partners may meet regularly as determined to discuss potential joint opportunities. This may include the review, renewal, and sharing of agreements, policies, procedures, and other documentation to coordinate, and provide clarity and consistency related planning and development standards in the region.
- 10.1.3 The RM shall be a good neighbour and communicate with the Village of Ceylon and other surrounding communities when development is proposed that may have impacts on the community and region. Developers may be required to engage with neighbouring municipalities, Indigenous communities, and other stakeholders to demonstrate support for the development.
- 10.1.4 The RM shall encourage compatible development where land has been purchased by a First Nation Band and it is pursuing Reserve status through either the Treaty Land Entitlement Framework Agreement process (TLEFA) or the Specific Claims process. Council shall meet with the Band Council to discuss and/or negotiate shared services, compatible bylaws, and other matters of mutual interest.
- 10.1.5 Lands selected by a First Nation in the RM are governed by the *Treaty Land Entitlement Act*, which requires an agreement between the First Nation and the affected municipality regarding tax loss compensation, municipal service provision, any payments in lieu to the municipality, bylaw application and enforcement and an appropriate dispute resolution mechanism for solving matters of mutual concern.

10.2 Regional Services Policies

- 10.2.1 The RM shall work in partnership with other jurisdictions, neighbouring municipalities, Indigenous communities, and other agencies as a means of providing, sharing, and funding community services effectively and efficiently.
- 10.2.2 The region should provide a wide range of community services for all ages to attract new residents and visitors. This may include childcare, and activities for youth, families, and seniors.
- 10.2.3 The RM supports community service amenities where there are existing complementary services and infrastructure in place to support the service.
- 10.2.4 The RM shall support and encourage the on-going efforts of local and regional clubs, committees, and boards.
- 10.2.5 The RM will work with the larger region to identify infrastructure and transportation maintenance requirements, and potential cost-sharing solutions to undertake repairs.
- 10.2.6 The RM may explore opportunities with regional partners related to energy production and public works.
- 10.2.7 Inter-community revenue sharing and other agreements to equitably share costs and benefits of future development in the region shall be encouraged.



- 10.2.8 The RM may discuss and develop agreements with neighbouring communities to share resources across municipal boundaries. Resources may include water and gravel.
- 10.2.9 Cost-saving opportunities may be explored to reduce duplication of services and costs. The communities in the region may consider hiring a joint bylaw enforcement officer.



11. Environmental Preservation

Overview	<p>The RM has a picturesque and unique landscape. Its topography varies from flat prairie to rolling hills. There are many water bodies within the RM including tributaries of the Long Creek, small lakes, and various riparian areas. The RM is part of the Upper Souris River Watershed.</p> <p>The RM is located approximately 65 kilometers from the Big Muddy Valley. There is a number of vegetation and animal species in the area that are considered rare or endangered. Locations where the species have been identified are shown on the Reference Map in Appendix B10.</p> <p>There are also a number of Ducks Unlimited Lands and Crown Conservation Easements in the RM of The Gap. These conservation lands are shown on the Reference Map in Appendix B9.</p> <p>There are some natural constraints within the RM and surrounding region. This includes flood prone and slope instability areas. These areas are indicated on the Reference Map in Appendix B8.</p>
Overarching Goal	Advocate for the respect and preservation of the RM's landscape, natural features, community pasturelands, sensitive lands, and species.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To protect environmentally sensitive lands and waterbodies from incompatible development. • To monitor drainage and surface water runoff and mitigate erosion. • To ensure a high-quality and adequate water supply. • To protect ground and source water resources from contamination. • To preserve the community pastures and conservation lands. • To identify hazard lands and discourage development in these areas. • To encourage environmentally conscience practices through the municipality.

11.1 General Policies

- 11.1.1 The RM will consider the ecological integrity of wetlands, riparian areas, significant natural landscapes, regional features, and the potential cumulative impacts of development on the RM landscape as part of planning and development decisions.
- 11.1.2 The RM of The Gap shall take an active role in identifying environmentally sensitive lands that are unsuitable for development. Developers will be required to work with the Ministry of Environment and other appropriate agencies on development proposed within environmentally sensitive areas.
- 11.1.3 The Future Land Use Map in Appendix A and the Reference Map B8 identifies areas where natural hazardous conditions may exist to ensure that the developer and/or property owner reasonably assess the hazards relative to the proposed development.



- 11.1.4 The RM shall work with the Water Security Agency, the Upper Souris River Watershed Association, and other stakeholders on watershed and aquifer planning. Plans and strategies shall be considered when reviewing development applications. The Water Security Agency and Upper Souris River Watershed Association may be used as a source for technical advice.
- 11.1.5 The RM shall maintain biodiversity and protection of rare and endangered species.
- 11.1.6 The RM recognizes and supports provincial planning initiatives that contribute to ecological integrity.
- 11.1.7 The RM supports Saskatchewan's Climate Change Strategy and may pursue the development a local or regional climate change strategy.
- 11.1.8 The RM will consider climate change implications in environmental management efforts to conserve biodiversity and enhance the health of natural areas and ecosystems.
- 11.1.9 Developers may be required to provide a Comprehensive Development Review with information pertaining to environmental qualities, vegetation, drainage, and soil report prepared by accredited professionals as a means of ensuring the suitability of the proposed development.
- 11.1.10 Council may refuse to authorize development of structures on environmentally sensitive land or may authorize such developments only in accordance with recommended preventative mitigation measures which eliminate the risk or reduce the risk to an acceptable level and remedial measures.

11.2 Hazard Lands Policies

- 11.2.1 Environmental health, social well-being, and long-term prosperity depend on reducing the potential for public cost or risk to residents or properties. Development shall be directed away from areas of natural hazards where there is potential risk to public health or safety.
- 11.2.2 The RM may undertake the necessary studies to determine and map hazard areas to develop and implement measures to reduce the risks of landslide and flood to existing and new buildings and infrastructure. Potential hazard lands are illustrated on the Reference Map B8.
- 11.2.3 It may not be practical or desirable for economic or social reasons to restrict certain development in hazard areas. Developments shall, be carefully controlled and planned to ensure that they are compatible with the risks or that the hazard has been eliminated or protected against. In these instances, the following criteria shall be applied:
 - a. Proposed developments shall not obstruct, increase, or otherwise adversely alter water and flood flows and velocities;
 - b. There shall be no added risk to life, health, or personal safety;
 - c. Structures and services must be protected against flood damage and shall be fully functional during hazard conditions;
 - d. Activities which alter existing slopes and may accelerate or promote erosion or bank instability shall be prohibited, unless appropriate mitigation measures are taken to minimize the potential of such erosion or bank instability; and



- e. Existing tree and vegetation cover shall be preserved where appropriate to reduce erosion and maintain bank stability.
- 11.2.4 All structures and developments that are proposed in the 1:500 year floodway shall be prohibited. Development of new buildings or additions to buildings in the flood fringe will be required to be flood-proofed to 0.5 metres above the 1:500 year flood elevation. Potentially flood prone areas are identified on the Future Land Use Map in Appendix A and the Reference Map in Appendix B8 and are subject to the Flood Hazard and Slope Hazard Overlays in the Zoning Bylaw.
- 11.2.5 Development will be restricted in the flood plain to protect against the loss of life and to minimize property damage associated with flooding events. Flood prone lands will generally be limited to agricultural, park, and open space recreational uses.
- 11.2.6 The Saskatchewan Water Security Agency or other appropriate government or private sector consultants can be utilized as a source of technical advice regarding flood levels and flood proofing techniques.
- 11.2.7 Development proposals in flood fringe areas shall be referred to the Saskatchewan Water Security Agency for review prior to approval. A site-specific legal land survey including contour lines shall be provided by the proponent at the time of a proposed development.
- 11.2.8 The RM will give consideration to the location of subdivisions, transportation infrastructure, and public works to avoid and minimize threats to the community from wildfire or other emergencies.
- 11.2.9 The RM should identify areas that have a severe wildfire risk through the development of a wildfire management plan. The Plan shall include guidelines and actions for addressing wildfire hazards and consider future climate change implications.
- 11.2.10 Development in wildfire hazard areas will be undertaken with precautions intended to protect and minimize the risk of damage to the property caused by wildfires that may ignite in or around the RM.
- 11.2.11 The RM is encouraged to utilize FireSmart⁹ principles for subdivisions planned within and adjacent to fire hazard areas.

11.3 Surface Water and Drainage

- 11.3.1 Adequate surface water drainage will be required throughout the RM and on new development sites to avoid flooding, erosion, and pollution. Consideration shall be given to the ecological, wildlife habitat, and drainage effects of development, including the upstream and downstream implications.
- 11.3.2 Where an area has been previously or exhibits potential for poor drainage (sloughs) due to snowmelt or prolonged rainfall events, all proposed building sites shall be located outside of those

⁹ FireSmart principles and resources can be found at the following website:
<http://www.environment.gov.sk.ca/firesmart>



areas whenever possible. Otherwise, the proponent shall provide a suitable amount of fill at the building site to provide a satisfactory level of protection for the buildings.

- 11.3.3 Unauthorized drainage of surface water runoff from any land throughout the RM shall be prohibited. Water courses shall not be filled or altered without the prior approval of the Saskatchewan Water Security Agency, Ministry of the Environment, and the municipality.
- 11.3.4 New developments and subdivisions which are adjacent to water courses shall be developed to minimize erosion and to maximize water quality.

11.4 Ground and Source Water Protection

- 11.4.1 In accordance with *The Statements of Provincial Interest*, the RM will maintain and protect the quality and quantity of surface and groundwater resources by:
 - a. Requiring all necessary technical studies concerning surface water or groundwater quantity or quality be completed to ensure any proposed planning and development processes and activities will not negatively impact surface water or groundwater resources, including recharge zones, in the area; and
 - b. Supporting the naturalization, retention, and enhancement of natural drainage patterns during the subdivision and development approval process.
- 11.4.2 The RM will work with the Ministry of Environment, Saskatchewan Water Security Agency, and other partners to protect, enhance, and restore the water quality and aquatic ecosystems in the region by:
 - a. Retaining natural areas along waterbodies and watercourses;
 - b. Incorporating best practices to minimize soil erosion, to protect and enhance riparian zones and to conserve and enhance areas that contain habitat for federally or provincially listed plant or wildlife species; and
 - c. Conserving wetlands and establishing riparian setbacks around wetlands.

11.5 Municipal and Environmental Reserves

- 11.5.1 The RM will require the dedication of Municipal Reserve or will use the provisions of *The Dedicated Land Regulations* to ensure adequate recreational and utility space is provided for future needs.
- 11.5.2 Subdivision applicants will be required to dedicate, as Environmental Reserve, all lands in an area to be subdivided that can be defined as Environmental Reserve in accordance with the provisions of *The Planning and Development Act, 2007*. In some instances, the approving authority may consider Conservation Easements in place of Environmental Reserves.
- 11.5.3 The Rural Municipality of The Gap recognizes the importance of supporting school opportunities. There is currently no identified need for a future school site within the RM though if there were a need in the future, the municipality will work with the Ministry of Education, the respective School Division, and neighbouring communities to ensure the creation of a site suitable for that purpose. If the need for a school site is identified in a neighbouring municipality that will accommodate students from the RM of The Gap, Council will contribute funds from the dedicated lands account for the acquisition of that site.



- 11.5.4 Where development is proposed adjacent to a watercourse, the Council will request the subdivision approving authority to dedicate Municipal or Environmental Reserve as appropriate to protect sensitive areas and ensure continued public access to these areas.
- 11.5.5 Land provided as an Environmental Reserve becomes the property of the municipality. The applicant may be required to provide any amount of land in any location that the approving authority considers necessary, if the land consists of:
- a. A ravine, coulee, swamp, natural drainage, or creek bed; and
 - b. Wildlife habitat of areas that:
 - i. Are environmentally sensitive; or
 - ii. Contain historical features or significant natural features.



12. Staying Connected: Infrastructure and Transportation Networks

Overview	<p>There are two provincial highways that run through the RM, Highway #6 and #337. The RM also has a 9-month primary weight Clearing the Path road, Grid #705, and a number of Class 5, 6, and 7 rural roads. Existing transportation networks are included in the Reference Map in Appendix B12.</p> <p>There are three public wells in the RM: Hanson, Gerle, and DeBruyne. The Eastend-Ravenscrag Bedrock Aquifer covers the entire RM. The location of the water wells and the aquifer are shown in Reference Map B11.</p> <p>Farms and acreages are responsible for their own sewer and water. Communication networks such as phone, internet, and television are provided throughout the RM by third party service providers.</p> <p>There are currently no future corridors, easements, or public works projects planned within the RM. Pipeline and utility right-of-ways are shown on the Reference Map B4.</p>
Overarching Goal	<p>Develop and maintain infrastructure associated with roadway transportation networks to facilitate the safe and reliable movement of people, goods, and services.</p>
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop, maintain, and repair infrastructure and transportation networks. • To develop an Asset Management Plan. • To ensure infrastructure and transportation networks are safe. • To responsibly manage water supply. • To prioritize road maintenance. • To work with regional neighbours, the Ministry of Highways, and other stakeholders to enhance highway transportation networks. • To encourage further development of reliable, quality communication networks.

12.1 General Policies

- 12.1.1 The RM will develop an Asset Management Plan to determine life-cycle costs, service levels, and identify cost-effective and climate change management strategies which will be incorporated into long-term financial planning.
- 12.1.2 Through an Asset Management Plan, the RM will employ sustainable development principles when planning future transportation and infrastructure projects to ensure the efficient use of materials and land when constructing, operating, and maintaining municipal infrastructure.



- 12.1.3 A professional engineer may be consulted for major upgrades to municipal roadways and infrastructure.
- 12.1.4 Future utility corridors, public works, and easements proposed in the RM may be identified on a map or concept plan to ensure coordination of utilities and compatibility of land uses.
- 12.1.5 The RM will give consideration to climate change impacts and extreme weather events when utility corridors, public works, and easement are proposed. The design and use of innovative technologies and systems that facilitate climate adaption are encouraged.
- 12.1.6 The RM supports the integration and co-location of infrastructure and facilities to take advantage of energy and resource system opportunities such as capturing waste heat, heat exchange, energy generation, and storm water reuse.

12.2 Transportation Networks

- 12.2.1 The RM will maintain safe, coordinated, efficient, and cost-effective transportation networks.
- 12.2.2 All development will have access to a developed road.
- 12.2.3 Proposed development that will have significant impact on the road networks may be required to enter into a road use or road maintenance agreement.
- 12.2.4 Off-site levies or a servicing agreement may be used to recover the capital costs of providing roads, sanitary sewer, water, storm water systems, and other services to new developments. Developers shall be responsible costs as outlined in the servicing agreement, as a condition of the development.
- 12.2.5 Development that is visible from a major transportation corridor may be required to reduce the visual impact through design features such as landscaping or buffering.
- 12.2.6 The RM will work with the Ministry of Highways to facilitate network improvements for the highways and where RM roadways and provincial highways intersect.
- 12.2.7 The RM will ensure future planning aligns with the Ministry of Highways transportation plans.

12.3 Communication Networks and Other Utilities

- 12.3.1 The installation, operation, improvement, maintenance, and replacement of communal systems shall meet all provincial regulations.
- 12.3.2 The RM supports the creation and implementation of a Provincial and Federal broadband plan.
- 12.3.3 Telecommunication towers are supported throughout the RM where they are safely and appropriately located and designed to minimize visual, aesthetic, and environmental impacts.



- 12.3.4 The use of solar panels, wind turbines, and other alternative energies may be supported. Such uses will be subject to the regulations in the Zoning Bylaw.
- 12.3.5 Commercial solar energy systems are encouraged on:
- a. Sites adequate in size and shape to accommodate the facility, ancillary buildings, landscaping and other development features to integrate the Solar Farm with the adjacent areas;
 - b. Poor quality, lowest productive lands and dry corners;
 - c. Cut-off, fragmented, irregular shaped parcels;
 - d. Parcels not currently or recently in agricultural production or irrigated; or
 - e. Parcels that will not adversely affect adjacent lands (noise, aesthetics, and other environmental concerns).



13. Implementation and Monitoring

13.1 Adoption of the Official Community Plan

Adoption of this Plan by the RM of The Gap will give it the force of law. Once adopted, no development or land use change may be carried out within the area affected by the OCP that is inconsistent or at variance with the proposals or policies set out in the OCP.

By setting out goals, objectives, and policies, the OCP will provide guidance for the RM of The Gap when making decisions regarding land use, zoning, servicing extension, subdivisions, and development in general. These decisions must be made in conformity with the stated objectives and policies of this Plan to ensure that the goals for the future development of the municipality will be achieved.

The OCP will be implemented, in part; by the development-related decisions that will be made in the future. However, the two most important tools available for guiding the future development of the municipality are the Zoning Bylaw and the subdivision process, including associated agreements.

13.2 Adoption of the Zoning Bylaw

The RM of The Gap has also adopted a municipal Zoning Bylaw which sets out specific regulations for land use and development:

- The Zoning Bylaw must conform to the OCP, and future land use and development shall be consistent with the goals and objectives of this Plan;
- Future development will avoid land use conflict and meet minimum standards in order to maintain the amenity of the municipality;
- Zoning Bylaws designate areas for certain types of development. Permitted and discretionary uses and development standards are prescribed for each zone;
- Development will be consistent with the physical opportunities of the land and of reasonable engineering solutions;
- Undue demand shall not be placed on the municipality for services, such as roads, parking, water, sewers, waste disposal, and open space; and
- The objectives and policies in the OCP provide guidance to Council when preparing the Zoning Bylaw or considering an amendment to the Zoning Bylaw.

The Zoning Bylaw will be used to implement the policies and achieve the objectives of this Plan by prescribing the uses of land, buildings, or other improvements that will be permitted in the different Zoning Districts established in the municipality. In addition, the Zoning Bylaw regulates how these uses may be carried out and the standards that developments must meet. The Zoning District Map illustrates each respective Zoning District within the RM of The Gap.



13.3 Tools to Make Things Happen

The Planning and Development Act, 2007 (Act) provides a number of tools to assist with the implementation of the OCP. These include, though are not limited to:

- Concept Plans, in accordance with Section 44;
- Development Levies and Agreements in accordance with Sections 169 and 170;
- Servicing Agreements in accordance with Section 172; and
- The subdivision process (Part VII).

There are also other tools beyond the legislation that are available to the RM. A Comprehensive Development Review may be completed by any person proposing to rezone land for multi-parcel (greater than 3) country residential, commercial, industrial, recreational, or Intensive Livestock Operation purposes.

The purpose of this comprehensive review is to identify and address social, environmental, health, and economic issues appropriately and to encourage the development of high quality residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational developments. This review proposes to address the following topics:

- Proposed land use(s) for various parts of the area;
- The effect on adjacent land uses and integration of the natural landscape regarding the planning and design of the area;
- The location of, and access to, major transportation routes and utility corridors;
- The provision of services respecting the planning for future infrastructure within the municipality;
- Sustainable development and environmental management practices regarding surface and groundwater resources, storm water management, flooding, and protection of significant natural areas;
- Appropriate information specific to the particular land use (residential, commercial, industrial, and/or recreational); and
- Proponents may be required to undertake and submit special studies as part of the approval process for certain types of development proposals. Engineering or other professional studies may be required including, though not limited to, traffic studies to determine impacts upon the municipality's road and highway systems, assessments of lands affected by flooding or slope hazards, risks to endangered species, heritage resource conservation, potential for ground and surface water pollution, and general risk to health and the environment.

13.4 Monitoring Performance

The OCP is a document intended to guide decision making over the long term and is not a static document that commits the RM of The Gap to an inflexible development policy. As new challenges arise, or old ones change, the Plan shall be revised to meet these changes. The Plan shall be reviewed after five years, and before ten years, from the date of its adoption by Council to evaluate the Plan's relevance regarding the stated goals, objectives, and policies.

This Plan must be kept up to date to ensure that the document will continue to appropriately address the real development issues facing the RM of The Gap and the greater community. New implementation initiatives will be needed, and priorities will require adjustment in response to the varied and changing conditions in the municipality.



13.5 Amendment

On occasion, land uses or developments may be proposed that do not conform to the OCP. The Plan can be amended in accordance with *The Planning and Development Act, 2007*, to allow the new development to proceed, however, before any amendment is made, the impact of the proposed change on the rest of the Plan and the future development of the RM shall be examined. Any changes to the Plan or the Zoning Bylaw shall be in the interest of the future development of the community as a whole. Through the process of periodical review, amendments to the Plan will allow the Plan to continue to serve as an effective guide for Council to make decisions on the future development of the municipality. For a step-by-step guide to undertake an amendment, please see: <http://publications.gov.sk.ca/documents/313/97960-Amending-Planning-Bylaws.pdf>



Appendices

Appendix A: Future Land Use Map

Appendix B: Reference Maps

Appendix C: Action Plan Template

Appendix D: Community Profile

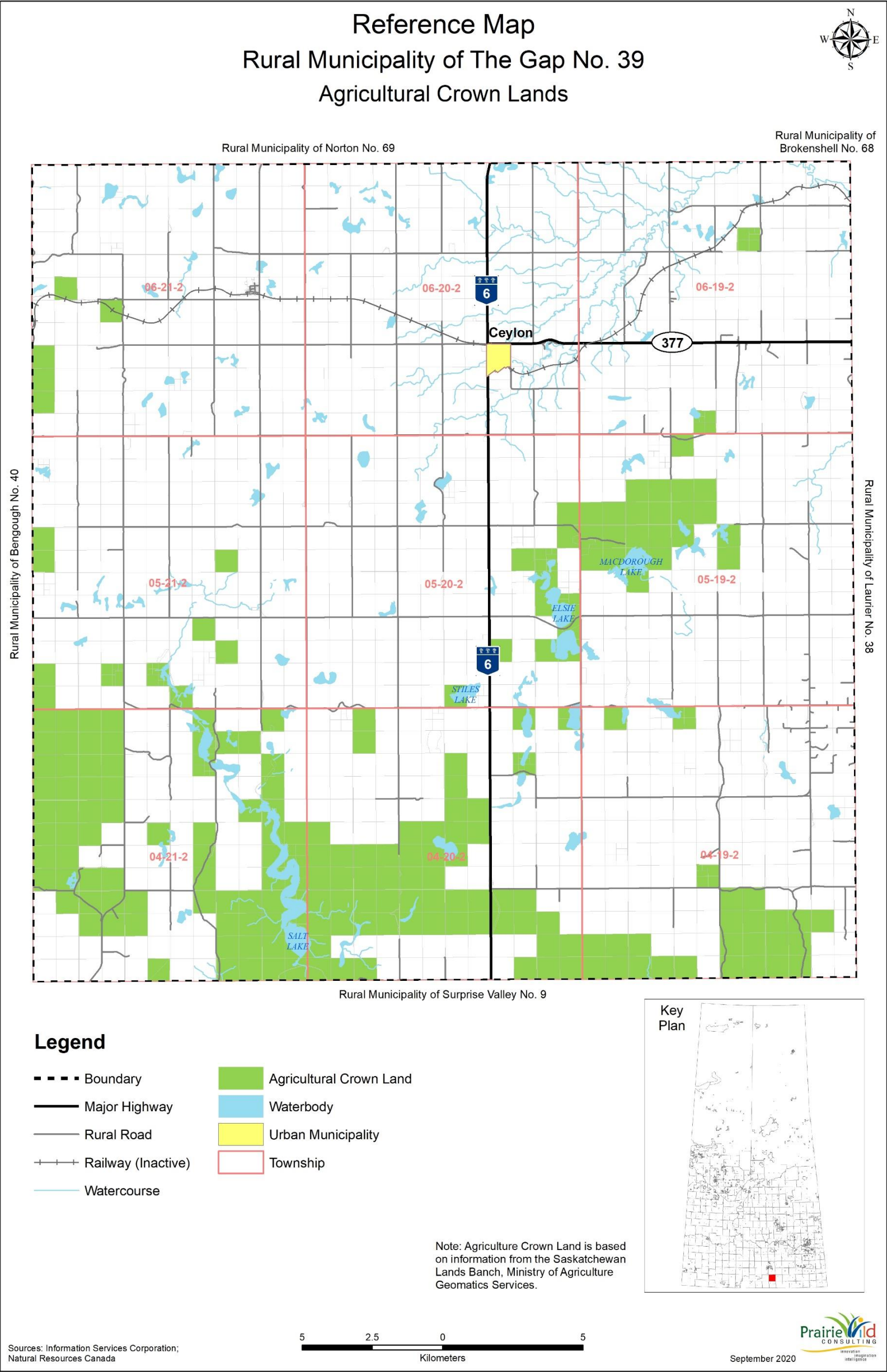
Future Land Use Map
Rural Municipality of The Gap No. 39



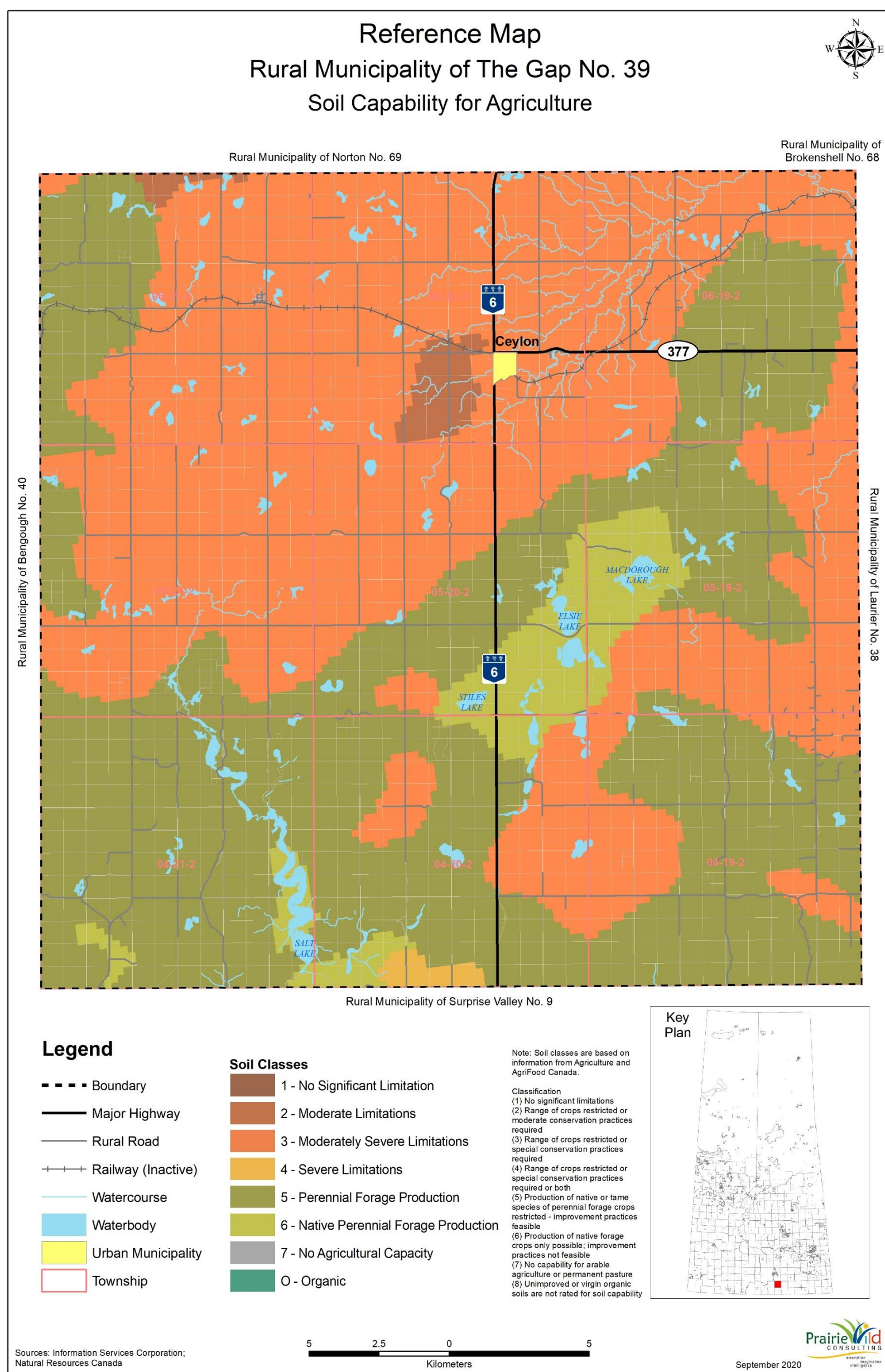


Appendix B: Reference Maps

Appendix B1: Agricultural Crown Lands

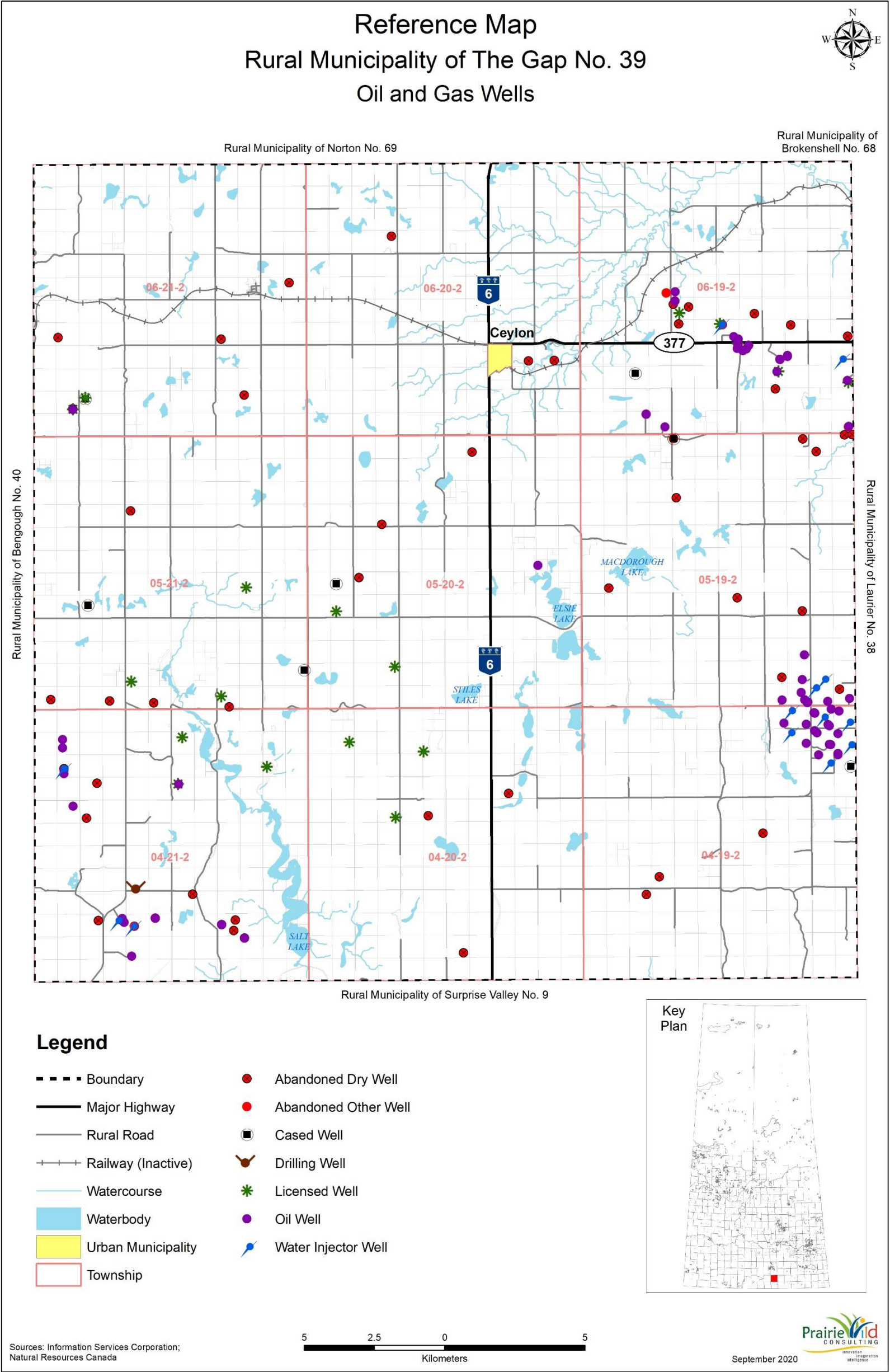


Appendix B2: Soil Capability for Agriculture



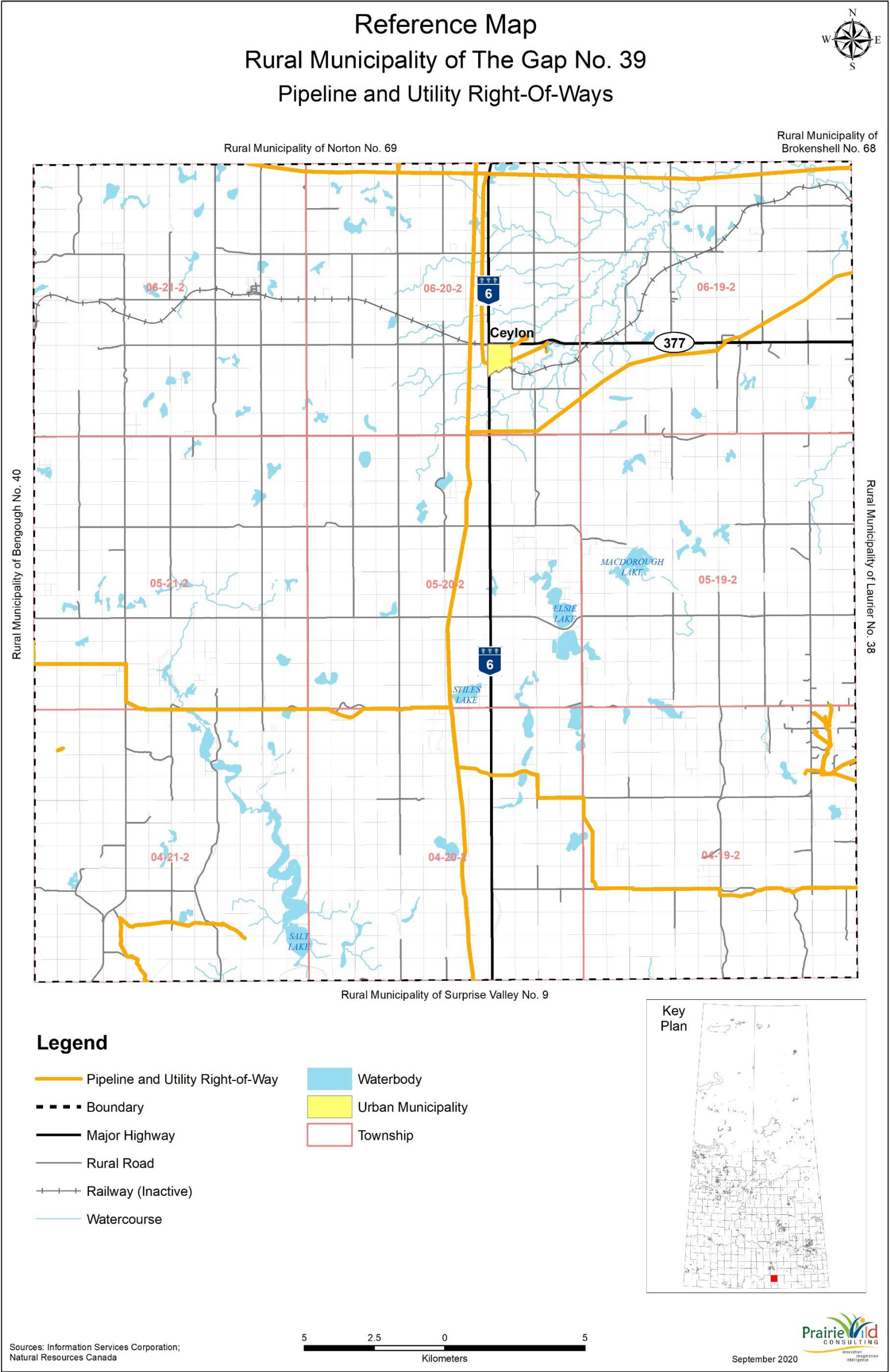


Appendix B3: Oil and Gas Wells



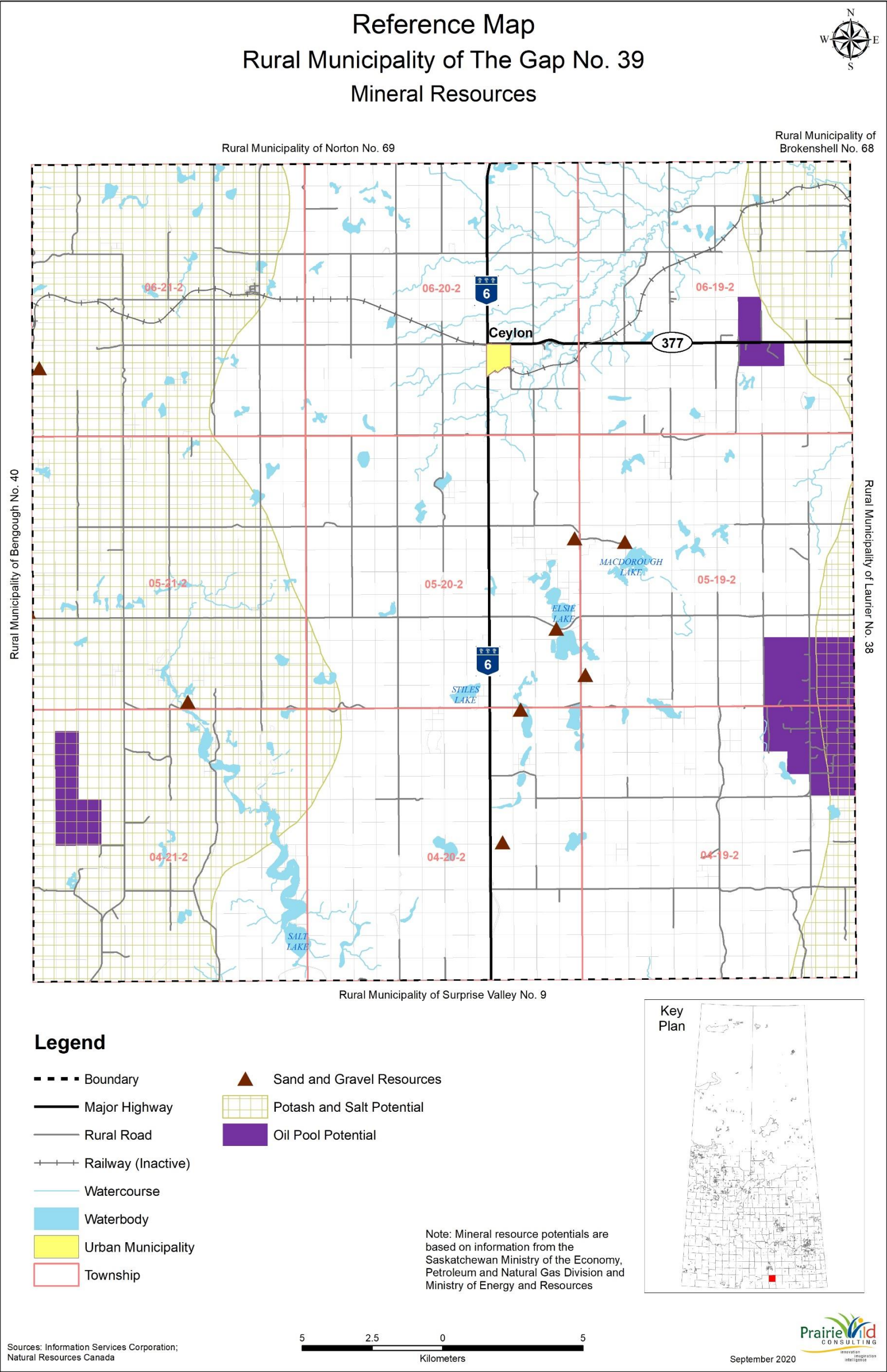


Appendix B4: Pipelines and Utility Right-of-Ways



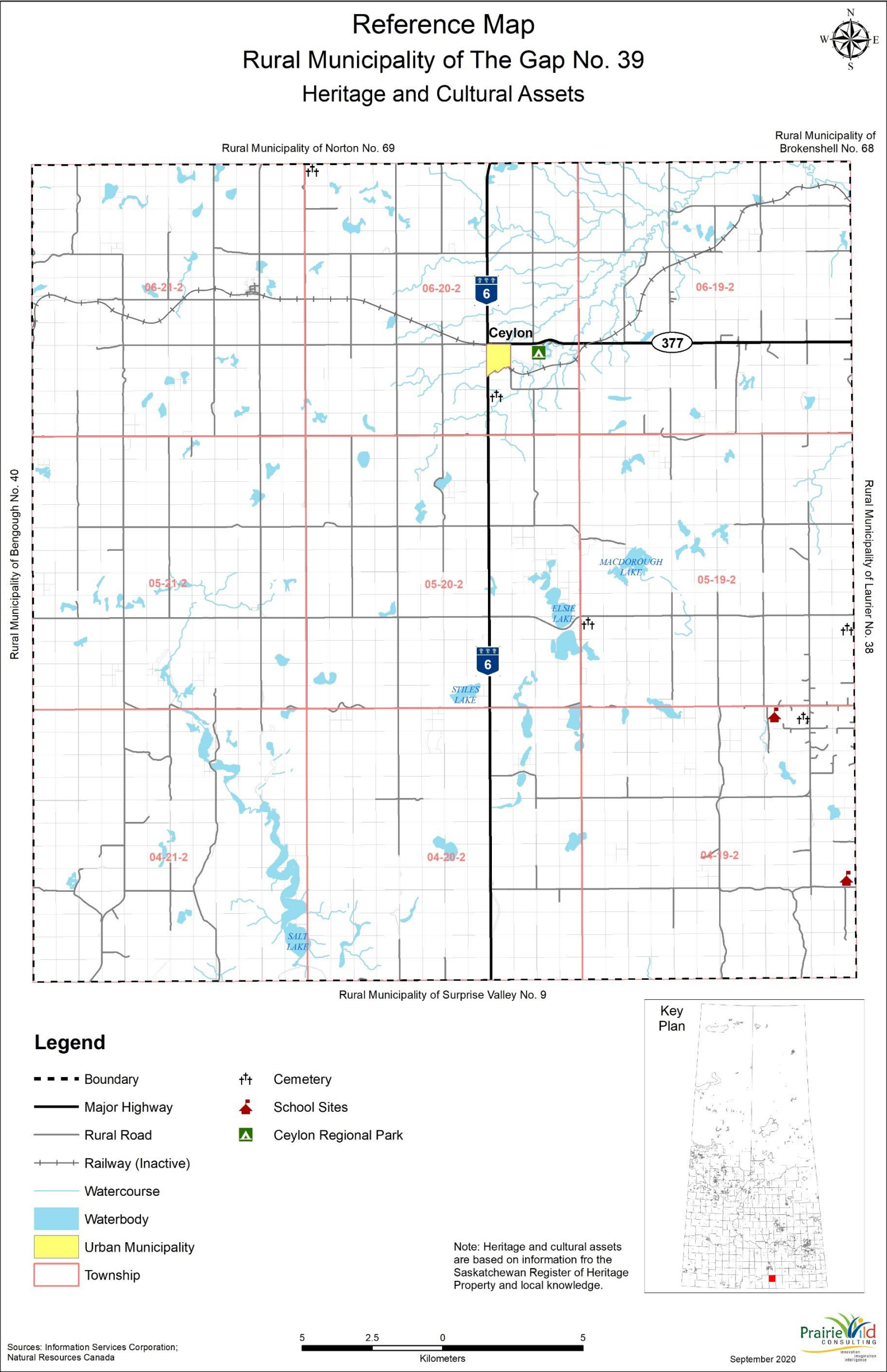


Appendix B5: Mineral Resources



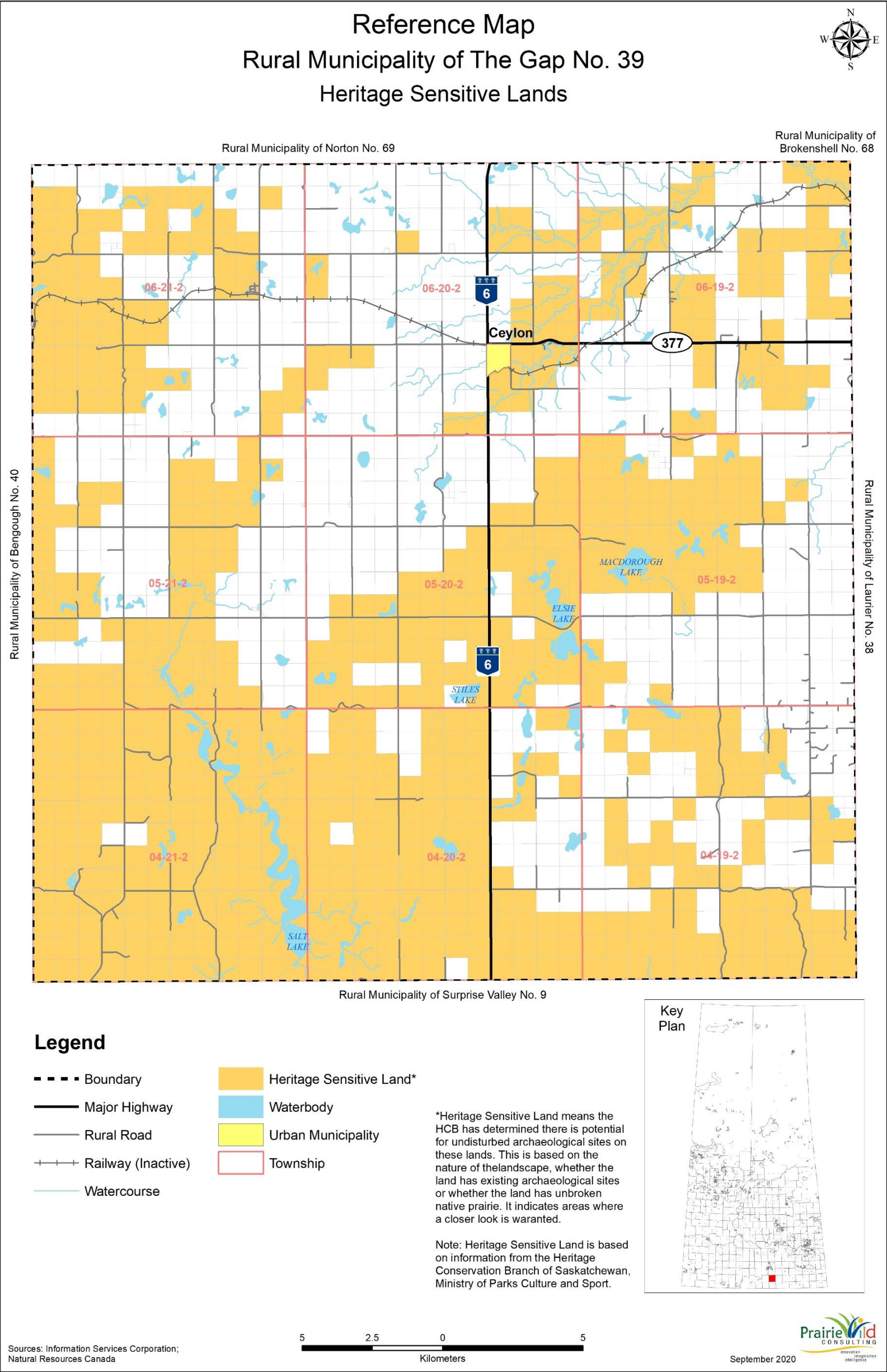


Appendix B6: Heritage and Cultural Assets



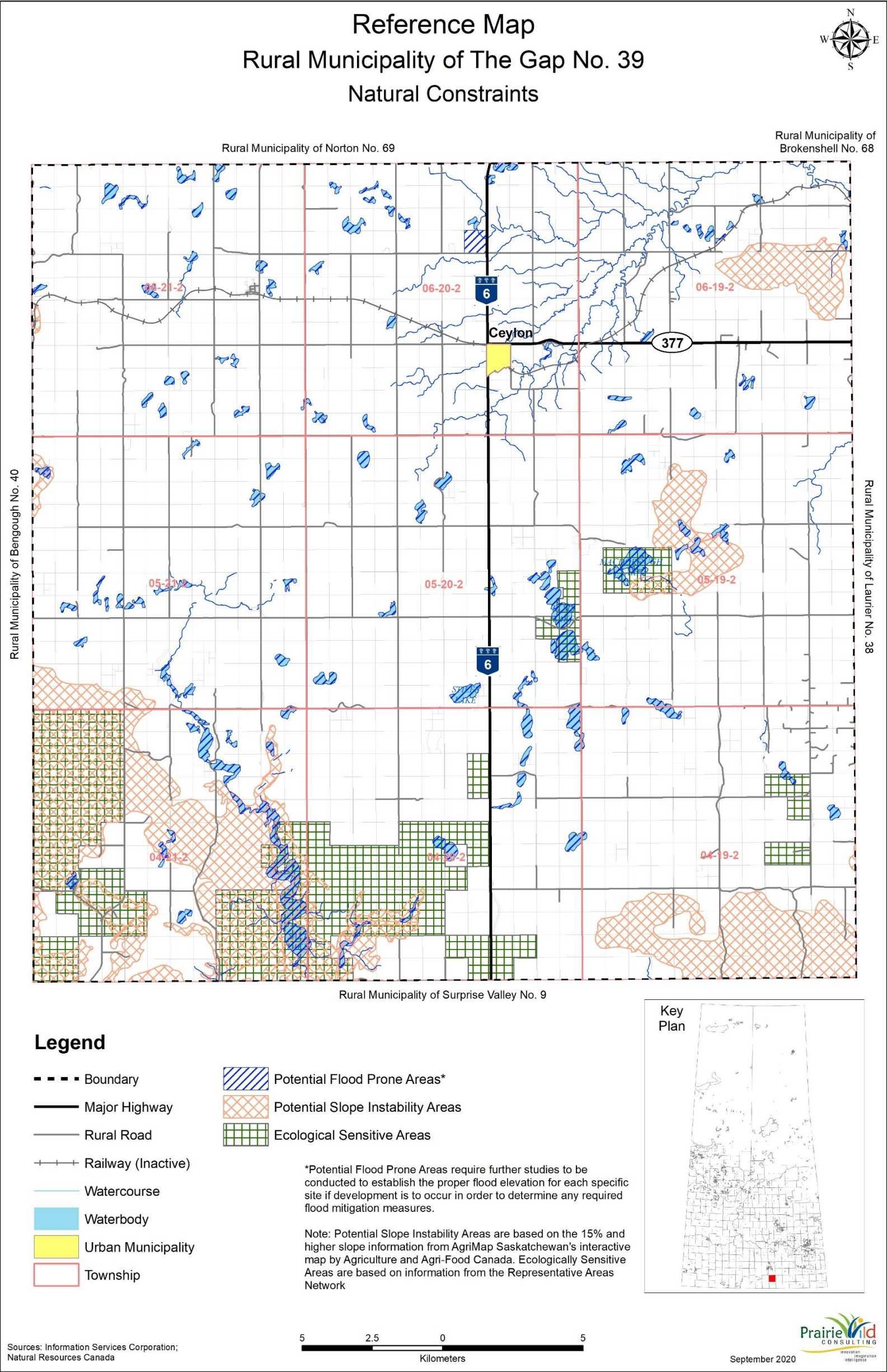


Appendix B7: Heritage Sensitive Lands



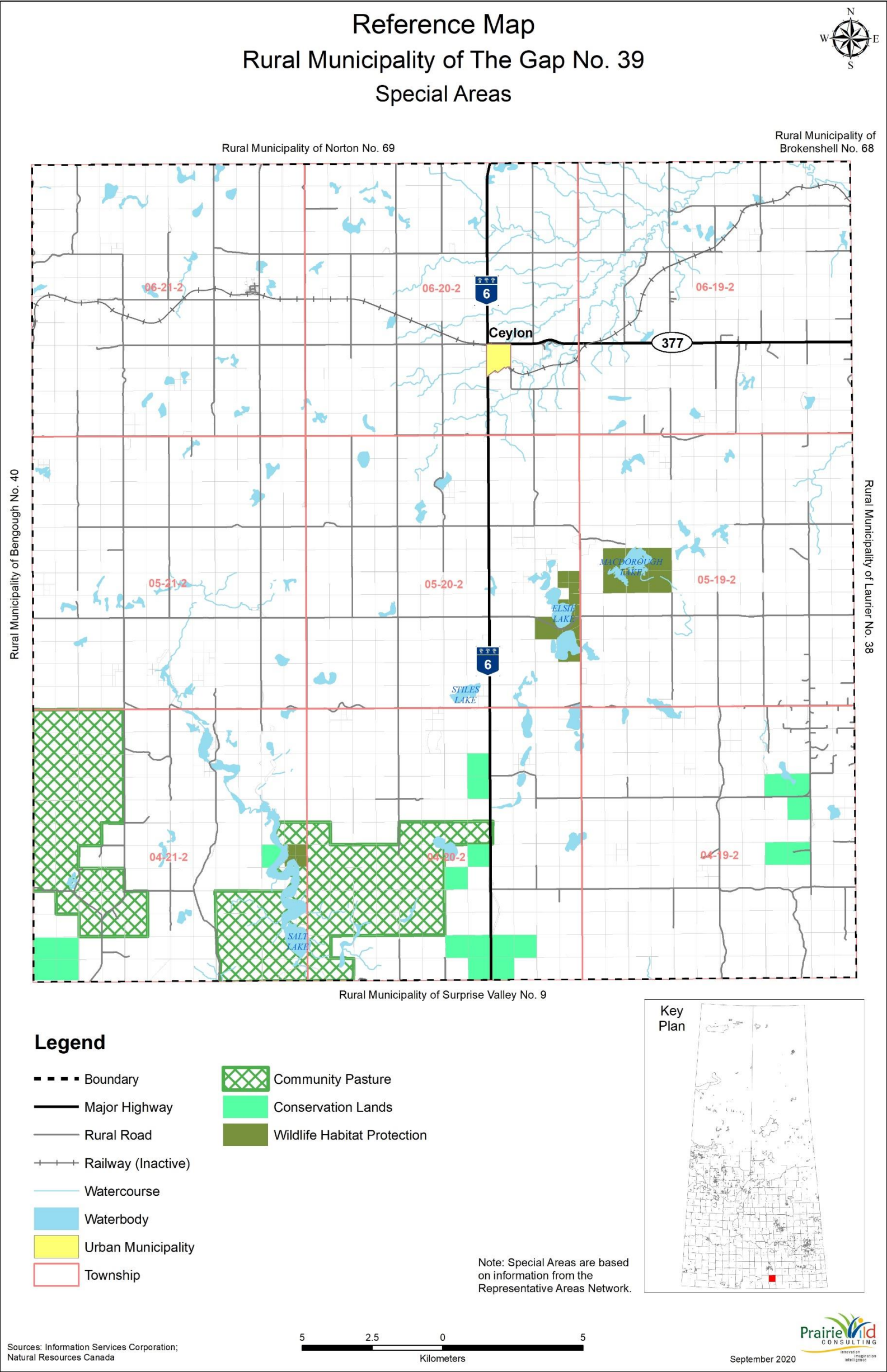


Appendix B8: Natural Constraints



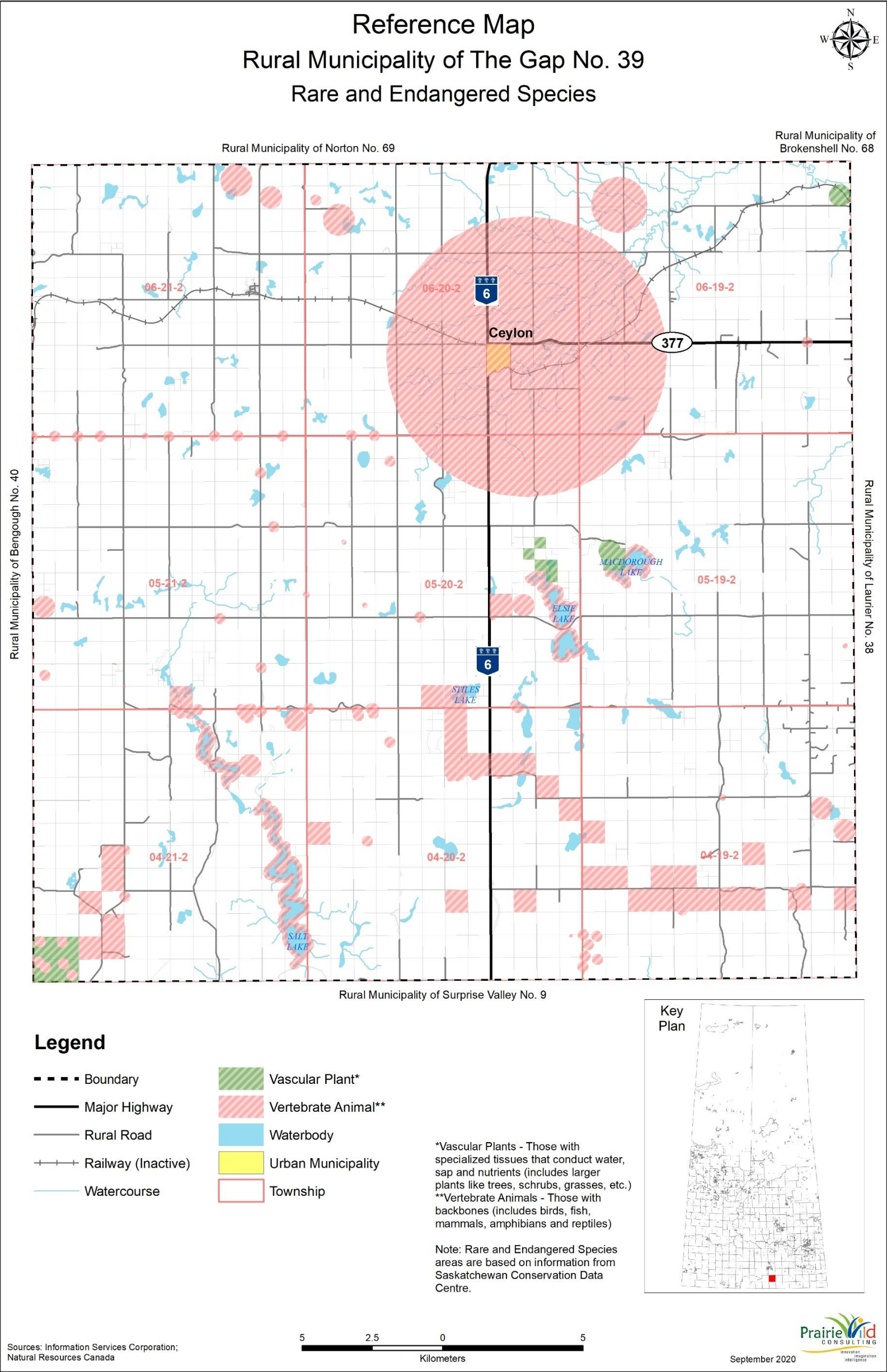


Appendix B9: Special Areas



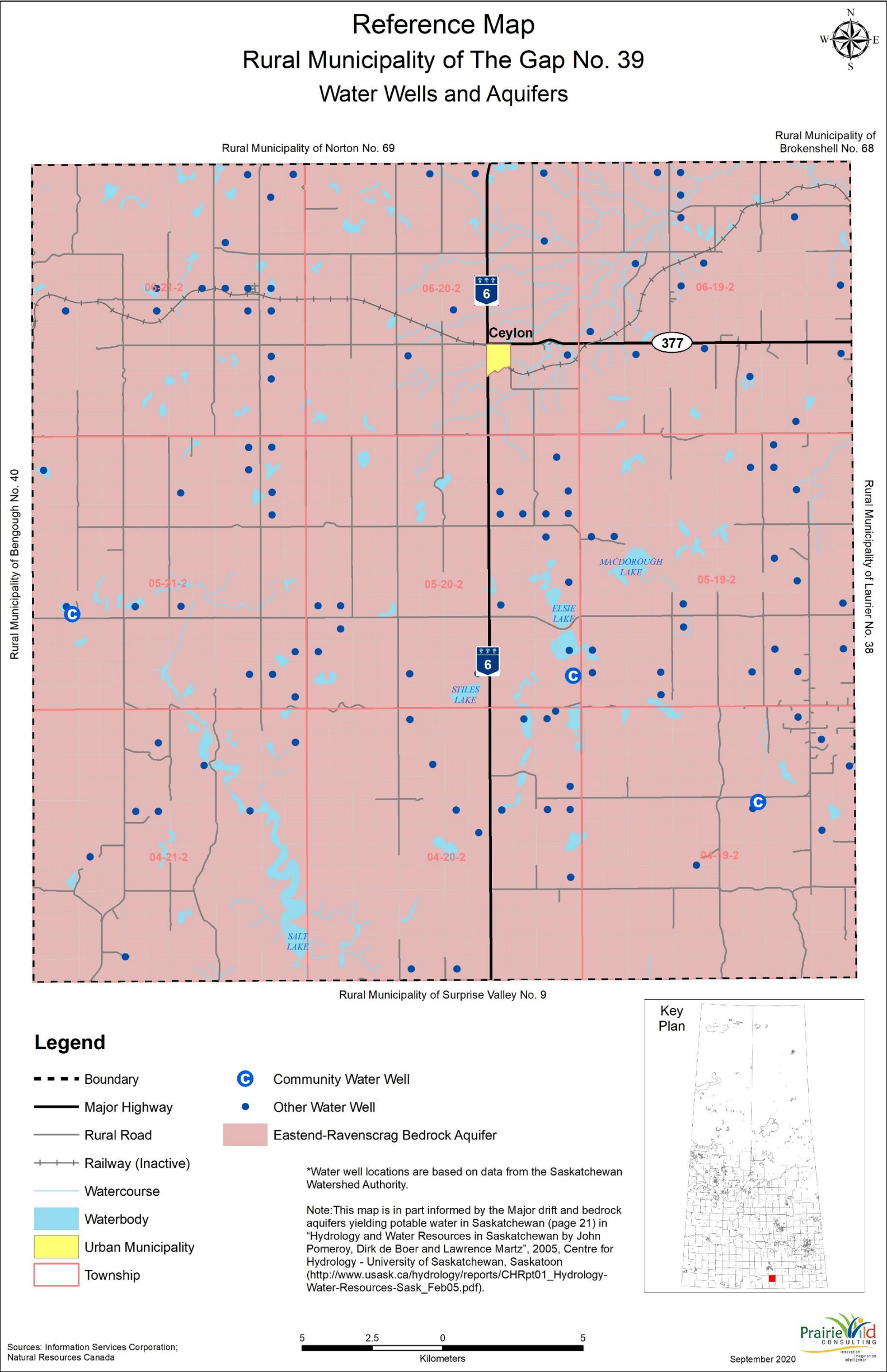


Appendix B10: Rare and Endangered Species



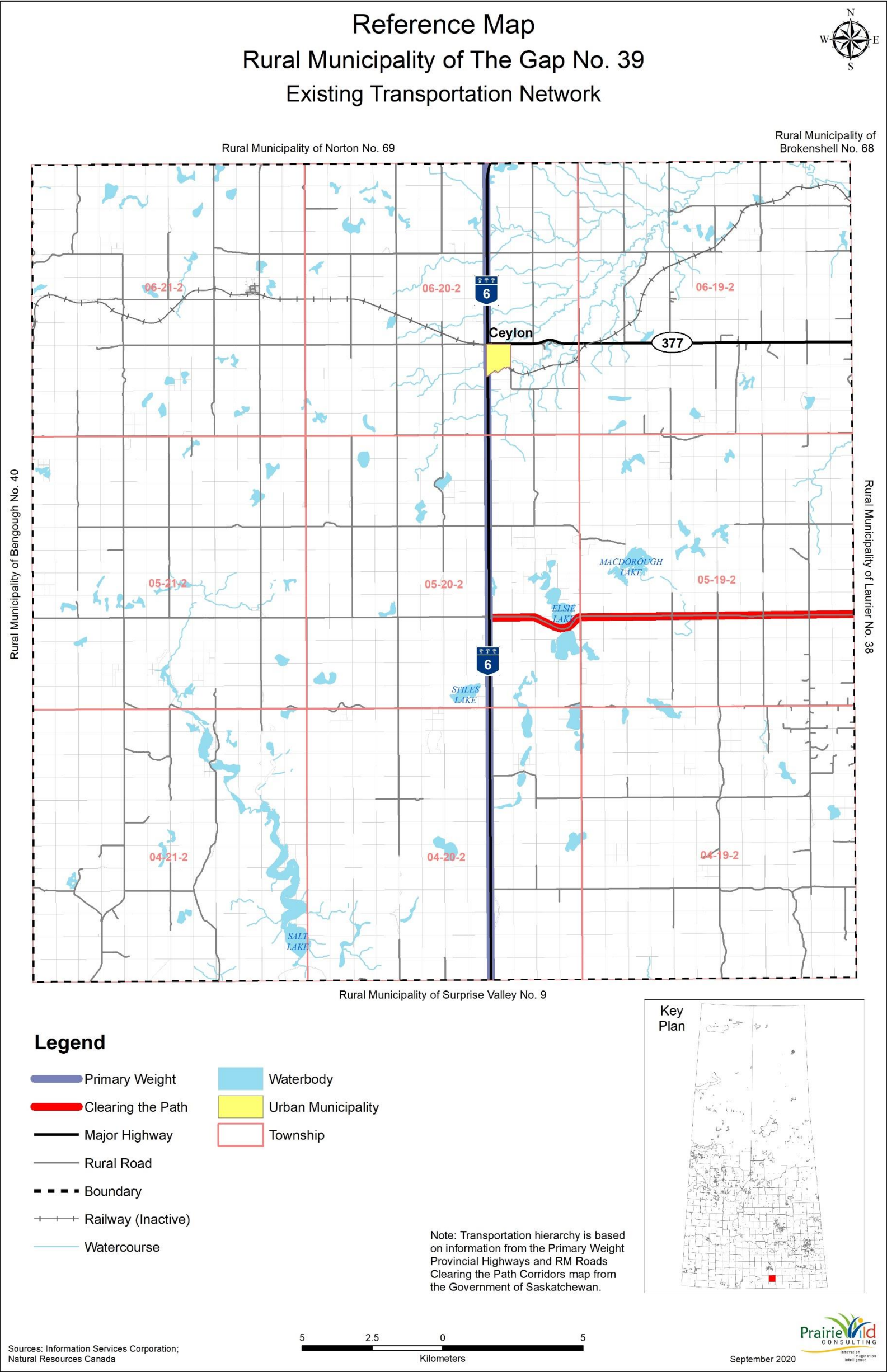


Appendix B1 1: Water Wells and Aquifers





Appendix B12: Existing Transportation Network





Appendix C: Action Plan Template

Action Statement	Performance Goal/Aim	Priority Timeline i.e. immediate, mid-term, 10+years	Lead/ Partners	Current Status	Reporting Period Status Update (Typically annually)
Agricultural Enhancement					
Economic Diversification and Expansion					
Explore waste management practices for the RM e.g. incinerator.					
Community Growth and Well-being					
Sporting and Supporting our Parks and Recreation					
Identify multi-use trails in the RM.					



Explore and apply for funding opportunities to enhance trail networks e.g. maintenance, signage, other					
Honouring our Heritage and Culture					
Develop and approve a Heritage Designation Bylaw for the RM.					
Regional Partnerships and Services					
Environmental Preservation					
Determine interest with regional neighbours to apply for funding to undertake a hazardous land study to accurately determine flood and slope hazard lands in the region.					



Staying Connected: Infrastructure and Transportation Networks					
Develop an Asset Management Plan					
Other					

Appendix D: Rural Municipality of The Gap No. 39 Community Profile

1. HISTORY

1.1 EARLY SETTLEMENTS

The European settlers first arrived in the area by following along the Willow Bunch Trail. The trail is a narrow valley winding from hilly southern Saskatchewan to Winnipeg, Manitoba. The break between the hills was referred to as “Gap Country” by the early settlers, which is the origin of the Rural Municipality’s name today. Southern Saskatchewan’s rich agricultural soil provided homesteaders a reason to settle in the area, while Willow Bunch Trail provided a favourable route to the area from the east.¹⁰

The homesteaders came to Gap Country during the summer and fall of 1905. Though the homesteaders originally settled the land under squatters’ rights, they were eventually given the land after the Dominion survey (*Dominion Land Act of 1872*) later that year. The Dominion survey resulted in the creation of nine townships (within the current borders of the Rural Municipality of The Gap). After the survey, a second wave of settlers came in the spring and summer of 1916. The newcomers to Gap Country faced numerous challenges such as isolation, poor housing conditions, limited diet, limited supplies, and more importantly, the harsh winter.

The Local Improvement District #519 was formed in 1910 to act as the governance unit for the communities within Gap Country. The Local Improvement District #519 was quickly changed to the Rural Municipality of the Gap #39. Ceylon was the first village within the Rural Municipality, when it was established in 1911.¹¹

1.2 THE WARS

World War I’s (WWI) impact was felt by the community as many men and women who fought in Europe did not survive. Most of those who survived moved elsewhere, instead of returning to the Rural Municipality. However, natural causes resulted in more devastation to the Rural Municipality during the 1910s. In addition to the war, natural disasters also caused destruction to the RM of The Gap during the 1910s.¹²

Prairie fires were common in the RM, which burned crops and structures. The lack of water was also an issue. Good wells were rare, and water supply was limited to hauled water in the summer, and melted snow in the winter. Additionally, due to limited diet and harsh environment, there had been constant fear for outbreaks



Figure 1. An old barn from an abandoned homestead within the Rural Municipality of the Gap. (Source: <https://nationaltrustcanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Barn-3-e1553796942994.jpg>)

Figure 2. An old barn from an abandoned homestead within the Rural Municipality of the Gap. (Source: <https://nationaltrustcanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Barn-3-e1553796942994.jpg>)

¹⁰ History Committee of RM of the Gap #39. 1980. *Builders of a Great Land*.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

since the early homesteaders came to the area. The Spanish Flu of 1918 spread to the area, and resulted in numerous casualties.¹³

Just like all of North America, the 1920s brought economic prosperity to the RM of The Gap. The construction of the Canadian Northern Railway through Ceylon, as well as the construction of Aldred Post Office increased the connectivity of the RM of The Gap to the rest of Canada. This attracted more settlers, businesses, and services to the RM of The Gap, which resulted in an economic and population boom. In a similar manner, the Great Depression that ravaged the continent in the 1930s also ravaged the RM of The Gap. The dust storms, droughts, and caterpillar and grasshopper infestations reversed the growth that the RM of The Gap experienced in the 1920s. The RM's population declined as some residents opted to move elsewhere to find employment.

During World War II (WWII), men and women of the RM of The Gap once again fought for Canada, which produced similar results as WWI. The technological breakthroughs in the 1940s allowed farming to be mechanized, which was helpful for the predominantly agricultural municipality.¹⁴



Figure 3. Aerial view of Ceylon in 1960. (Source: <http://www.prairie-towns.com/ceylon-5.jpg>)

1.3 POST WARS

The baby boom in the following decades after WWII resulted in brief fast population growth for the RM of The Gap. Additionally, the availability of electricity, water, and sewer made rural living more attractive to young families. However, the growth could not be sustained as businesses in the RM of The Gap could not compete with the businesses from the larger urban centres.

Presently, the RM of The Gap has a population of 199.¹⁵ The Village of Ceylon is the largest community within the RM with 111 residents.¹⁶ The oil and gas industry joined agriculture as the top industry in the RM of The Gap.¹⁷

¹³ History Committee of RM of the Gap #39. 1980. *Builders of a Great Land*.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Statistics Canada. 2019. *RM of the Gap #39, 2016 Census Profile*.

¹⁶ Statistics Canada. 2019. *Village of Ceylon, 2016 Census Profile*.

¹⁷ History Committee of RM of the Gap #39. 2001. *Builders of a Great Land Continues*.

2. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

2.1 POPULATION, AGE, AND SEX DISTRIBUTION

The population of the RM of The Gap No. 39 in the 2016 census was 199. The Village of Ceylon had 110 residents in 2016. Together, the RM and Village had a regional population of 309. The regional population distribution by sex is approximately 53% male and 47% female. The population distribution by age and sex is shown in figure 3. The population is lowest between the ages 5 to 24, especially for females. The female population remains relatively consistent after age 24. The male population is larger between ages 50 to 64 and between 70 and 74 but declines after 75. It is worth mentioning that with respect to the census count, differences of 5 are essentially a rounding error. The census results are rounded to the nearest 5. This is not significant for large populations but is for a population of approximately 309.

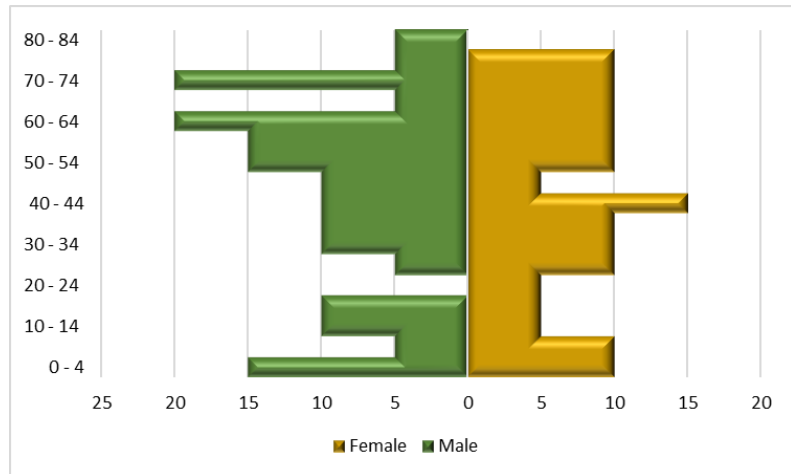


Figure 3. RM of the Gap No. 39 and Village of Ceylon Population Pyramid, 2016.

Source: Statistics Canada Census Profile 2016.

Note: There are some minor discrepancies in the population data that could influence the age and sex distribution given the RM's small overall population. For example, for The Gap No. 39 the census lists 10 males and 5 females in the 0 – 4 age interval, but totals this to only 10 instead of 15. Similarly, the census table shows 5 total people in the Village of Ceylon in the 90 - 94 age interval including 0 males and 0 females. Fig 2.1 is based on the sum of males and females for each age interval from the Village of Ceylon and the RM of the Gap No. 39. Recomputing all totals based on the male and female counts changes the total population to 315 from 310, with slightly fewer in Ceylon.

3. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

3.1 COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Ceylon Hall had been the longest-standing community hall within the RM of The Gap. It was originally built as a school, one-half of which was built in circa 1911/1912. The rest of the building was finished in 1915. It was later turned into a community hall and was used for numerous functions, such as shows, wedding dances, family gatherings, birthday parties, funerals, and funeral lunches. It had also hosted larger events such as garage sales, school reunions, cabarets, fundraising events, and community dances. Ceylon Hall officially closed in 1998, when a larger gymnasium was added to the Ceylon School, and most community events were moved there.¹⁸ The former school and gymnasium are still used today to host various community events.

3.2 EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

The early population growth during the early 20th century resulted in high demand for educational facilities. The RM of The Gap originally had 20 school districts. However, the population stagnation and decline from 1910s-1940s caused the school districts to amalgamate, and for schools to close. The most prominent and the longest-standing school within the RM of The Gap is Ceylon School #351.

¹⁸ History Committee of RM of the Gap #39. 2001. Builders of a Great Land Continues.

In September of 1911, citizens of Ceylon petitioned the Department of Education to construct a school. A year later, the Ceylon School, a one-roomed school was open. A larger, six-roomed school was opened in 1925 to replace the smaller original school.

Several expansions were added to the Ceylon School during the following decades, such as in 1951 (addition of a small gym, a workshop, and 2 classrooms), in 1953 (addition of 2 classrooms), and in 1975 (addition of a large gymnasium). By this point, all the other schools within the RM of The Gap were closed, and all the rural students were bussed to Ceylon School. In 1981, Ceylon School was demolished, to be replaced by a larger and newer Ceylon School. However, continuous population decline made Ceylon School unsustainable to run, therefore, it was officially closed as a school in 1998. The building is currently being used as a community centre and a gathering place. The students from Ceylon are bussed to the schools in the neighbouring communities.¹⁹

3.3 CHURCHES

The first Catholic homesteaders arrived to the RM of The Gap in 1906. The following years saw an increase in the Catholic population, which led to the construction of St. Joseph's Church in 1917, making it the first church in the RM of The Gap. The original church was destroyed by a fire in 1951. The new St. Joseph's Catholic Church was finished in 1953, on the same location as the original church. Today, the church is still an active facility for the Catholics in the RM of The Gap.²⁰

The first Protestant settlers who came to the area were of various denominations. In 1917, the different denominations united to form the Union Church. The growing congregation could not be held in private residences anymore, which led to a demand for a church. In 1918, the Ceylon United Church officially opened, becoming the second place of worship in the RM of the Gap. Presently, the congregation is still an active community within the RM of The Gap.²¹

The members of the Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses first came to the RM of the Gap in the 1940s. Like the earlier religious communities, their first gatherings were held in private residences. As the congregation grew, so did the need for a larger space. The Kingdom Hall was constructed in 1958. However, due to decreasing number of members, the Kingdom Hall had to be sold shortly after 1988.²²

3.4 TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Telephone service first came to the RM of The Gap in 1916, with the incorporation of the North Ceylon Telephone Company. This telephone system originally had 46 subscribers with 35 miles of line. The South Ceylon Telephone Company opened in the same year, though only having 4 miles of line. Both companies were later incorporated within the SaskTel system in 1980 and 1960, respectively. The telephone switchboard was in use in the RM of The Gap until 1966 when the arrival of dial phones.²³

¹⁹ History Committee of RM of the Gap #39. 2001. *Builders of a Great Land Continues*.

²⁰ History Committee of RM of the Gap #39. 1980. *Builders of a Great Land*.

²¹ Ibid.

²² History Committee of RM of the Gap #39. 2001. *Builders of a Great Land Continues*.

²³ History Committee of RM of the Gap #39. 1980. *Builders of a Great Land*.

3.5 POSTAL SERVICE

The first post office in the RM of The Gap was the Aldred Post Office, which was opened in July 1st, 1907 by Mr. J. A. Aldred. The opening of the Ceylon Post Office on January 28th, 1911 resulted in the former having to be closed. There were further post offices that opened within the RM of The Gap that has since been defunct, such as the Rushton Post Office (1908-1928), the Daleview Post Office (1909-1926), the Brooking Post Office (1911-1961), and the Hardy Post Office (1912-1965).²⁴ The only post office that remains open today is the Ceylon Post Office.

3.6 TRANSPORTATION

The only connection between Gap Country and the rest of Canada had originally been the valleys winding through the rolling hills in southern Saskatchewan called the Willow bunch Trail. The Willow Bunch Trail provided a relatively easy mode of transporting goods and people to and from Gap Country. As the settlers grew in numbers, grid roads and market roads started to get built. The first highway was finished in 1929, when Saskatchewan Highway #6 was opened. Today, in addition to Saskatchewan Highway #6, Highway #377 is also a major road within the Rural Municipality as it connects Ceylon to Radville, a larger population centre within the Rural Municipality of Laurier, just west of the Gap.²⁵

3.7 RECREATIONAL FACILITIES



Figure 4. Ceylon Regional Park. (Source: <https://saskregionalparks.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Ceylon-1.jpg>)

The Ceylon Regional Park Authority was established in 1965, with a goal of developing a recreational complex within the area. The RM of The Gap, Village of Ceylon, and Village of Hardy have agreed to contribute financially and appoint representatives to the Regional Park Authority. The provincial government was initially involved with the project by contributing financially to the capital and operational costs. Presently, Ceylon Regional Park boasts a lagoon-style pool with a change house, picnic areas with tables, campground with electrical outlets, boat ramp, playground, and a baseball diamond. Additionally, the Gap Recreational Centre located in Ceylon allows the community to access various winter sports activities, such as hockey.²⁶

²⁴ History Committee of RM of the Gap #39. 1980. *Builders of a Great Land*.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ History Committee of RM of the Gap #39. 2001. *Builders of a Great Land Continues*.

4. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

4.1 OIL AND GAS

The oil and gas industry has and still is a major economic driver in the RM of The Gap. Oil companies would lease lands from landowners to extract oil. The oil rigs would then provide employment for the community. Since 1950s, dozens of oil rigs have been dug in the RM of The Gap. In addition to oil extraction, the construction of pipelines also boosted the local economy. In 1973, the Wascana Pipeline was built to transport crude oil to the United States.²⁷

4.2 TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY

Ceylon Hotel (formerly known as North West Hotel) was and still is one of the most iconic landmarks in the RM of The Gap, due to its rich and exciting history. The current Ceylon Hotel was built in 1912. The hotel included a dining hall, and a bar, which were proven to be popular amongst the townsfolk, as they were always busy. The first movies were also shown in the hotel's dining room. During the prohibition period, the bar was used for boot legging. Since then until now, Ceylon Hotel remains as a place of socialization and gathering within the RM of The Gap.²⁸



Figure 5. Ceylon Hotel. (Source: <http://hotelhistories.blogspot.com/2011/03/hot-times-in-ceylon-north-west-hotel.html>)

4.3 AGRICULTURE

The 2016 Census of Agriculture recorded 82 farms in the RM of The Gap No. 39. The farm distribution by type for the RM is shown in figure 6. Oilseed and grain farming was the most common agricultural activity with 50 farms engaged in this. Note that a given farm can be engaged in multiple activities. Only 5 of these were growing oilseeds, while 30 were growing "other grains," 9 were growing dry peas and beans, and 6 were growing wheat. Eighteen (18) farms engaged in cattle ranching and farming.

Farm Type	Quantity
Cattle ranching and farming	18
Beef cattle ranching and farming, including feedlots	18
Sheep and goat farming	1
Sheep farming	1
Other animal production	1
Animal combination farming	1
Oilseed and grain farming	50
Oilseed (except soybean) farming	5
Dry pea and bean farming	9
Wheat farming	6
Other grain farming	30
Other crop farming	12
Hay farming	10
All other miscellaneous crop farming	2
Total number of farms	82

Figure 6. Farms in RM of the Gap No. 39 by Type, 2016
Source: Statistics Canada. 2017. Table 32-10-0403-01:
Farms classified by farm type.

²⁷ History Committee of RM of the Gap #39. 2001. *Builders of a Great Land Continues*.

²⁸ History Committee of RM of the Gap #39. 1980. *Builders of a Great Land*.

Farm Area Classification	Quantity
under 10 acres	1
10 to 69 acres	4
70 to 129 acres	0
130 to 179 acres	5
180 to 239 acres	1
240 to 399 acres	7
400 to 559 acres	2
560 to 759 acres	5
760 to 1,119 acres	10
1,120 to 1,599 acres	8
1,600 to 2,239 acres	9
2,240 to 2,879 acres	11
2,880 to 3,519 acres	4
3,520 acres and over	15
Total Number of Farms	82

Figure 7. Farms in RM of the Gap No. 39 by Area, 2016

Source: Statistics Canada. 2017. Table 32-10-0404-01: Farms classified by total farm area.

Compared by farm size, large farm types are more common than small farm types. Farms classified by total farm area in the RM are shown in figure 7. Out of the 82 farms, only twenty (20, 24.4%) had an area less than 560 acres. Thirty (30) farms (36.6%) were 2,240 acres or larger. The most common farm type, accounting for fifteen (15) farms (18.3%), was the largest category: 3,520 acres and over.

Total gross farm receipts in the RM in 2015 were \$39,993,456. Forty (40) out of 82 farms in the RM had gross farm receipts between \$100,000 and \$999,999. This accounts for 48.8% of farms in the RM and is the main concentration of farms. Otherwise farms were distributed fairly evenly with 8 or 9 farms in each receipts bracket other than the upper and lower brackets. Eleven (11) farms (13.4%) had gross receipts of \$1,000,000 or more. Only 3 (3.7%) had gross receipts of \$2,000,000 or more. Only 5 farms (6.1%) had gross receipts under \$10,000.

Gross Farm Receipts	Quantity
under \$10,000	5
\$10,000 - \$24,999	9
\$25,000 - \$49,999	9
\$50,000 - \$99,999	8
\$100,000 - \$249,999	11
\$250,000 - \$499,999	17
\$500,000 - \$999,999	12
\$1,000,000 - \$1,999,999	8
\$2,000,000 and over	3
Total Number of Farms	82
Total gross farm receipts	\$39,993,456

Figure 8. Farms in RM of the Gap No. 39 by Gross Farm Receipts, 2015

Source: Statistics Canada. 2017. Table 32-10-0436-01. Farms classified by total gross farm receipts in the year prior to the census.

5. HERITAGE AND CULTURE

4.1 CELEBRATIONS

The most prominent event held in the RM of The Gap is the Ceylon Homecoming 1980, which was held from August 1st to August 3rd of that year. The event was in conjunction with Saskatchewan's 75th anniversary. The celebrations include a grand parade consisting of 65 floats, marching bands, bikes, motorbikes, and horse riders; a flower show; a ball tournament; an agricultural display; and a crafts fair. Additionally, 1,200 people were served pancakes by the Lions Club, and 1,500 feasted on Kentucky Fried Chicken supper on the rink. It was estimated that a total of 2,500 people attended the festivities of Ceylon Homecoming 1980 over the course of three days.²⁹

6. CONCLUSION

The Rural Municipality of The Gap is a community that is rooted in rich history. The homesteaders first came to Gap Country to cultivate the land. The immigrants faced challenges such as poor housing conditions, isolation, limited diet, and the lack of experience dealing with the harsh winter. The community persisted through devastating natural and man-made events of the following decades. Throughout the latter decades of the 20th century, the population of the RM of The Gap has been steadily declining after the population peak during the post-war baby boom.

In order to adapt to these challenges, the residents of the RM of The Gap pursued services and facilities that would sustain community and economic development. Schools, churches, post offices, and a train station provided opportunities for new settlers, and provided a reason to stay for the current residents. Improvements with transportation and telecommunications followed soon after. New recreational facilities, better agricultural technologies, and the start of the oil industry sustained the RM for the latter half of the 20th century. The Rural Municipality of The Gap has adopted an Official Community Plan (OCP) to guide future developments within the RM, as well as to identify future opportunities to enhance and sustain the community.

²⁹ History Committee of RM of the Gap #39. 2001. *Builders of a Great Land Continues*.