

Regional Mitigation Opportunities

October 19, 2016

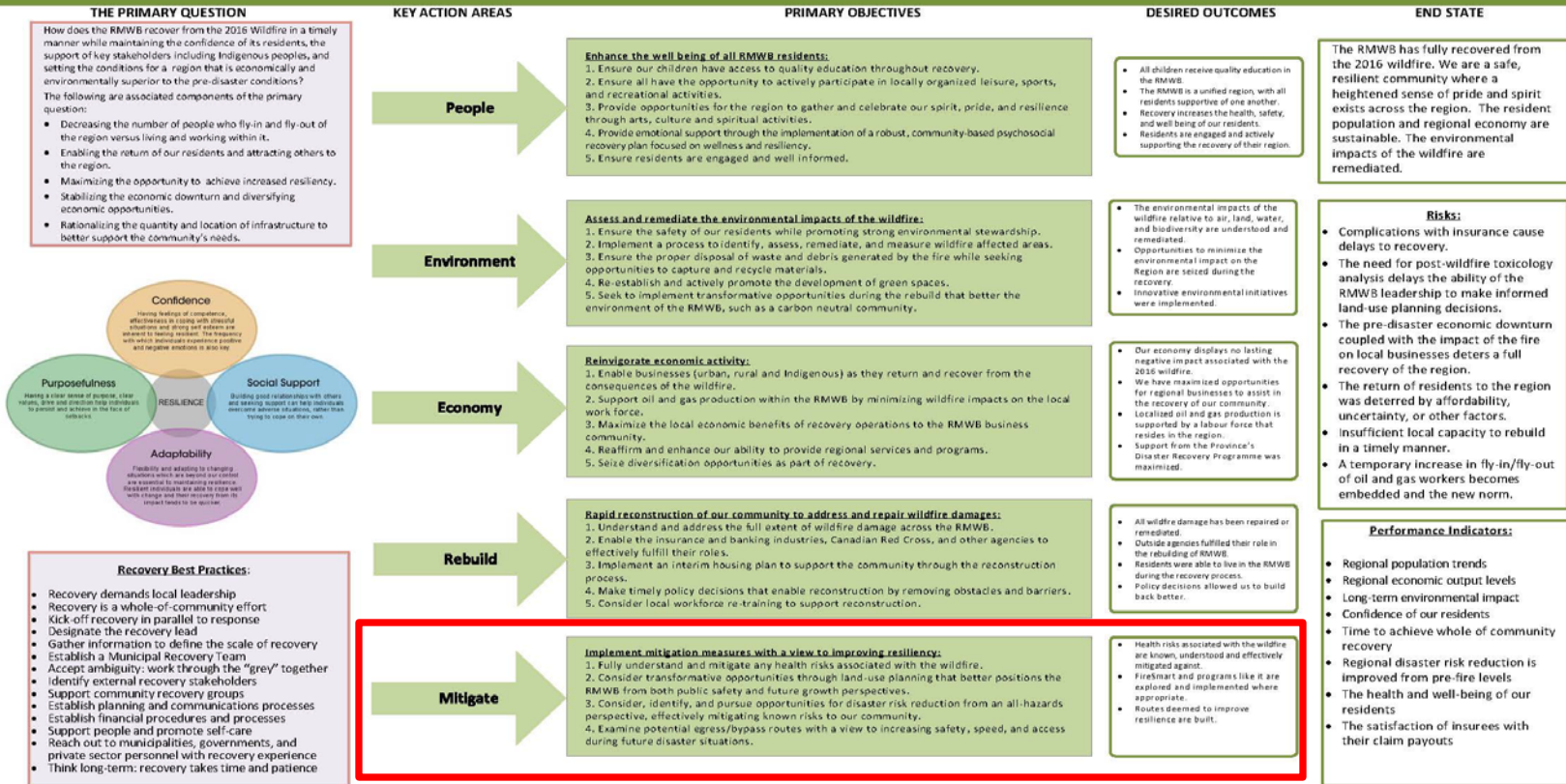
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Wood Buffalo Recovery Task Force



Agenda

- Background
- Process and Recommendations
- Alternate Egress and Evacuation Routes
 - Regional Level
 - Local Level
- FireSmart, Protecting the Region, and Fire Crew initiative
- Budget/Financial Implications
- Timing and Next Steps

RMWB 2016 Wildfire Recovery – Campaign Plan



- Recovery Best Practices:**
- Recovery demands local leadership
 - Recovery is a whole-of-community effort
 - Kick-off recovery in parallel to response
 - Designate the recovery lead
 - Gather information to define the scale of recovery
 - Establish a Municipal Recovery Team
 - Accept ambiguity: work through the "grey" together
 - Identify external recovery stakeholders
 - Support community groups
 - Establish planning and communications processes
 - Establish financial procedures and processes
 - Support people and promote self-care
 - Reach out to municipalities, governments, and private sector personnel with recovery experience
 - Think long-term: recovery takes time and patience

Narrative: The RMWB is recovering from a devastating wildfire that threatened the lives of our people and the very existence of our community. We suffered the loss of two residents while evacuating, thousands of homes were destroyed, as well as some public infrastructure. Many of our residents were evacuated for over one month while first responders bravely fought the fire and set the conditions for their return. We chose to move forwards, not backwards. We will rebuild once areas are safe. We will accommodate all families who want to move home as soon as possible. We will advocate for adequate community egress routes and a bypass to improve the safety and efficiency of our transportation network. Achieving these outcomes requires sound planning and strong governance. We will establish and empower a recovery task force led by Council. We will develop short and long term recovery plans that consider the needs and desires of our regional communities, industry, citizens and Indigenous peoples. We will create a roadmap to guide decision making and provide transparency and shared understanding of who decides what, when. We face a long and difficult road to recovery, but we face it together. We must work collaboratively, supporting one another, and caring for one another's mental and physical health. We see a region that is ready to bloom. We see a vibrant and tightly connected region where people want to stay and live an entire life.

Process

- Mitigation opportunities were identified with the intent of requesting support from other levels of government to implement
- Opportunities were prioritized with the lens of increasing regional resiliency and their likelihood to be supported by the Province

Prioritized Mitigation Opportunities

Mitigate Pillar Primary Objectives

Implement mitigation measures with a view to improving resiliency:

1. Fully understand and mitigate any health risks associated with the wildfire
2. Consider transformative opportunities through land-use planning that better positions the RMWB from both public safety and future growth perspectives
3. Consider, identify, and pursue opportunities for disaster risk reduction from an all-hazards perspective, effectively mitigating known risks to our community
4. Examine potential egress/bypass routes with a view to increasing safety, speed, and access during future disaster situations.

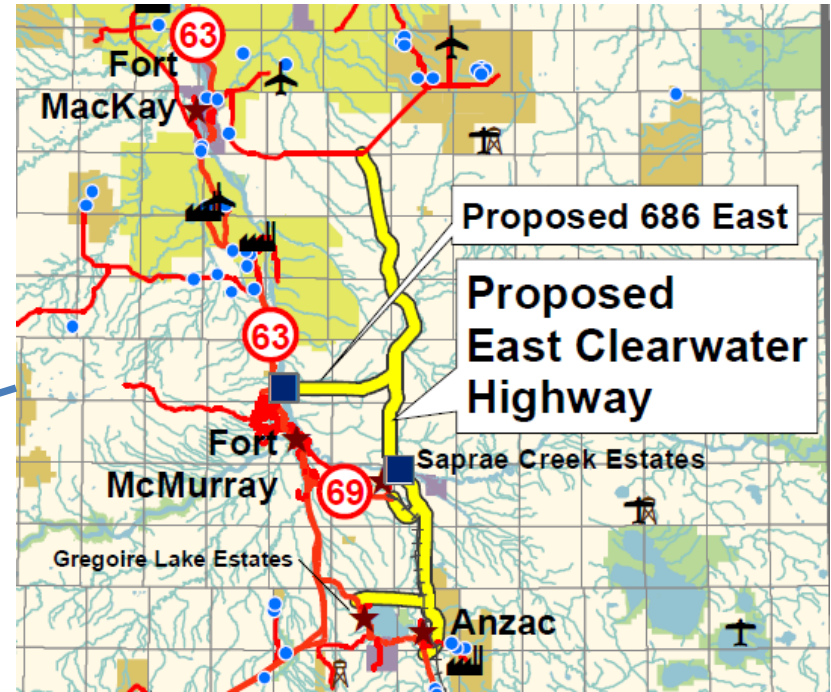
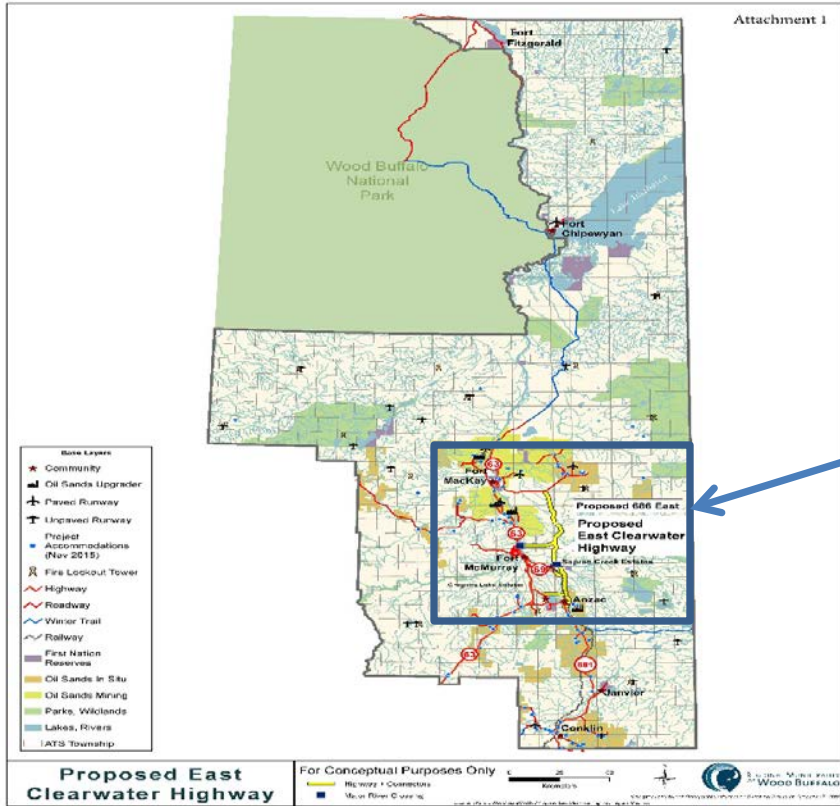
- East Clearwater Highway
- Neighbourhood Egress
- FireSmart
- Protecting the Region: Rural Hamlets and West Flank of the Urban Service Area
- Mirror and expand the Wildland/Urban Interface (WUI) Firecrew capacity developed for Slave Lake

Regional-Level Evacuation Route

- Previous reports and studies
- Resiliency and public safety

“A further benefit of the Clearwater East Corridor would be the construction of a secondary route parallel to Highway 63, which could be used for mixed traffic in emergencies, the need to which was illustrated in 2011 during the Slave Lake fire” – Regional Structure Action Strategy, 2014

Regional Level Evacuation Route



Local Level: Neighbourhood Egress

- Developing secondary or emergency egress routes for communities is a top priority for mitigation
- Administration has already engaged pre-design efforts and this is the subject of a separate Council report
- WBRTF supports this requirement as an important mitigation effort

Specific Recommendations

- That Council direct Administration to participate in a pre-design for the proposed East Clearwater Highway with a focus of improving resiliency and public safety for the residents of the Municipality; building on previous and ongoing initiatives including any work done by related Committees
- That Council direct Administration to budget \$5M in the proposed 2017 budget as the Municipality's contribution to the overall pre-design costs for the proposed East Clearwater Highway, subject to a commitment from other partners on the remainder of the pre-design costs
- That Council solicit the Government of Alberta for 2017 funding support for the pre-design which includes cost-sharing opportunities for the proposed East Clearwater Highway

FireSmart, Protecting the Region, Fire Crew Initiative

- Request that a letter be sent to the GOA consisting of three elements:
 - FireSmart
 - Determine the best means of protecting the region from a WUI Fire
 - Funding support to mirror and expand the WUI Firecrew capacity developed in Slave Lake

Budget/Financial Implications

- 2017 budget consideration for \$5M towards the cost of the pre-design
- Budget demonstrates the Municipality's pledge to the highest priority mitigation project
- Pre-design must consider cost-sharing options so that requests for construction dollars can be included in the 2018 budget deliberations for all levels of government, if desired

Timing and Next Steps

- Opportunity to request budget dollars in 2017 from the GOA for mitigation priorities
- Approval of the recommendations by the WBRC requesting that Council approve the motions
- Council consideration Tuesday, October 26th

Questions